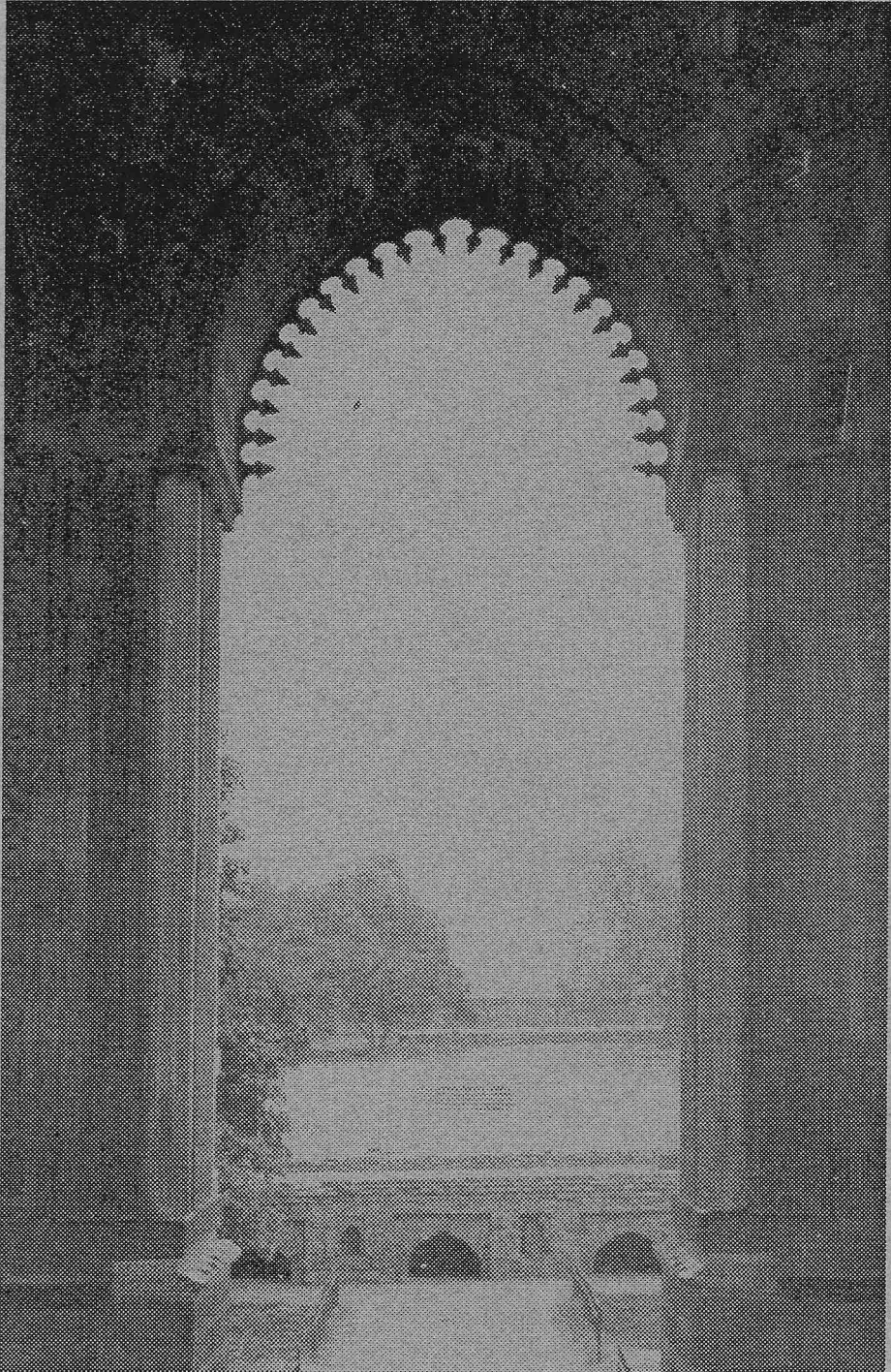
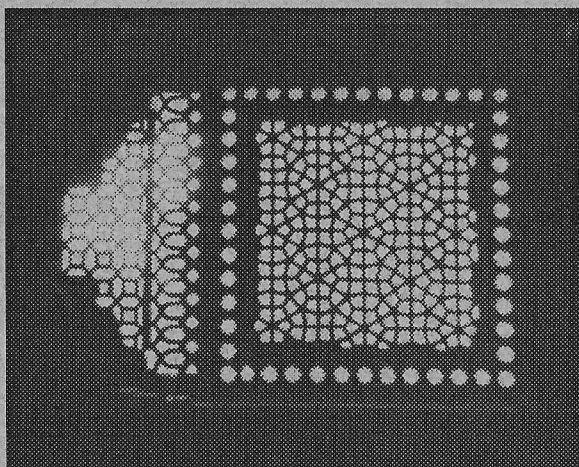


GURUKULAM

VOLUME XVII • 2001

SECOND QUARTER





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COVER: Entry Arch at Qutab Minar Complex, Delhi, photograph by Nancy Yeilding

Inside Cover: Window, Qutab Minar Complex, Delhi, 12th c., photograph by Nancy Yeilding

Genome and Essence

One of the most beloved stories in Indian mythology depicts the love story of Śiva and Śakti, brought together in answer to the other beings' prayers for the birth of a young warrior powerful enough to save them from the demon Tāraka who was "flooding misery over the worlds." Their union was rendered in exquisite poetry by Kalidasa in his *Kumārasambhava*, in which Śiva said to Parvati with a smile,

*With the beams like fingers
seizing the darkness
as if it were a mass of hair, the moon seems
to kiss the face of the night with its eyes,
the day-blooming lotuses, closing up like buds.*

*Now the moon, lovely woman, is uniting
with its due star, the face of which is sparkling
like a newly wed girl trembling with fear
as she and her bridegroom are joined together.*

*Then Śiva picked her up, she who was heavy
with the weight of her hips, her golden belt
hanging down, and he entered
a house of jewels
with its splendors created by
the power of his mind.*

*There, with his beloved, he lay down on a bed
beautiful to the eye as the sand of the Ganges
with its sheet as white as the wild geese
and he looked like the moon
on a cloud in autumn.*

*The bride loved the bridegroom
who was worthy of someone like her
and he loved her in the same way
just as the Ganges never leaves the ocean
while he takes his pleasure from
the sweetness of her mouth.*

*When they had made love,
the embrace relaxing,
the couple, for a time,
were cooled by the breezes
from the Gandhamādana forest
that were opening the flowers
and rippling the water
on the surface of Lake Mānasa. **

In these verses Kalidasa romantically described the fulfillment of erotic attraction in the act, repeated countless millions of times, that creates new human life. The

coming together of male and female has been studied and explicated by philosophy, religion, psychiatry, biology, and other fields; it has been explored, expressed, celebrated, denigrated, and distorted in myriad variations of every art form and commercial media. It is commonplace, everyday, integral to existence, yet the mystery of human origin remains.

Hidden from view of even the couple who conjoin so intimately, another union takes place, that of their genetic material. Each donates half of the complete set of instructions for making another human being, coded in tightly coiled threads of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and associated protein molecules, organized as 24 distinct microscopic units called chromosomes. The merging of sperm and ovum creates a single cell in which two sets of chromosomes, one given by each parent, combine. This master blueprint for all cellular structures and activities for the lifetime of the cell or organism, found in every nucleus of a person's many trillions of cells, is called the human genome.

Each DNA molecule contains many genes—the basic physical and functional units of heredity. Molecular biology has determined that a human DNA molecule consists of two strands that wrap around each other to resemble a twisted ladder whose sides, made of sugar and phosphate molecules, are connected by rungs of nitrogen-containing chemicals called bases. Each strand is a linear arrangement of repeating similar units called nucleotides, which are each composed of one sugar, one phosphate, and a nitrogenous base. Four different bases are present in DNA and the particular order of the bases arranged along the sugar-phosphate backbone is called the DNA sequence. The sequence is very important because it specifies the exact genetic instructions required to create a particular organism with its own unique traits. The two DNA strands are held together by weak bonds

between the bases on each strand, forming base pairs. Although the human genome contains roughly 3 billion base pairs, molecular biologists recently have completed the almost inconceivable task of determining the sequencing of these chemical building blocks of life.

Computer scientists, biologists, doctors, governments, educational institutions, and multinational corporations have been enthusiastically cooperating in this project and are excitedly exploring the possibilities opened up by its completion. The genome map potentially offers several benefits such as the capacity to develop preventative health measures based on knowledge of the ties between genetic mutations and environmental triggers, better informed life-style and medical choices for persons who are aware of genetic pre-dispositions to particular diseases, gene therapy for some conditions, and increased insight into the operation of life functions. At the same time, it presents many ethical challenges and potential threats such as: catastrophic genetic pollution from engineered life forms; discrimination against people on the basis of their genetic information, especially by potential employers and insurance companies; and corporate ownership and control of human genetic information through patents on gene sequences.

One of the most profound threats this vast array of information represents is so pervasive that it is often overlooked—the way it blinds us to our full reality. As the discoveries of modern science are translated almost overnight into stunningly powerful technological devices, we can fall prey to the perspective that sees living beings as mechanistic. The new "Genomes to Life" program spawned by the successful mapping of the human genome aims "to achieve the most far-reaching of all biological goals: a fundamental, comprehensive and systematic understanding of life." It is telling that the objectives of the program describe the fundamental elements of life as machinery: "Identify the protein machines that carry out critical life functions and characterize the gene regulatory

networks that control these machines."

The more we accept a definition of life as mechanical, the more ignorant we become of the hidden treasures lying buried within us. We not only carry genetic seeds of potential expression and influence, we also carry seeds of truth, goodness, and beauty that seek expression in our thoughts and words, aspirations and actions. Too often, we fail to nurture their growth. Instead, we are seduced by the promises of technology to enhance life by controlling it. This is linked to the view of nature as separate from humanity, something to be possessed, manipulated, consumed by and for human technology. This orphans us from our full beingness as a part of an integrated whole.

As the biologists explore the basic building blocks of life, we need to remember the realization that slowly dawned on the physicists who delved deeper and deeper into the basic building blocks of matter, voiced by Max Planck: "Science cannot solve the ultimate mystery of nature because in the last analysis we are part of the mystery we are trying to solve."

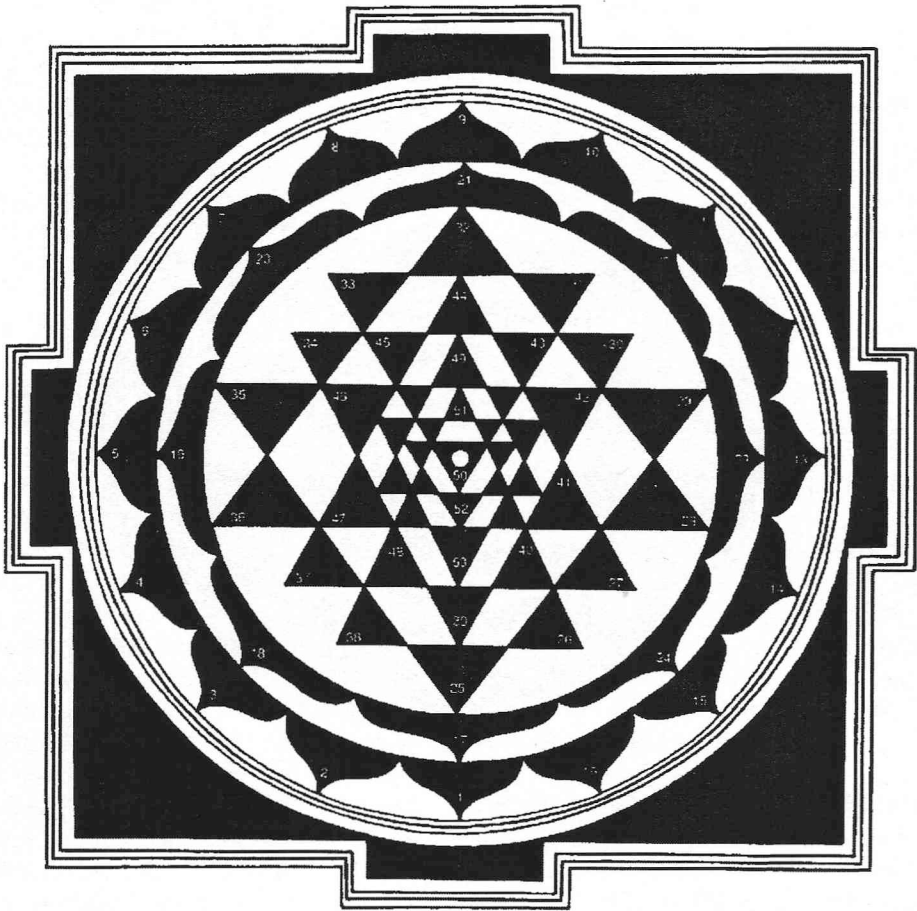
In the face of that mystery we are better aided by the artist and the poet who use the tools of beauty to illuminate our interconnectedness, like Kalidasa when he sang: "moon beams like fingers seizing the darkness as if it were a mass of hair," "star, the face of which is sparkling like a newly wed girl;" "he looked like the moon on a cloud in autumn," "he loved her in the same way just as the Ganges never leaves the ocean while he takes his pleasure from the sweetness of her mouth." Such expressions bring us fresh experiences of our reality as integrated parts of the seamless web of nature. And they are lyrical reminders that human creativity is part of the continuous unfoldment of the universe in which each unique expression of beauty, goodness, or truth is a revelation of the essence of all.

Nancy Yeilding

*(From Hank Heifetz, *The Origin of the Young God, Kalidasa's Kumārasambhava*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1985.)

Meditations on Śrī Cakra

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati



In 1990, while staying at the Portland and Bainbridge Gurukulas, Guru Nitya gave a series of meditations on *Śrīcakra* (above), a proto-linguistic depiction of a person functioning within a cosmic system. In this diagram (*yantra*), the four upward-pointing triangles represent the supreme spirit or universal consciousness (*puruṣa*) and the five downward pointing triangles represent nature composed of the five elements (*prakṛti*). They are so interlaced that no aspect of reality can be seen as entirely physical or entirely spiritual. Each of the two rings of petals represents a fully opened lotus flower, indicating that both the microcosm and the macrocosm unfold like the blossoming of a flower.

Śrīcakra is an aid to meditation which is intended to become unnecessary as the mediator comes to recognize his or her functional and essential unity with All. Meditation begins with the petal at the alpha point of the diagram, proceeds clockwise around the outer petals, then around the inner petals. Then, beginning with the triangle placed at the alpha, it proceeds counter-clockwise around the exterior points of the triangles until the final four which are placed on a vertical axis. Each petal and point has a seed mantra associated with it, as well as an aspect of divinity envisioned as the Supreme Mother. Each meditation reflects the transcendent power of beauty to lead us to the oneness of Reality.



ghṇī sarvavidrāyaṇī

Meditation Twenty-six

O Mother, what happened to the amazing tree that had its branches spread out in all directions, overladen with beautiful fragrant flowers? Was it the same that withered, fell in the great rain, turned into earth and disappeared? What happened to its leaves and flowers? Have they all evaporated and disappeared in the atmosphere? Did the time of fire change the tree into mere smoke and ashes? The green energy that was the delight of its leaves, has it gone into the clouds to become occasional lightening?

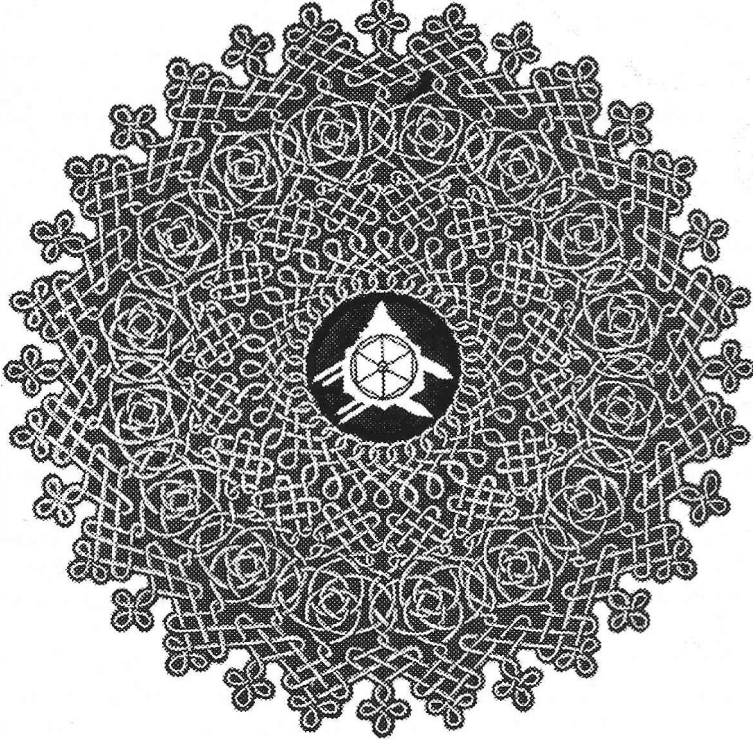
The monads of the five elements were quintuplicated at the dawn of creation. Now in the dusk I suspect they have given up their comradeship and each has gone into its aloneness. It was in your scheme of things to alter the seasons so that the vegetative world could play hide and seek with us. You also gave us the sport of make-believe death coming to us night after night as sleep, followed by our hilarious laughter in the morning. It seems you have now closed down such kinds of amusements. There is not a single throb to be seen anywhere. In the intensity of your presence one may sometimes experience total absence. Is that the lesson you are giving us now?

Every mountain and its snowy peaks and the deep oceans were all like your eternal treasuries. Now there is not a single blade of grass to be seen. Sand and sand and sand. My eyelids are also feeling heavy. Is the enveloping desert slowly entering into us also? In the vast stretch of your infinite nothingness, only your Lord is seen, totally lost in his frenzied dance. I am sure that all these flying particles of dust were once cheerful, laughing souls, holding whose hands I was once dancing in the garden of your bounty. Even when everything is lost, I'll be sticking on to your lotus feet as a tiny little dust particle.

Brahma the creator is not to be seen in his lotus seat. How can there be creation when there is no creator? Now your Lord is not burning anything. He is withholding all schemes of transformation. Viṣṇu is no longer in his dream state. He must have gone into *susupti*, the dreamless state. If he does not remember, no one will remember to act. It's a contradiction in terms to say that death has died. This is that rare occasion when even nothingness has become unreal. The scale of values has become discarded from use. There is no one to remember even all the *manus* and *manvantarās* that have gone before.

In such a total dissolution of the source of being and non-being, your dear husband alone is seen as a rejoicer. Maybe your intense love for him has become his armor of protection against this all-devastating time in which time has also become ultimately non-throbbing. I am incapable of offering anything to you, so may I immerse deeper and deeper into your silence.

ghṃ sarvavidrāyaṇī



gṃ sarvākarṣiṇī

Meditation Twenty-seven

○ Mother, the all-embracing unifier of love, the cock crows in the morning. When the fragrant breeze fondles the branches of trees, leaves make a rustling sound. The streamlet is flowing with a subdued gurgling song. The little baby fed by its mother's breast milk is satisfied and laughs merrily. From the sanctum of various temples of worship comes the jingling of bells along with liturgies sung in praise. I suppose these are all items of worship offered to you, using the very gifts that you have given to each

one. You have also given me a voice which may not be very melodious. In the way it occurs to me, I clap my hands and beat the rhythms.

How many languages are spoken by people? No one can say which language is the most superior and dear to you. Within the same language there are many tongues speaking with various accents. Even when a child lisps, its mother can interpret it correctly. So I am not afraid to sing my songs and offer my prayers. However incorrect are my pronunciations and the words I choose, I am sure you will think of each one as an appropriate mantra.

Each sect of the various religions of the world has a different way of propitiating you with rituals, offerings, sacrifices and many gestures made with heads and hands. Which is the correct mode of worship? I don't think that you have any preference. In Christian chapels or cathedrals, the priests conduct the Eucharist Mass and those who participate believe they are partaking of the flesh and blood of Jesus and their sins are pardoned. The Muslims sit and stand, bow down and look up with great devotion, offering their prayers to Allah by reciting appropriate Arabic lines from the Qur'ān. Is that the right way or is it the only right way?

Sometimes I am bewildered, seeing these elaborate rituals and the confidence with which people speak of God and describe hell and heaven as if they are constant visitors there. You don't mind that I have simplified my belief by seeing you in everything, and all as an inseparable presence of your beautiful manifestation. So I am circumambulating everything. Even if I am not doing it, the earth is ritualistically carrying all of us in her space ship and we go round and round the sun, sometimes singing "Hallelujah" and sometimes chanting "Hara Hara Mahādeva." I suppose both of these mean "Lā illah illālah" or "Ave Maria."

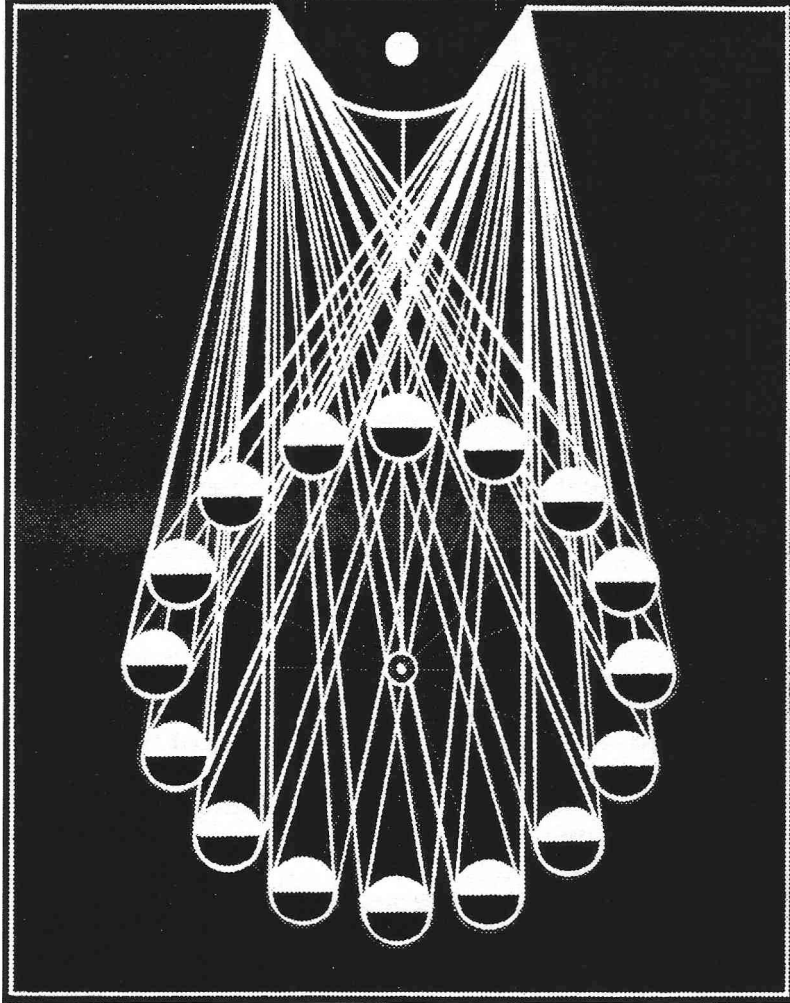
How ingenious are the people who have conceived and created you to adorn their altars with ceramic or metal images. These beautiful little gods on temple altars do not suffer from hunger or thirst and there is no way to feed them. That is a beautiful idea—to think of God without thirst and hunger. Even so, I cook sweetmeats with great devotion and care. For a little while I place them all before you. Then, imagining that you are more real in the flames of hunger burning in my stomach, I offer them all to myself. When I rejoice, you must also be rejoicing.

My teachers advised me to make prostrations before you. I forget to do so. But when night comes I stretch myself on this all-supporting earth. I know you will accept it as my prostration. Can there be a worship more honest and trustful than a child quietly sleeping in the lap of its mother? My worship is also like that. I do not know how to surrender. Are you not surrendering everything to keep us children happy and cheerful?

Do you think that I am chaotic? Is chaos not a field for you to arrange everything and put it into perfect order? I know how busy you are with me, bringing order to my chaos, beauty to my ugliness, and love to my irritations. That is my submission; that is my surrender. After all, it is for your playful sport that you have created me. Unlike sporting equipment such as bats, balls and wickets, we are playthings which are entirely conscious of the sport in which you engage us. You have given this insight to me to be playful and hilarious, to bump around like a rubber ball, or to sit like a pawn on a chessboard, moving only with caution.

In all games, you are the umpire. When you blow the whistle, we start. When you dictate penalties, we submit ourselves to them. O Mother, how beautiful is your arrangement—the lion roars, the dog barks, the donkey brays, the cat mews, the rat squeaks, the bird chirps. What do you expect me to do? I babble and you laugh. Such is the glory of our game.

gṃ sarvākarṣiṇī



khṃ sarvāhlādinī

Meditation Twenty-eight

O Mother, the rejoicer in everyone. Your creation of this world, its sustenance, and destruction are all mysterious events that can evoke the highest wonder in everyone. Who can say where the sun rises? Some say it is from behind the yonder hill, and others think it is rising from the ocean. All see the wonder of the sun peeping out from the horizon in the morning and slowly traversing toward the west. Looking at the crimson sun some people rejoice and say, "Look at the rising sun." Looking at the same sun, another one remarks, "Look, the sun is setting." Many do not know what the sun is, and yet it brings a sense of wonder and inexpressible joy.

When the sun or moon comes there is not only the sunrise and moonrise. There are also the appearances of hills and dales, mountains and cities. In twenty-four hours, everything has an emergence into the visible and a disappearance into the invisible. The changing light also brings corresponding changing shadows. Visible beauty is never the same even for two minutes. A flower does not do anything; it just remains there. When it is illuminated it is like a special manifestation of color and light. The unflickering flame of a lamp has the same status of eventless shining. These are not the special privileges of the flowers and brightly burning lamps. By itself and in itself a grain of sand, a pebble, a rock, a bug - each has an intrinsic nature of its own and consequently a value of its own. A violet is glorified because it is a humble flower; a rose is glorified because it has a color and fragrance that are universally appreciated.

When a pot is to be made, it is inevitable that one should have mud. If what one cares for is jewelry, gold or silver are sought and they are valuable. The gentlest of breezes has a lyrical quality. A typhoon is devastating; it can also be a metaphor for a tragedy. Thus everything not only has a *svadharma*, intrinsic nature, but that nature also has a reputation, *dharmakirti*. When that worth is explicitly brought forth, that brings fulfillment.

Where the dawn and dusk were celebrated some hours ago, everything is now veiled by the thick darkness of night. Where there is no illumination (*prakāśa*), there is also no critical description (*vimarśa*). Where action terminates, there is liberation. This is your eternal *līla*, to play with the alternating balls of day and night. With the same ease you create a universe or withdraw it into your dissolution. In the morning when we wake up the eastern sky is still there. The sun rises as usual, the cock crows, and we remember the sequences of our programs to be performed. Even so, after an oblivion of several millennium, when manifestation comes into being once again, everything is as usual. No new law is to be initiated, no new design is to be invented. The law of change is as eternal and binding as the law of the changeless. From a blade of grass to the creator, Brahma, and from the transforming light to the changing phenomena, everything is subjected to the negativity of total withdrawal. Continuity of being is assured through the unbroken love that links the hearts of the Mother and her Lord.

The shining earring, *karṇābharāṇa*, has in it the secret of eternity. It is differently spoken of as *anāhata*, the unbroken, or *aditi*, also meaning the unbroken. What is unbroken between Śiva and Śakti is the total trust and the never-failing care of absolute love. The waxing and waning of interests in us take away the continuity of our eternal being. You are teaching us again and again to keep the spirit of attention unbroken, like a continuous streak of oil. In other words, you are asking us never to wake up again to the vicissitudes of change and never to sleep again from the ever-shining glory of truth. Profound salutations to you.

khṃ sarvāhlādinī



nm̐ sarvasammohinī

Meditation Twenty-nine

O Mother of all Muses and the source of creative enthusiasm. Through several cycles you have been preserving the innumerable modes of beauty which constitute the universe in its entirety. Each passing moment has a temporal significance of immense value. Time as a whole, as pure duration, has in it the unbroken unity of all the cycles of creation hitherto come and gone and the cycles yet to be. Both the space you have allotted to embodied beings and the space between bodies have been the source of inspiration for artists and architects and even for ordinary folks who have to personally structure the model of their own world to understand the magnificence of your creation. The structu-

ral elegance and significance of every body that you put together, from a virus to a galaxy, astonishes all creators. The engineering skill of foreseeing a function even before a structure is designed and assembled is another source of great education to us.

All these can be seen epitomized in the value-studded crown of Viṣṇu, in whom we see enshrined the secret of all *dharmas*. Like his spouse, Śrī or Lakṣmi, his crown is of innumerable auspicious qualities. Seated in the lotus flower blooming from the navel of Viṣṇu, Brahma, the creator of the universe, is ever-contemplating on every shade of beauty seen in Viṣṇu's crown, including the subtle nuances they suggest. That is why in nature's creation you do not see even the slightest flaw. With ever-elaborating creation, Brahma is entertaining the shining ones (*devas*). Indra, the Lord of the *devas*, gathers the appreciation of the creative excellence of Brahma and passes it on to the creative minds of the connoisseurs of beauty. They, in turn, fill every heart with promptings to appreciate the manifestation of *ānanda* in music, painting, sculpting, poetry, architecture, theatrical arts and in the very fascinating relationship of lovers, not to say the contemplative depths to which mystics go.

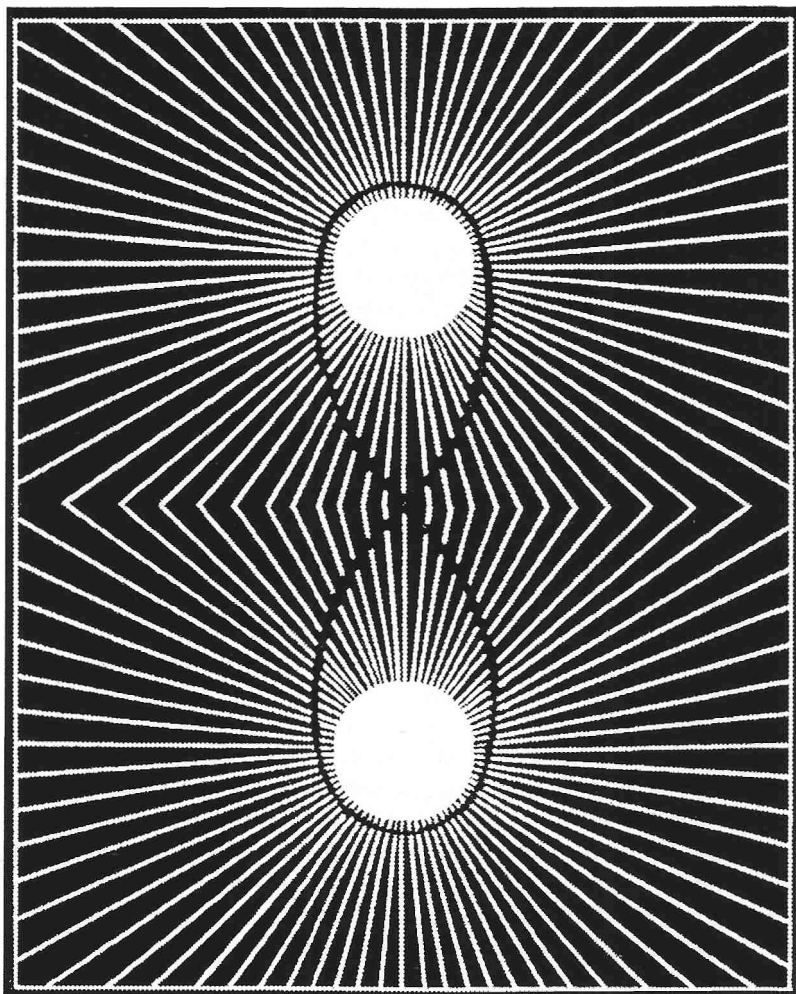
In this world of bountiful values, you are seated on your throne, expecting that great moment when you have to gather all this and pass it on to the Lord to be crushed in the palms of his hands and reduced to the ashes with which he smears his forehead and body. You do it like an offering. Even though you individually care for the perfection in the arrangement of the petals of a humble flower like the jasmine, it is with no regrets that you make an offering of all the seven worlds to your Lord. Your happiness is identical with the happiness of the Absolute. What you care for is not pleasure or pain, but the supreme unity of happiness in which every shade of pain and pleasure becomes equally harmonized and blended.

It is in this context that the attendants of Mother whisper to her that in this final act of turning everything to nothingness, she should somehow retain Viṣṇu, Brahma and Indra as latent potentials, to be incentives for the next cycle of creation. The cosmological dissolution and the deep sleep into which we go are qualitatively alike. The streaming thoughts of consciousness and being busy with the promptings of action are all hushed into silence when memory goes into sleep. In deep sleep only the unperturbed consciousness of Viṣṇu retains the many cycles of the future. Again in the dawn of creation and also when we wake up, Viṣṇu moves from deep sleep to his dreaming consciousness. It is from the mine of Viṣṇu's dreams that Brahma gathers the archetypes of all modes and spreads out this vast world of names and forms and functions of all kinds. He spreads everything around just as before, only to be concealed again when the memory is hushed, and in our case, when deep sleep takes over.

The micro-function and the macro-function of the individual and the universe are identical. So, if *citta*, the repository of memory, is inoperative, no word will burst into meaning, even if it is shouted in one's loudest voice. When memory is lost, time will not occur to mind because there is no beginning, no end and no movement from beginning to end. The beginning should always be marked by a surprise, asking, "What is this?" The elaboration of the world comes through the description of "What." The question "What is this?" alerts Indra who stands in the center of consciousness with his chariot to which the five senses are yoked as horses ready to gallop in the infinite range of space in the path of time. The path in which Indra's horses pace is what we understand as thought, *vicāra*, and each stride the horses of consciousness make is the modulation of a sentence.

Thus with the fine threads of time, space and all, O Mother, you weave a tapestry that conceals all these dramatic performances that enrich the art of creation. From behind that veil, you smile and it bewitches your Lord; we are filled with gratitude. We offer you our worship.

nṃ sarvasammohinī



ॐ sarvastambhīnī

Meditation Thirty

AUM Klim. O Mother, the secret implied in the mantra *klim* is not to be understood through any exercise of ratiocination. It is to be understood by the mutual infusion of the body and the Self. When a small particle of carbon becomes filled with fire it becomes a spark. In the shining body of a spark, no one can discern which is its animating fire and which is its inanimate carbon. In the same manner, when a person is in a state of absolute bipolarity, it is difficult to discern who is the devotee and who is the Lord. Sunlight belongs entirely to the sun. Even so is the relationship of the moon and its sheen.

When I believe I am the body, with that very thought I identify myself with helplessness, weakness, disease, and mortality. When the same consciousness comes to recognize itself as the all-pervading Self, all frontiers disappear. Time and space no longer offer limiting conditions. The mind becomes clear and devoid of all shades of doubt. The Self is nearby; it is far. It pertains to the concrete and it is more subtle than the subtle.

These and many other adjectives are no longer necessary to know the Self because I am That. No flaw raises its ugly head of controversy. There is no distinction between what is and how it is. There is no attempt necessary to meditate on the quality of happiness because, in the reality of the equipoise or the beatitude that is established, *ānanda*, the indescribable, pervades throughout. Seeing one in that state, a knower of such mystical identity, you declare it as an instance of *sānanda samādhī*.

In the same manner, when I am drawn to your feet and, in my infinite delight, when I ponder on the blessedness of the earth in which you tread, I see how you transform all feet into yours and walk in every path as if all paths are yours. If my feet are yours, then what is left behind which is not yours? It is amusing to me to watch how you trot around as a horse, crawl around as a snake, and climb a wall or a tree as ivy. Perhaps your overpowering strength to cover the world is seen more in the feet of the tiny grass blades than even in the roots of the oak. In spite of different stages of progress, we are all walking to one and the same destination. When you stand behind and prompt me to mount hills and climb peaks, I have only to think of your sturdy legs that can overcome any hurdle. If there is a rocky mountain that hinders my path, I know you will not bother to blast the rocks away. Instead you will teach me to melt in love and gently direct myself at the blockage like a river and overcome it by slowly finding a path by which I can circumvent it and flow in a different direction.

All paths are yours, so why should I bother whether I climb or flow? If I am to become a cascade, I will also laugh with it and in the sparkling foam I will see your world reflected a million-fold. The music of the cascade is similar to a symphony which soars into high pitches and softens into a murmuring silence. How wonderful that I can become all these just by thinking of you. What is so wonderful about you is that you have no fixed structure. Fast changing strategies are as acceptable to you as consistency. Omnipresence can sometimes hide behind all-out absence.

I sometimes see you as the immeasurable peak of Meru. When I entertain thoughts of your insurmountability, I see the soft head of a summer cloud wafting into my presence from over the head of the peak. You allow it. You do not lose anything if it pleases a gentle cloud to pass over you. When I see that, I know that my heart should not become heavy, ruminating on thoughts of being deceived or of someone scheming. Every day each thing you place before me has a direct message for me. You are not like other teachers who give sermons or instructions. To learn a lesson from you, I should become you. Then you will become the warmth of my body. Keeping the rhythmic pace of my breath, you will give a silent message to every corpuscle in my blood and to every tissue of my body. For that, words are not required to articulate, ears are not required to listen. Nor are the lessons to be interpreted or commented upon.

Where there is such an intense delight that I burst out into laughter, the very fact that I am beside myself is a sure indication that I am no more myself. You have become me. When, in the intensity of pain, I lose consciousness and helplessly go into the timeless depth of the unknown, you are there. And the very darkness that blinds my eyes and the non-being that devours my self is your supreme Self. I am praised and I blush with embarrassment; then I realize that the hymns sung before me were all to praise you and I only mistook that they were meant for my tiny self. When I am reproached and taken to task, I realize that you have a quick and sharp way to change ugliness to beauty and convert the unreal into the real.

The way in which you transfer everything belonging to you to everyone identified with you is the only secret of love. It is a lesson so simple to learn. Yet it is so hard to know that such a lesson being given by you is that easily recognized. Where the desire and the action prompted by desire have no agent, it is no longer desire or action but only a fulfillment of your love. All victory to you.

ॐ sarvostambhinī



Ātmopadeśa Śatakam:

One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction by Narayana Guru

Translation and Commentary by
Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

Verse 15

*parayute pālu nukarnna bhāgyavanmā-
rkoru patināyiramāṅtoralpanēram;
arivapara prakṛikkadhīnamāyā-
lara noṭiyāyiramāṅtupōle tōnnum.*

To the blessed ones who have sucked the
milk of *para*
ten thousand years is but a moment;
but if knowledge succumbs to *apara prakṛti*
half a second seems like a thousand years.

Some people are always caught in one difficult situation or another. They need to have something to cry about. There is always darkness surrounding them. And yet we cannot say they are bad people. They have very tender minds, highly suggestible. They are compassionate. Mostly they suffer because of their relationship with someone; or else they have economic difficulties, physical diseases, mental aberrations. Even if you try to help them, as soon as you pull them out of one tight situation they slip into another. After some time you become fed up with them. It looks as if they can never be helped. What is wrong with them? They are caught in the necessities of a relativistic world.

In a moderate way we all suffer from this same problem. We are human beings, so our lives are all intertwined and interrelated. Naturally we have to be sympathetic to the needs of those whom we love. Our own needs can also be very pressing.

When the day breaks, several necessities come and stand before us, asking for our attention. There are many obligations: we have to oblige this friend or that relative. If you have a sensitive mind which exaggerates situations, then even little things will appear very urgent, needing to be done immediately, and you can get into an anxiety neurosis. Afterwards you regret what you have done in haste. The regret over what you have done, the anxiety over what is yet to be done, and the darkness in which the present moment is caught, assault you from all sides, and then all you can do is sit and suffer.

In the present verse, this state is described as getting caught in *apara prakṛti*. *A* means not, *para* means the Absolute. When a situation proliferates, or something multiplies and recurs, it is *prakṛti*. Most of the things in our life are recurrent. We have breakfast, but by noon we are hungry. Then we have lunch, but by evening we are hungry again. Hunger is recurring. Our needs, most of which have to do with the body and the mind, can all multiply in this way.

In an earlier verse we were discussing another element in us, the witnessing consciousness. There is a flickering light which is like a spark somewhere in us which is not afflicted or affected by any of the passing qualities of life. This is actually the spark of the spirit in us. It is our Self. The necessities of life can easily overpower and veil this subtle light. Suppose

you befriend it. If you are in search of yourself, be friends with that little shimmering spark in you. In fact, the love that you give to others comes from it, and the love you enjoy arises when it is touched by another person. If your mind is conjoined with the divine spark, you begin to experience a more beautiful world within yourself. This is what Jesus was referring to when he said the kingdom of God is within you.

We have such a very rich treasure in us! When you find it, the remorse of the past do not bother you any more. You cannot do anything with the past; it is gone. Let the dead bury the dead. Along with the past, bury your regrets also. Catholics go and confess to a priest. With the confession, a feeling comes that now whatever it was is over. That's a fine thing. But even without going and telling another person, you can say "what is done is done; I can't do anything about it. If it has no value, I won't repeat it." That's all you do; then it leaves you.

Regarding the future you can say "let it come. When it comes I will see." Its not that you should not plan your life, but instead of seeing a hundred problems all at once, make ninety-nine problems wait while you take up the one problem that is most relevant. Then if your mind does not exaggerate it, it won't look particularly unnatural. And what could your problem be anyway? If it is of the body, people are always being born, while others are dying. This is only normal. Growth brings other problems. A child cries when a tooth is coming in--there is nothing we can do about it. We cannot prevent the pain. Our sitting and crying with the child doesn't do any good. You just understand that the child is having a tooth come in. Then after some time gray hair comes, wrinkles come, the face changes, teeth fall out--what of that? Are these not natural? We shouldn't exaggerate them.

In the course of a day we may have to do many things, or we may have very little to do. Many of the things which look imperative are not. They can be avoided, dropped off. The growth of the mind

brings many problems. The seeming needs of the mind are multiplied by TV and other advertising; everyone is trying to catch your attention because you are the consumer. To make you consume the goods they manufacture, greed is to be generated and lust to be stimulated. Thus there is an external influence which is trying to make your mind thirsty, hungry, haggard, all the time with a sense of poverty, thinking "I don't have this, I don't have that." These can all be dropped one by one.

We need to be doing two things simultaneously. One is going inward and befriending our own spirit, our dear friend that is the Divine. We are realizing the Self within; in other words, seeking the kingdom of God within ourselves. The other is in regard to the outer world, the world of necessity: we need to give up all exaggerations and become more matter-of-fact. We are still sympathetic, but we are changing the mode of our sympathy. Perhaps your most beloved friend is in a state of crisis. He or she is in great darkness. Instead of adding your own darkness to theirs, you should try to bring them to your joy. Share your joy with them and not your sadness.

This does not appeal to most people. As soon as they see the other person's face, long and sad, their countenance falls and they also become sad. They think it's a must that if their friend is crying they should be too. It is not necessary. When Arjuna was caught in the most terrible situation between two armies, and the missiles were flying, he stood there in tears. Krishna was also standing right next to him in the same situation, but he smiled. This implicitly showed that there was a way out of the seemingly insurmountable difficulties. It was with this smile that Krishna started Arjuna's program of correction. So you should offer your smile and not your tears. This is not something that can be accomplished in just one day, but it definitely can be accomplished.

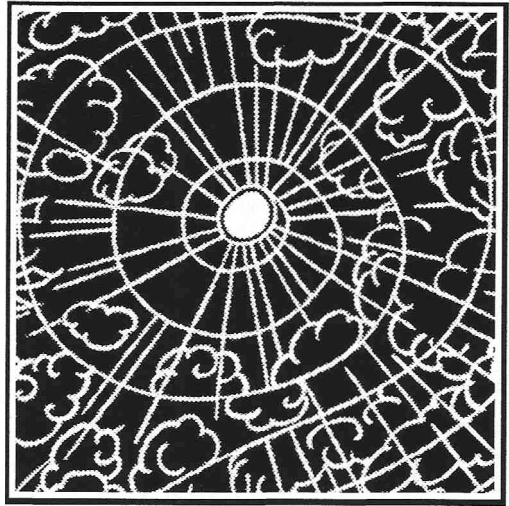
When our friend comes and plays the piano, he is lost in it. He does not know how time passes. Those of us who sit and

listen also forget everything. What is happening? There is music in all of us and our life is music. Our life has in it a rhythmic flow, a rhapsody, a melody; it is harmonious. When the harmony in us is evoked, the spirit comes to prevail. Our deeper nature becomes more prominent than our outer nature. The outer nature and the inner nature come together in a state of harmony. We go into our own depths. For this brief time we are not in this world. After playing for some time, our friend gets up from the piano. We all feel that we were in another world, and now we are returning from it. We are sitting on the same couch in the same room with the same people, but we were all different for a time. The seat was more comfortable and restful. All this magic was done by music.

Another friend is in her studio getting into her day's work. Its not work to her, its a creation of beauty. Each stroke of the brush is opening up a new joy. What was never seen before is now coming from her. It is an opening up, an unfoldment. This unfoldment is rich with wonder, the revelation of beauty. The center of the soul is resonating with what the eye sees. Thus the objective world and the subjective world become related in the spark of joy. It is this spark we should be friends with.

Two lovers meet. They look into each other's eyes. They are never tired of seeing each other; again and again they gaze with a sense of wonder. They are absolutely oblivious of everything happening around them. They are only two people—there is nothing else in the world. They look into each other's eyes as if they are swallowing each other. They touch. They hold each other. There is ecstasy, nothing but ecstasy.

When a child is playing with a toy, he does not know how time passes, either. In his rapture, he is just like the others, or rather they are like him. But when all of them come out of their state of unity, the world of misery is again outside, waiting to pounce on them. The musician is no longer a musician, the lover is not a lover, the artist is not an artist, the child is no



longer engaged in his child's nature—all are once again the victims of necessity.

Yet it is possible to retain continuous joy, by getting into companionship with your own real Self. Call it whatever name you want; call it God, Krishna, Jesus, Beloved, whatever. It is your own. It is all the time with you.

We see some rare people who have no money, but who have risen above their entanglements in the world of necessity. They may live in rags and be physically unhealthy, but they have a twinkle in their eyes, a joy in their heart, a smile on their lips, a tenderness in their attitude, and a kind word to say. They can always cheer you up. Even at the moment they are passing away, it is a great joy just to sit by them. They are like a light that shines before you. We cherish the company of such people. They are the real light of this world. They don't need anything, and yet they have a richness by which they can enrich the mind of everyone. Why should you not be that person? You don't have to invest anything for it, only change your attitude of life a little. Then when your life is changed, it changes the lives of others too.

Many people used to ask Ramana Maharshi what they could do for the world. He always asked them, "Who is doing for whom?" Thus their focus was turned to their own selves. If I want to make you happy, I myself should be a happy person. If I am sad, how can I make

you happy? To make you smile, I should first of all know how to smile. I should know what peace is to bring peace to you. We have to discover the peace within ourselves, the joy within ourselves. This can be done only if the friendship that we cultivate with the spirit within becomes continuous, unbroken.

This is like magic: your world tomorrow won't be the same. You live in exaggeration. This world is not as bad as you paint it. What is madness? Madness is a positive or a negative exaggeration of the mind. If you see a thing in its natural value or worth, not more or less, it is a sane attitude. But we tend to exaggerate.

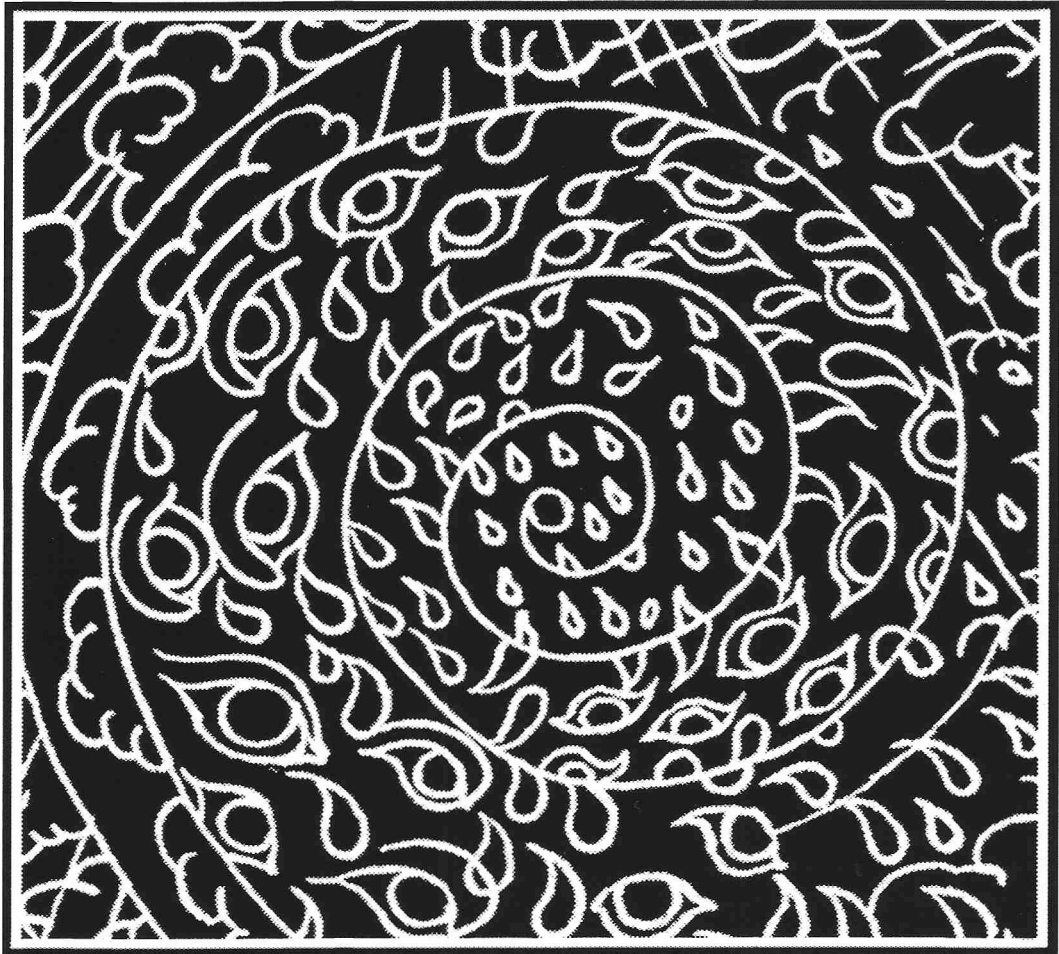
If somebody is busy doing something and you pass by and they do not smile or greet you, you say, "Oh, he does not like me any more. That's why he didn't greet me." You are so self-conscious and

poverty-stricken, wanting somebody's attention all the time.

What kind of a terrible disease is this? If you don't have such a disease you would say, "Oh, my friend was very busy today, so absorbed in himself that he didn't see me." It amuses you. "He didn't even see me!" The other attitude is, "He deliberately ignored me." One thing is seen two different ways. One hurts you and the other amuses you. So why should you be on the side of being hurt rather than amused? I am speaking of you, not some far away people. You can make your world a real heaven. This is the paradise; there is no other. This is a happy world, right in the palm of your hand, every day. But you throw it away.

This is the promise Narayana Guru gives us in this verse.

(Continued in next issue.)



The Storm

Standing there.
Waves crashing, rolling into the rocks,
As joyfully the ocean fights its bounds.
The wind whips my hair
The sea challenges,
"Come play, come fight"
But I, vessel only, let it rage
With its raw power around me,
Standing there.

Standing there,
Truly living.
Darkness in constant motion around me.
The wind doing its best
To play its strength out.
Me, a lantern in my hand,
Still as the world breaks
Into a thousand pieces around me.

Standing there,
On a rock
In the middle of a room
Where a very old child is throwing a tantrum,
Amazed and drunk with its power,
And strength.

Standing there.
The wind roaring,
The waves crashing,
The world breaking.
And there is peace,
Perfectly real,
Standing there.

Jessica Clark

Selected from *Trask and Moontrap*

He saw a world he had not seen before; a world made not for mastery but for living. Once seen it was a very simple thing to understand.

One thing he knew; in pressing past the limits of endurance, man could learn. Out of the scourging fire there came a sure and certain sense of depth; and Trask felt now that more was in this terrible joy than just a sense of self's dimension.

In time, everything before him blurred and coalesced, became a dream through which he walked without volition.

He knew when the time had come for him to dance his spirit and he moved forward with the pounding of the poles and drums working in his blood. He did not remember dancing; nor speaking; but remembered the clear voice in the back of his mind just before he began.

Everything you've got. Everything . . . everything . . . everything .

He might have laughed then, knowing he could dance or speak or walk or crawl or any other thing he might ever have to do. For the power surged out of his belly and he felt the strength on him to do anything.

And he knew there was no country too rough but he could walk it, no trail too steep; no darkness too profound. As long as he could hear in his mind the voice that told him what he had to do, and what there was in him that he must give.

Everything . . . everything . . . everything.

There were many things he would never know now, all the answers to the questions he had not thought to ask. There was always time tomorrow for the forgotten questions of today. Until time ceased suddenly, and it was too late to ask.

The eastern sky, just above the horizon was faintly light. He felt a joy that was stronger than the pain surge inside him. The sun was coming. And smoothly as the moon in its perfection it would glide upward in the sky. It was perfect, and there were suddenly tears in his eyes. He had never in all his years thought of anything so beautiful as the slow and perfect course of sun and moon swinging through the depth of sky, balancing each other, lighting the way and night. It was a miracle.

He loved it all.

The Gurukula remembers Berry with affection and gratitude. His thirty years many fruits, including: dialogues which stirred creativity and reflection in Gita and Narayana Guru's Darsana Mala; his own translation of Darsana . . .

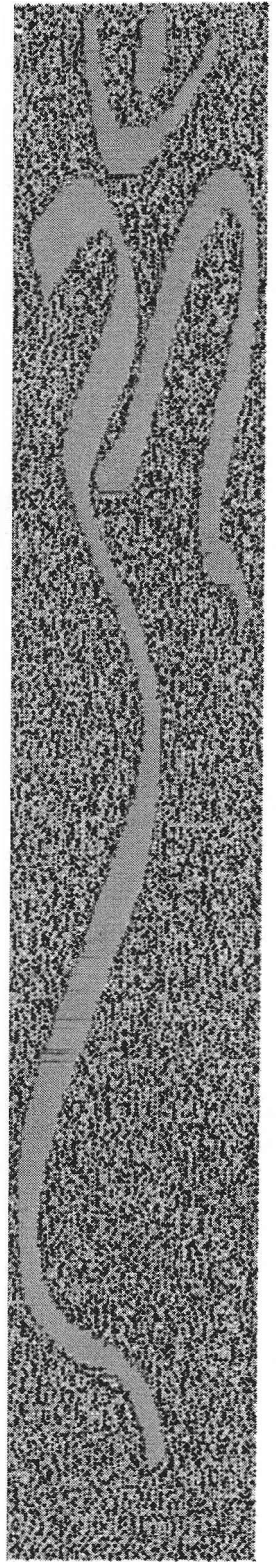
*For The Estuarians
At the Millennium*

Gathering at an estuary, the ultimate
transition between worlds

*Not long ago the overcharge sea
Gave Water to the insubstantial sky
And sky made a cloudworld
Lifted by the wings of gulls.*

*Evanescent cloud gave Water
to bounded and gratified land
confined it crooked
taught it limits
Called it "River."
Imprisoned it
With boundaries of name and
form*

*Until, dreaming that true nature
Without limitation
Water returns to sea and no eye
is quick enough to see that
moment of liberation when River
becomes again the boundless sea.*



*r long association with Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati and the Gurukula bore
their listeners; Forewords to Guru Nitya's Commentaries on the Bhagavad
Mala; and the creation of the Island Gurukula Aranya Website.*

Dante's Chanso of Love

Deborah Buchanan

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Provençal courts of what is now south and southwestern France developed a lyric poetry that centered around the chanso, a poem that, in definite patterns of rhyme and structure, sang of both love's sensual and ethereal qualities. These poems paired a refined courtly aesthetics with a medieval chivalric code of love between knight and lady. Sung by troubadours who wandered from court to court, the chansos alternated rhythm by stanza, idealized woman as embodying perfect beauty and grace, and expressed the singer's longing for that beauty, for union, and for the consummation of desire. Similes, allusions, metaphors—sometimes excessively contrived—are all used to express the state of longing and desire with which the poet yearns for his lady. Sensuality and easy acquaintance with the moods of nature are intrinsic to the chansos, which were often more songs than written poems.

*Lady, queen of the angels,
Hope of believers,
Since sense commandeth me
I sing of you in the 'lenga romana,'
for no man, just or sinner,
Should keep from praising you,
As his wit befits him...*

Peire de Corbiac

*Serving devoutly as I do
the noblest lady in the world
daily betters and refines me.
From sole to crown I am hers only
and when the cold wind starts to blow
the rain of love within my heart
warms me in the worst of winters.*

Arnaut Daniel

Two of these chanso poets, one Italian—Guido Guinizzelli—and one Provençal—Arnaut Daniel—are lovingly and respectfully cited by Dante in the Purgatory section of the *Divine Comedy* as cherished predecessors. In the landscape of Mediterranean Europe, the shape and history of poetry was not strictly limited by political boundaries or geographical formations, and the tradition of the chanso or love lyric is one of the most fertile traditions that Dante drew on in his writing of the *Divine Comedy*. Virgil and *The Aeneid* are the obvious and usually credited sources for the theme and structure of Dante's major work, yet a look at the poetry of southern France shows another deep current that fed Dante's visionary poem.

In the very center of the work (Purgatory, Cantos 24-28) Dante meets with these older poets, talks to them as friends, discusses their works, speaks to their notions of love. And then continues his journey up Mt. Purgatory to then follow the straight, light-flooded path leading into Paradise. By tracing the different expressions of love in the *Divine Comedy*, most especially in Purgatory and Paradise, we can see how Dante drew on the works of his poetic chanso ancestors and how he then deepened and expanded their understanding of what love really is.

After that darkened wood in Canto 1 of the Inferno, Beatrice—Dante's lady, his inspiration, his feminine benefactor—appears in the words of Virgil as he explains why he came to Dante's rescue. Beatrice says to Virgil (Canto 1, lines 72-72): "Love prompted me, that love that makes me speak." Beatrice, Dante's beloved, is herself prompted and directed by a greater love outside herself to come to Dante's aid—not as an ideal woman or as

satisfaction for sensual desires but as an agent of salvation.

That source is mentioned in Canto 3, lines 5-7, as part of the inscription over the gate to the Inferno:

*My maker was Divine Authority,
The highest Wisdom and the Primal Love.
Before me nothing but eternal things
were made, and I endure eternally.*

That love is the source of all manifestation, all hope, all direction, and to lose it is to "abandon every hope who enter here." (Canto 3, line 9) The Inferno is the place where love is most completely absent and we reach the Inferno when we abandon or forsake the divine gift of love. Each sin in the Inferno is an absence of love, a variation on its limitation. There is the "love" which sees only an object of desire or which wants to possess. And each sin is punished by its own lack, as the lustful who are tossed by emotional tempests, never to rest.

In the Inferno the theme is not love but justice. It is the old world (not Christ's New Law) of revenge and exacting retribution. Singleton writes that justice is the central theme of the entire Comedy, but I think that it is rather the motif of the Inferno, the old law of both the pagan and Old Testament, which later is revalued by Christ. And it is that revaluation through love that Dante explicates in both Purgatory and Paradise.

An essential element of that love is spaciousness, a sense of openness, fluidity and extension. And that is precisely what the Inferno lacks. Here all movement is frozen and both time and space are static. It is a claustrophobic lack of love that eternally haunts Hell's denizens with its "turbid, timeless air" (Canto 3, line 29). Or:

*I am in the third circle, filled with cold,
unending, heavy and accursed rain;
its measure and its kind are never changed.*

(Canto 6, lines 7-9)

At the fifth circle are the wrathful and the sullen who are caught and defeated by Hell's muddy waters. Here Dante shows

both Dante and Virgil calling out to these "ruined souls" in anger and disgust (Canto 8, lines 37-42). Our pilgrim representative and his ancient guide do not just show us those that suffer from anger, they themselves are caught by wrath. The Inferno is not a place to merely observe sin but it is where all who pass through become distorted by the deprivation of love.

*O master, I am very eager
to see that spirit soused within that broth
before we've made our way across that lake.*

(Canto 8, lines 52-54)

What can so easily be mistaken as maliciousness on Dante's part is in fact part of the very fabric of Hell. All who are there are caught in its anger, sullenness, envy, its absolute lack of love. Love cannot manifest in hell. For that emotion we must wait.

At the bottom center of the Inferno, where Lucifer, now become Dis, lives, is a world covered in ice, the opposite of the warm breath of life and love. Dante writes:

*O reader, do not ask of me how I
grew faint and frozen then—I cannot write it:
all words fall short of what it was.
I did not die, and I was not alive.*

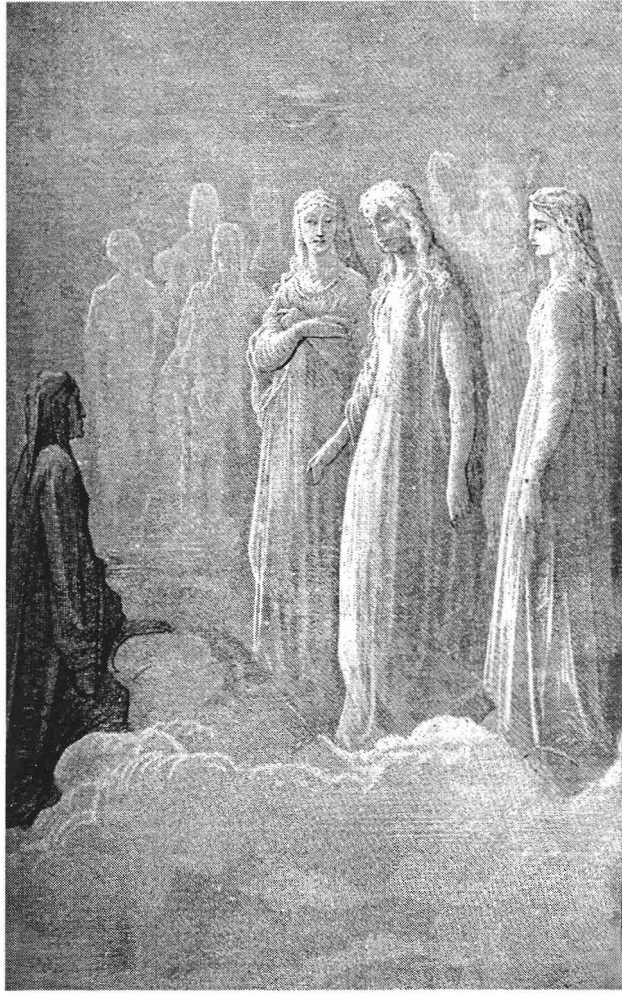
(Canto 34, lines 22-27)

Immediately upon entering the realm of Purgatory the unrelenting claustrophobia of the Inferno gives way to a sense of space and possibility.

*The gentle hue of oriental sapphire
in which the sky's serenity was steeped—
its aspect pure as far as the horizon—
brought back my joy...*

(Canto 1, lines 13-16)

We are now back to "the beautiful planet that to love inclines us" (Canto 1, line 19). And right as we reacquaint with love, we meet the ancient muse of poetry, Calliope, who is invoked to "let poetry rise again from the dead" (Canto 1, line 9). Dante here underscores the central position of poetry in the Comedy, not just in his writing of this journey but in the life of each man coming to full spiritual con-



sciousness. It is poetry that expresses the love that takes us from the locked negativity of the Inferno up to the radiating light of earthly paradise. Numerous times throughout all three sections of his long work, Dante refers with great pride and honor to his metier of poet. It is not just for the telling of a story, however important, that poetry exists but for the guiding and enlightening of mankind in the path of love.

And I to him: 'It's your sweet lines that, for as long as modern usage lasts, will still make dear their very inks.

(Dante to Daniel) (Canto 27, lines 112-114)

It is with Guinizzelli and Daniel that Dante highlights the love between friends, not just towards a Lady. He underscores

the illuminating and edifying aspect of friends' love, between pilgrims on a common journey. Their friendship revolves around poetry, vision, music, language.

When we land on the shore of Purgatory's island, we return to the land of time and space. Each position of the planets' journey is charted by the star's positions in the sky—the spacious sky!—after emerging from Hell's enclosures. Here again Dante echoes and expands on the Provencal poetic tradition. In those earlier poems, the state of nature was often evoked as a mirror, an indication of the poet's emotional world. The first of Romance poems from 841 A.D. is an alba, a type of poem on the fleeting disappearance of dawn.

*Dawn appeareth upon the sea,
from behind the hill,*

*The watch passeth, it shineth
clear amid the shadows.*

This type of echoing and mutual interplay between the natural world and human emotions is a trait of chanzo poetry that Dante thoroughly made his own and refined to such an extent as to make the two worlds, psyche and geography, seem an inseparable whole.

*Behind my back the sun was flaming red;
but there ahead of me, its light was shattered
because its rays were resting on my body.
And when I saw the ground was dark in front
of me and me alone, afraid that I
had been abandoned, I turned to my side.*

(Canto 3, lines 16-21)

Here, the landscape is meshed into Dante's psyche and, as well, expresses it.

As Dante journeys through Purgatory the sinners he meets with express various forms of love. The sinner is in Purgatory, being purified, because his understanding of love has some deficiency, some distortion of the ultimate divine love that Dante is travelling towards.

*Love is the seed in you of every virtue
and of all acts deserving punishment.*

(Canto 17, lines 104-105)

It is here that Dante makes his most personal and radical reevaluation of the courtly love lyrics of Provence. There the Lady, whether an ideal or an actual person, is to be admired or pleased; for Dante the woman, and all the pleasures of satisfaction she represents, is the guide, the holy blessing that takes one to the deepest love. The love sought is divine, transcendent and all-encompassing. What is sensual in the poet's lyrics is a step into a greater love, not the goal sought.

*So may your deepest longing
soon be appeased and you be lodged within
the heaven that's most full of love,
most spacious.*

(Canto 26, lines 61-63)

Here we need to add some more about the role of the feminine in the *Divine Comedy*. In addition to Beatrice's singular

role as an ideal woman, many different women appear along the path, the three graces, Matilde, Leah, Rachel, the mysteries. For Dante the embodiment of love and wisdom comes in a feminine form. This is an vision that comes directly from the courtly chansos: it is the feminine that instructs and inspires. Additionally, in "Letter to Can Grande," Dante wrote that his language in the *Comedy* was that of the common people, the vernacular, or as he so succinctly put it, "the speech of women."

A pivotal character here and throughout the first two sections is Virgil. Virgil is not just Dante's guide but his friend—and in some strange way too, his feminine helper, his mother and consoler.

*I turned around and to my left—just as
a little child, afraid or in distress,
will hurry to his mother anxiously,
to say to Virgil...*

(Canto 30, lines 43-45)

Part of the closeness between Dante and Virgil is the closeness between Dante's medieval mind and the ancient world of Virgil. Despite our modern historical knowledge and the proliferation of translations, it is Dante who is closest to the spirit of Virgil, and that shows throughout the poem.

What the poet seeks, what guides him, what nourishes him—all of this is given to Dante through Virgil. Where Beatrice remains somewhat remote and aloof, Virgil is there to hold Dante's hands, literally, to watch over him, to lead him on towards his goal. In all of the *Divine Comedy*, Virgil is perhaps the most humane character. We understand or identify with Dante the pilgrim, we admire or detest the various shades we meet, but Virgil is the person we hold dear like no one else in the book. Virgil, at the point of his departure from Dante, says:

*I've brought you here
through intellect and art,
from now on, let your pleasure be your guide...
Await no further word or sign from me,
your will is free, erect, and whole—to act*

*against that will would be to err: therefore
I crown and miter you over yourself.*

Virgil has been Dante's guide, directed by Beatrice's love, and has brought Dante to the cusp of Paradise. Now Dante's path of intellect and reason end, and in Paradise love and grace, inherent in each person, fulfill the journey.

Another poetic tradition from the Provençal courts is the *sirventes*, a commentary on a social or personal matter, but not love. Dante, the great participant, never imagined a spiritual life of withdrawal or negativity. He was a fully involved community member and political activist. The *Divine Comedy* is not only a love poem but very much a series of commentaries on the political attainments and foibles of Dante's world. How many of the denizens of both the *Inferno* and *Purgatory* are Dante's comrades as well as opponents from the strife of 13th century Florence? One could say that the *Comedy* is a chanso built around many variations of the *sirventes*.

The troubadours of Provençal poetry were wandering minstrels who sang their songs at courts and in towns. Dante only began his great poem after his painful exile from Florence. His exile created a schism and distance in Dante from which he could more acutely view his world and use its foibles as fodder for his great tale of love. In his earlier work the *Vita Nuova*, Dante saw himself as a continuator of the troubadours' love song tradition. In the *Comedy*, himself now on a physical journey, he begins to expand and enrich and amplify the courtly idealized love of the chivalric age into an encompassing spiritual passion and pivot of liberation.

At the top of Mt. *Purgatory*, as the path to Paradise leads Dante onward, time and space are again obliterated, but in a very different sense than in the *Inferno*. In Paradise everything exists eternally everywhere. It is here that Dante finds an Aleph, the point which contains the entire universe. Yet after enumerating all that is in the Aleph, Dante says it is a false Aleph. How could one enumerate everything rel-

ative and transactional and have it also be eternal and divine? It is like the Tao that cannot be named. And that is the crucial problem of Paradise: Dante must continue to describe what he finds only too indescribable. The light that was circumscribed by shadow in *Purgatory* is here brilliant and the world around the pilgrim is irradiated by that luminescence. Yet Dante, the great lover of language, continues to write another thirty-three cantos. Love is explicated, given example in peoples' lives, seen from many different standpoints. Dante's crucial point in all this, his greatest philosophy, is to see love as originating in itself, its own cause and reward, the mover of all that men do.

*O Beatrice, sweet guide and dear! She said
to me: 'What overwhelms you is a Power
against which nothing can defend itself.
This is the Wisdom and the Potency
that opened roads*

*between the earth and Heaven,
the paths for which desire
had long since waited.'*

*Even as lightning breaking from a cloud,
expanding so that it cannot be pent,
against its nature, down to earth, descends,
so did my mind, confronted by that feast,
expand; and it was carried past itself—
what it became I cannot recollect.*

(Canto 23, lines 34-45)

*O Grace abounding,
through which I presumed
to set my eyes on the Eternal Light
so long that I spent all my sight on it!
In its profundity I saw—ingathered
and abound by love into one single volume—
what, in the universe,
seems separate, scattered:*

(Canto 33, lines 82-87)

*Eternal Light, You only dwell within
Yourself, and only You know You;
Self-Knowing, Self-Known,*

You love and smile upon Yourself!

(Canto 33, lines 124-126) ❖

(Verses from *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri with a verse translation by Allen Mandelbaum, Bantam Publishers, 1982, N.Y.)

*Kuan Yin, a feminine Avalokiteśvara,
Bodhisattva of Compassion*



My conception here is of a dynamized Kuan Yin who is dancing on a dragon flying in the air. She is balanced on the toe that rests on the dragon's *ajña cakra*. Her dynamism is exteriorized in the curvaceous (masculine) dragon, representing *elan vital*. Chinese dragons are atmospheric bringers of wealth in the form of rain for the paddy.

She holds an iris rather than a peony. Iris is the goddess of the rainbow, *Bhuvan*, the messenger of the gods. The vase has become a watering can, signifying rain. The Amitābha Buddha in her headdress identifies her as a feminine divinity of the Amitābha family.

Charles Erickson

Keynote Address:

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati Memorial Lectures and Seminars, Sree Sankaracharya Sanskrit University, Kalady, Kerala

Peter Moras

**Enough Talk and Books Filled with Words,
It's Time for Walking the Talk and
Transforming our World,
Viewed as our own Self**

Philosophy, if it is worth its name, should help us live a happier, more meaningful life. Our pursuit of Truth should give us inner clarity, universal sympathy, and broadmindedness. The fruits of such a search are unitive vision and the courage, commitment, energy, and joy to actualize that vision in the details and challenges of our everyday life.

For long, the field of Philosophy has been perceived as an activity of people living in ivory towers, apart from the cares and concerns of the world below their protective walls. To the extent that philosophers and schools of philosophy maintained a moral and intellectual disconnect between what they professed academically, and what they actually did in their daily lives, between the powerful knowledge and positions they held and the pathetic and undignified conditions they allowed to prevail in their communities, they proved to be ineffective sources of the very vitality, leadership, and imagination needed to transform our world.

If anything is true about the New Millennium, it is that this hopeless situation has to change. Men and women cannot live without hope. Hope, new-found confidence, and power come when our actions are in congruence with our beliefs. We have an unparalleled opportunity to correct past wrongs inflicted on our fellow beings and on nature herself. We need to learn more appreciative, respectful, and

responsible ways of living and working that are in harmony with nature's laws, befitting of our human dignity, and mindful of the rights of fellow creatures, particularly, lower life forms, who depend on our wisdom and goodwill. Our individual and collective efforts can restore the integrity, purity, and beauty of our world. In the process, we will do nothing less than discover and release our infinite potential. When we get down to it, the world needs the same love and care that we presently lavish on our own bodies, because in truth, the world is our larger body with a cloud for a hat, forests and oceans for clothes, and soil for shoes.

This two-day seminar, the first of its kind, is devoted to the contributions of Nitya Chaitanya Yati, a man who was able to experience, articulate, and live Truth uncompromisingly, wholeheartedly, and creatively (1923-1999). His vast scholarship, research, and teaching in the fields of psychology, philosophy, and comparative studies in religion, art, literature, aesthetics, architecture, and yoga began here in India, but took him throughout Asia, Melanesia, Polynesia, North America, and Europe. The published works and life example of this World Philosopher and World Friend invite our attention and discussion for their perennial relevance and ready application in our present climb out of moral decay, social and environmental irresponsibility, and divisive modes of thinking and feeling. We have organized Guru Nitya's intellectual effort and published works into five categories: Philosophy and Mysticism (Darsana), Psychology, Literature, Biographies, and Science.

Guru Nitya's life example is itself a contribution to moral philosophy which will be taken up in turn. As a sishya of Nataraja Guru, he fell within the parampara or wisdom hierarchy of succession coming down through Narayana Guru, Sankara, and the Upanishadic Rishis. An analysis of his work shows that he was a continuator of the Advaita (Non-Dual) Philosophical tradition, revalued in the light of modern science and expressed through his brilliant genius to think holistically across cultures and time periods. His on-going research and celebration of the "Symphony of Values" provides a way for seekers and seers world-wide to see and share both the wealth of our past traditions and the amazing wonders and new knowledge that Truth is forever opening up to us. Now it is up to us to integrate the best of the old with the new, to make our lives meaningful, vibrant, and happy, well-adjusted to present circumstances, and mindful of future generations, whose rights and opportunities have been sacredly entrusted to us by our parents.

The two keynotes in Guru Nitya's life were 1), his Self-Realization and 2), his world citizenship. the latter expressed in practical terms his Beingness with the Beingness of all. The former was an experience of never-decreasing Light of the Self-Effulgent Ātman within him, as him, as this entire world. He used a speck of that Supreme Consciousness to relate himself to his world, to us, to contemplate, to write books, to tell stories, to take photographs, to cook delicious meals.

Guru Nitya went to the Core of his being in his search for Truth. I remember a story he told. He had to give up associating his essence with the body he was born with. He made himself inwardly quiet and watched the gentle movements of his breath; he perceived that he was distinct even from those harmonized vital forces. He made himself even quieter to hear and feel his heartbeat—that too was not him. He had further to go. He went behind his brilliant mind and genius of an intellect as they were also not Nitya, the Eternal One.

He possessed great writing and speaking abilities and took great personal pride in his academic formation and world experience. Even those were transient. He also saw that he was not his reputation, however high and well-regarded. He had to jump off into the deep end, into the Great Silence of Pure Consciousness, shorn of all individual identity and coloration.

He realized his identity with That which Vedantins call "Brahman", the Absolute. Nothing was left over, nothing was left out, from his full enlightenment. Words can't describe the dawning of wisdom that is neither a thing, nor an experience, which Narayana Guru described as the rising of ten thousand suns at once. He was able to see how the Light of his own Self-Effulgent Being, his own Consciousness, illuminates the individual ego, and from thence, the perceived, conceived, and projected world of names and forms. He experienced what we neutrally but adoringly call "That," in and as the four states of Consciousness: the gross, waking state, the subtle, dream state, the causal, deep sleep state, and the underlying, silent, transparent Consciousness. This is the same Reality as explained in the *Mandukya Upanishad* with reference to the letters and Silence of the *Pranava* mantra. Suffice it to say, he realized his Non-Dual, Absolute Self residing in all beings and all beings residing in his Self. It is this realization of oneness with all, that one substance manifests as all, this sameness of vision that see everywhere diversity arising out of unity, that formed the basis for his writing, teaching, and daily life.

From time immemorial, the basis for human moral behavior and ethical consideration to fellow humans and the earth herself has been this realization of interdependence, of primal unity, that what I do to you ultimately affects me, because in reality, the essence of you and me is not different, it's One. And on a practical, physical level, what I do for my happiness should at the same time promote your happiness, at least, not detract from it. I will explore three ways in which Guru Nitya contributed to moral philosophy



based on this unitive understanding and self-identity with the Truth of all as his guiding norm.

His self-realization confirmed on him instantaneously a sense of world citizenship. He experienced the Non-Dual, Absolute Self residing in all beings. His self-identity was completely one with That, with all. He had a sameness of vision because he was a yogi par excellence, and a unitive, synthetic vision because he was a sage of the highest order. Guru Nitya used bipolar dialectics, that is, synthetically looking at both sides of every situation from a neutral vantage point, to relate himself to the "other." He felt that the happiness of his fellow man was his own. He thought, spoke, wrote, and acted accordingly. The sign of wisdom is love and compassion. Love and compassion shone in him for no reason like the morning sun.

Guru Nitya's revaluation of non-dual Advaita philosophy in the light of modern science, psychology, culture, ecology, and one world economics, formed the basis for his teaching. His teaching took many forms:

- gurukula classes,
- one-on-one , responsible, bipolar relationships with students, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances,
- writing for the serious student, books and commentaries in English and Malayalam,
- writing for the general public to raise

awareness, spread understanding, and teach values, via articles for newspapers, magazines, journals, and the Narayana-Gurukula web page on the Internet,

-carrying on written correspondence during his lifetime that totaled into the tens of thousands of letters,

-intimate counseling with people who brought their problems to him.

The *Bhagavad Gita* stresses the importance of having both pure and applied knowledge, *jñāna* and *vijñāna*. Guru knew his Self was the Self of all. That was his *jñāna*. As all wise, realized people do, his assumption of an attitude of unlimited liability for the happiness and welfare of all beings as his own was his *vijñāna*. Guru Nitya lived and breathed *jñāna* as a vibrant, courageous, joyous, affirmation of life, every moment of every day, even when he was sick, tired, or in pain. His living was his *vijñāna*, his actualization of unitive truth, *jñāna*. Why did people love Guru? Because his words matched his deeds, his written words matched his spoken words, and when words weren't enough, his heart spoke eloquently in silence and holy communion.

Guru Nitya's life example taught us that philosophers don't just philosophize, they do. He lived what he advocated. He had extreme moral authority built up over eons of doing what is right, and learning from what is wrong. That force comes

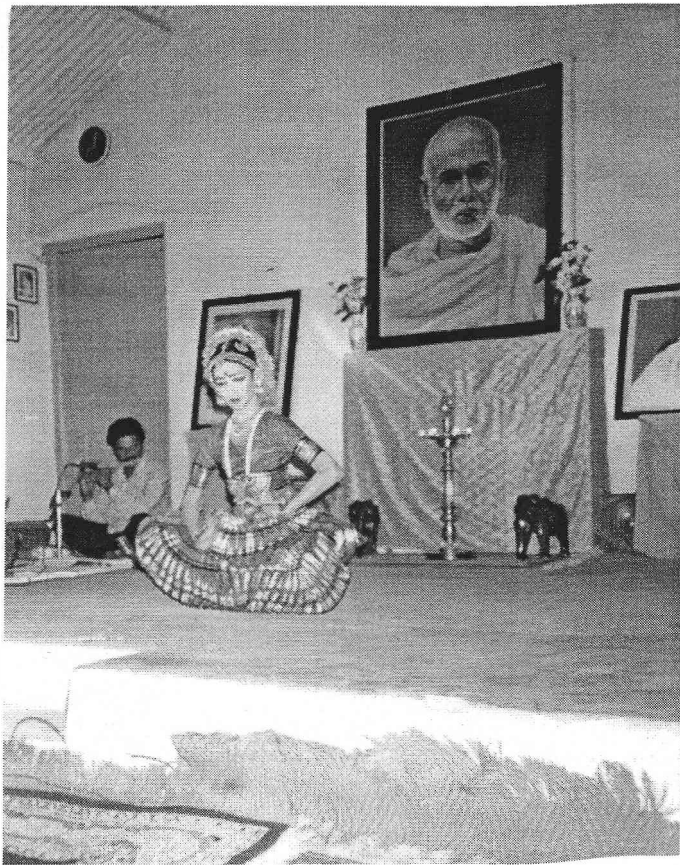
from being truthful in all situations, kind to all people whether they are kind back to you, from being beautiful and dignified in an often ugly society, and from being intelligent and caring amongst the ignorant, the unfeeling, and the uncaring.

You could trust Guru Nitya as a human being and have faith in his ability to teach and lead. He commanded respect like a beautiful beach, or a perfectly-shaped, breaking wave, or a snow-capped mountain peak against blue sky, or a pink poppy opening up in the light of the morning sunrise in one's garden. How did Nitya Chaitanya Yati love others? Let me count the ways:

Guru Nitya hosted ten years of May Music, Dance, and Poetry Festivals at the Fernhill Narayana Gurukula in Tamilnadu. His encouragement, organizing ef-

forts, and patronage injected new life into Indian culture, spawned new careers and furthered already established ones. He instilled an openness and appetite in one and all for the appreciation and regeneration of global culture. He taught that life itself is the highest aesthetic experience, where the Transcendent Divine manifests as the Immanent. It can be seen in a simple laugh, a delicious curry, a tasty pickle, a sunset's orange and pink blush on darkening clouds, the coming and going of our own prana, the gentle, faithful, imperative beat of our hearts, animated by one, all-knowing, self-regulating Wonder.

Guru paid the school tuition and expenses of many deserving students who had the desire but not the means to pay for their education or training. It's not enough just to say "I love You." We have



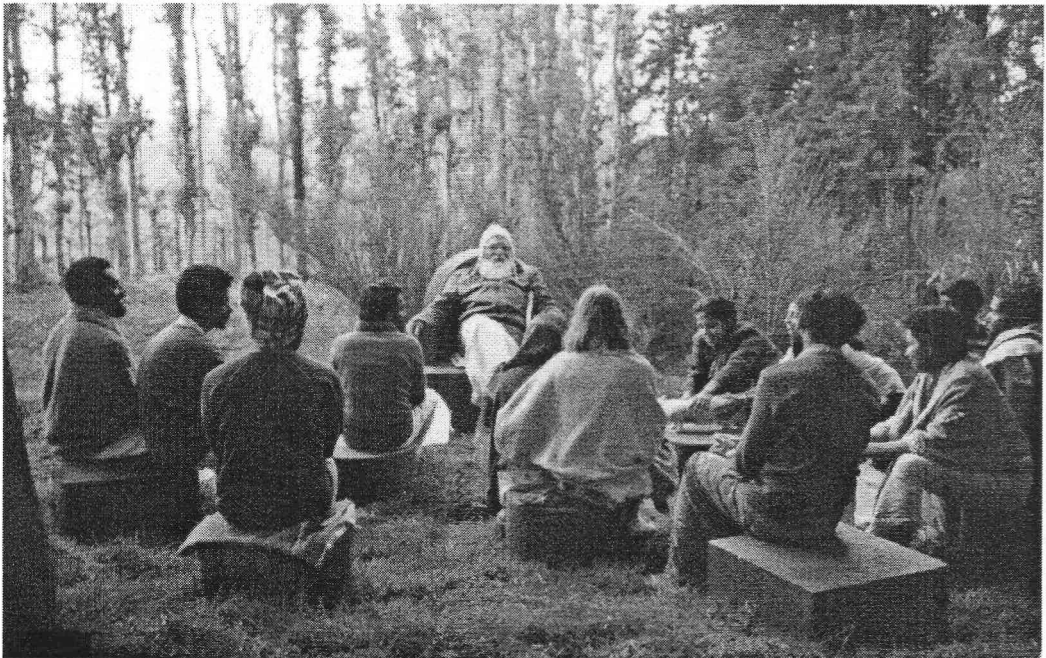
*Divya Parvati performing Bharatya Natyam
Fernhill Gurukula Festival of the Arts ~ 1993*

to do things that say we do. He encouraged actors to act, artists to paint, draw, or computer animate, photographers to look, see, focus, and click, weavers to imagine, weave and sew, dancers to bow, aspire, thrill, and move, poets and writers to care with a cosmic heart and pour their heart and soul through their pen or keyboard, gardeners to visualize a renewed, radiant earth, to plan, plant, grow, care for, protect, rejoice, and celebrate as one human family, bonded by the religion of our common happiness, dedicated to the Truth of our Divinity and the need for its expression through our unrepeatable uniquenesses, here and now. If not now, when? If not here, where?

Guru Nitya set a good example for maintaining the property and the environs of the Gurukula as any good neighbor naturally does. He picked up garbage, swept the driveway and village road, planted trees, and cultivated the land to produce welcome bounty. He helped people who were serious about helping them-

selves, to clear away the unwholesome and limiting conditionings of their personality, the rubbish of their narrow, unconsidered views, the stench of selfish, the agitation of needless worry, and the weight of burdensome memories. To receive his love was to be loved as no lover ever has, to be burned clean, to come true as in the tempering fires of a forge. It was to be in the hands of a great Blacksmith whose iron becomes pure steel, whose rough gold becomes smooth, shiny, and bright, ready to be worked with the least effort into any heart's wish or mind's dream. To know Guru is to become Guru, to become who we already are, the Light of all Lights, the Delight of all Delights, the Seer of all Sights.

Let us do this. Let us become who we are, the Self of All, and with that vision, we can't help but see this world as also That, too. Let's remake it in our own bright, true image. Let the Kingdom of Heaven start with me, and become manifest in this earth of our larger body. ❖



Globalization, Culture and Spirit

Thiru. Kuppaswami

Meaning of the Word "Culture"

Culture means that which is cultivated. It implies a certain growth or development. There is physical culture, aesthetic culture, intellectual culture, and spiritual culture. When a man simultaneously and harmoniously develops his body, mind, emotions and spirit, then he is called "a cultured man." The byword here is, "Not what I can accomplish but what can be accomplished in me."

Sensuality and Spirituality

Everybody is after happiness. What kind of happiness? Sensual pleasure or spiritual pleasure? Life is between these two. Sensual pleasure relates to civilization. Spiritual pleasure relates to culture. Civilization is always the opposing force of culture. Civilization deals with material objects. Culture is always of the spirit, the essence.

The desire for sensual pleasure needs a lot of outside things, ever varying, every hour. It is never satisfied. Even gratification only increases the fire, like pouring hot oil onto it. Ultimately our thirst can only be pacified with the finding and drinking of the waters of spirit of which even a handful will do.

Sensual pleasure needs money for its gratification. Money is made only with power. So everybody is after power. Hence the mad, mad, mad world is after sensual enjoyment and power. There is no end to this vicious circle. The end will only be the destruction of the world by these power seekers.

On the contrary, spiritual happiness lies within. Be still – without words or thoughts. That is bliss, greater than sensual gratification. Only those in whose minds the inner loudspeaker of thoughts

stops can know this silence. This silence is realization of the Self (*ātman*).

This happiness does not need anything, anything at all. No thing, no money, no power. Throw away everything, even your thoughts. Stand all alone. Then only this silence comes. When it comes, it comes with spiritual bounty, immense treasure. Then you start giving spiritual energy to everyone, like Narayana Guru gave to everyone who came into contact with him. Only a saint can give and give out of his store of spiritual energy. This energy can be later translated into any material thing such as knowledge, money, power. Most people only know how to take from others, because they themselves are poor. They have no energy to give.

The Key to Authentic Living

In the larger body of mankind, India has always been the soul, the spirit, the life principle, the *ātman*, and the West the physical body with its senses and mind. Mind is also physical, the subtle essence of sense percepts. As Marshall McLuhan rightly said, "All technological gadgets are only an extension of the senses and mind." Cars and rockets are extensions of the feet. TV is an extension of the eye and the ear. But all these things are useless in one place. They have nothing to do with pure Being or the Self.

The five senses and four aspects of mind (*antakarana*) are at best only instruments, physical, material instruments. Man mistakes them for the enjoyer. The real enjoyer, the Master, is Being, which is slumbering inside. Sleeping inside. Awaken Him. Stop the mind from dreaming inside or dreaming outside or dreaming through the senses, which is not real life. It is only the inauthentic, mechanical life

of a machine. The machine may have a name and a form, a degree in English Literature, it may have a million rupees in its bank balance, but with all these it still remains a machine, at best a computer, maybe a feeling robot.

But living as Being alone is real living, authentic living, born out of and into love and compassion. This is the meaning of Narayana Guru's words, "You are alive only in the moments in which you love." All the other times you are a machine, a bundle of habits.

What is the use of going to the moon or Mars when the problem of death, extinction remains unsolved? It is like the story in which one tastes a drop of honey while waiting for death by a tiger or snake. It is like having a vacation on Mars on borrowed money, forgetful of the fact that tomorrow you will have to face Death, the lender.

Man's first duty is solvency. Stabilize your position first. Stabilize and magnetize your consciousness first. Then only you are free to play all these games. They are nothing but games, technological games played by grown up or "grown down" immature kids. The solution is this. Man needs both soul and body, not one at the expense of the other. But the center has to be moved inside.

The master has to be recognized first. The real master is the spirit. Awaken him. Acknowledge him. Recognize him. When he sees through the eyes, every sight he looks at is a masterpiece. When the spirit hears through the instrument of ears, every sound is sublime. It is no use until then to go on increasing the efficiency of the audio equipment. Even a Bose Audio System is a poor substitute, or no substitute, for the spirit's functioning. As long as Indians, or for that matter Westerners also, do not forget this fact, nothing wrong would come from any economic reform, including globalization.

The Difference Between Thinking and Realizing

A great philosopher of the twentieth century, Bertrand Russell, writes in his au-

tobiography that after three marriages, hundreds of books and a Nobel Prize, he could not bear the loneliness of his soul, the anxiety of his mind. He went as far as chaos, as the saying goes. For mind can take you only to chaos. Thinking cannot take you to tranquility.

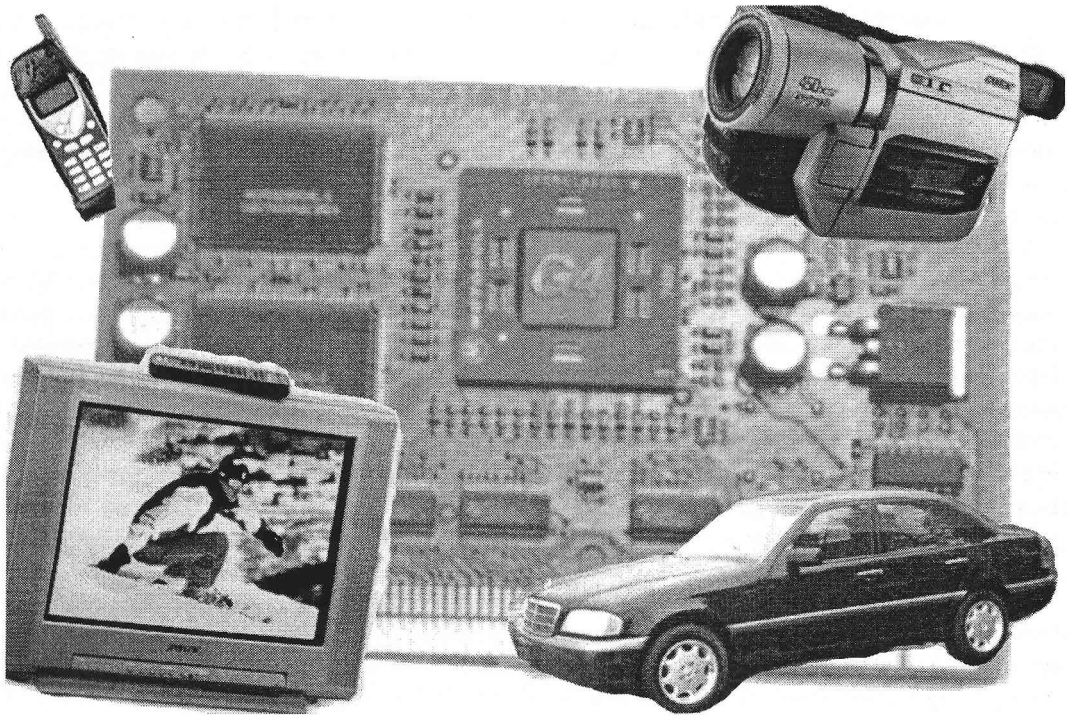
It is not enough to learn to think. You must also learn to stop thinking. The basic premise of the West is that thinking can solve all problems. But that is not the whole truth. Thinking can never touch reality. Only silence can reach there. To achieve silence, you must learn to stop thinking. This is the final, ultimate art, the art of stopping the image-making process in the mind. This is yoga. This is self-realization or *ātmaavidyā*. *Atman* is nothing but the silent state.

This is the premise of the Indian tradition. One of its best products was Guru Narayana. He attained silence at a young age. In fact after attaining the silent state permanently, he came out into the world to preach and reform. All his actions were powerful and irresistible because they were rooted in silence. His words and deeds came from silence.

Aeschylus, one of the greatest minds of Greece, wrote "Call him fortunate whom the end of life finds harbored in tranquility." This is where the West went wrong, to find tranquility at the end of life, to leave it to chance and circumstance. Indian culture says, "Acquire tranquility as the first thing in life. Get silence first. Thereafter you may command events and even nature."

The Transformation of Instincts

We are literally like toys in the hands of nature. We run on the power of instincts. Humankind is a community of slaves to nature. Freedom from the bondage of instincts is real freedom. That is real salvation, not the unlimited enjoyment of senses or political or economic freedom. A human being is only an animal as long as he or she is bound to the law of instincts, the instincts of sex, food, water, air, sleep, thought and matter, i.e. the world of matter and its images, and finally the instinct



of death.

When all these seven deadly instincts are transcended consciously, a person would be free from the laws of nature. He or she would go beyond nature and would become its master and order natural phenomena like a Christ. Then one's physical body would be transformed into a resurrected body, into a spiritual body.

How can it be done? What is the process? The process is known as "Śiva Yoga." Śiva here means "Total Consciousness, Pure, Infinite, Intelligence." The instrument to be used for this purpose is one's own consciousness.

The outer sex must be replaced by inner sex or *bhakti* (devotion) toward the Divine Lover inside.

The outer food and water must be replaced gradually by inner food and inner water. This is called practicing *brahmacharya*.

The outer breathing must be replaced slowly by inner breathing by practicing Vasi Yoga or Kriya Yoga until Inspiration is permanently established.

The outer sleep must be replaced cautiously by inner sleep or conscious sleep called *samādhi*.

Thought must be replaced by silence by abstaining from words, images or noise.

Death or the instinct of fear must be replaced by faith in spirit or God by practicing conscious death, like a *siddha*.

From instincts to *ātman* (the Self), this is the right journey of consciousness according to Indian culture. This is the only meaning to life, the only answer to the riddle of life on earth. Instinct is total sleep. *Ātman* is total awakening, total awakening of the mind-body-soul machine, the spiritualization of the machine is the goal and achievement of Indian Culture.

On the other hand, Western Culture starts with matter. Material enjoyment goes only as far as the enjoyment of intellect or thought, which is nothing but subtle matter, a series of images of the material world. Even the subtlest philosophical system or scientific theory is like the world of dreams, a series of images produced by mind, the image-making machine. According to Indian spirituality all enjoyment of the senses and memory is like the illusory enjoyment in a dream. In that you don't touch life or spirit at all.

Only when this image producing machine, the mind, stops is life touched in the quick.

This fact, I am afraid, was not understood even by most of the great thinkers of the West. We are born in imagination, live in imagination and die in imagination. One's education, family, fame, riches – all happen in the world of images. This may sound harsh, but it is the truth. Jesus meant just this when he said, "When you live your life, you lose it. Only when you lose it, you gain it." Ascending from the material plane or the plane of images to the silent, spiritual plane is the only meaning, the only way of living.

The Scourge of Consumerism

Unfortunately Western man is a consumer to the core. What is he consuming or eating? He is consuming more and more images into his mind. He is constantly adding fuel to the fire that is consuming his life. In the beginning, some billions of years ago, life struggled very hard, very hard indeed, to free itself from the clutches of matter. Now in the name of consumerism, Western man (and the "second-class Western man" in India) is reversing this process. Life is being converted back to matter. No Buddha, no Christ, no Narayana Guru can do anything against this deluge of matter into the world of life and spirit. The war between matter and life, the war between matter and spirit has been fought in the mind of man for millennia. But this is the final battle. All the penances and struggles of the spiritual masters are at stake now. To go on to the next phase in evolution or to reverse back to animal nature – this is in the hands of the 21st century human being. Let's hope for the best and work for it.

The Secret of Silence

Reality is of two kinds: form and formlessness. Both are needed by us. We are amphibians who live in both form and emptiness. We live in this world of form and have to learn even while here how to live in the world of formlessness, in the world of *mukti* or liberation. Liberation

from what? From form only. We have to take just one step. What is that step? Non-relying upon worldly things, gadgets, body, mind – all are forms, nothing but forms. To live in this world means nothing but idol-worshipping. The West has not understood the real meaning of idol worshipping. An idol is not only a god. An idol can be anything. It can be your Mercedes car, your electronic gadgets, your dollar. You throw away the ancient gods and in come the modern gods, the gadgets of technology.

You worship form in all its manifestations. What is knowledge but form? What is thought but form? All the arts, all your literature, all your philosophy, all the sciences, all these things come from words, signs, images and symbols. All come out of the image-making process of the mind. The products may be different, but the process is the same, the process of *maya* or illusion.

Indian spirituality says only one thing: This process of image-making must stop. That is real renunciation, real salvation. That is silence. That is Self-Realization. For Self is silence, not a time-bound, place-bound image. Self, the silence, is of the eternal dimension. To go beyond thought into silence is the only way. Thought is nothing but subtle matter. Spirit is silence. According to Indian spirituality, one way or the other, through the way of globalization or the way of folklore, humankind seems determined to lose its spiritual kingdom and remain always in the world of matter.

Indian spirituality says this entering into silence is quite easy and blissful. A friend of mine is a dealer who rents loudspeaker systems. He could not imagine a world without loudspeakers. Last month he had a heart attack. He was in the hospital for a month. Now he says it was blissful. We are all like this man. We have an inner loudspeaker, which keeps blaring all the 24 hours, all through the years, even during sleep in the form of dreams. We are used to and inured to this inner noise pollution. We call it thought. A thought is a thought, just as a noise is a noise,

whether it's a big loud noise or a whisper. Silence is more blissful than all Beethovens, all Mozarts, all Shakespeares.

How to enter into this silence? Indian spirituality says through meditation. And what is meditation? Being mindful of the image-making process. Just that. Nothing else. Be mindful of the images in your mind. Don't do anything with them. Just see them. One day they will subside by themselves if you just observe and don't do anything with them. Is there anything in the world simpler than this meditation? Watch your inner television instead of the outer. That's all. Finished. Give silence a chance. Silence is the Self, the Supreme Self.

Even Buddha who stressed only this imageless living called *nirvana* was made into an idol and his image is worshipped. That is the way man is. Buddha knows and smiles. Just remember when you worship Buddha. Do not forget this conditioning of your mind. Do not forget that your aim is to go beyond these images.

Vedanta gives us an indication of this blissful state. Everyday we are already enjoying it, but in its counterfeit, duplicate, shallow form. It is sleep. After a night of deep, dreamless sleep, you get up in the morning rejuvenated and all happiness. "I had a very good sleep," you say. The feeling is good. Why? During dreamless sleep, there is no image. Hence this peace. But when do you enjoy it? Only later, in the morning. Not while it lasts. Imagine yourself enjoying that blissful state even during sleep. This state is called *samādhi*. Imagine that you can have this silent state all the 24 hours, even during the daytime, even while you quarrel with your husband or wife. Is it possible? Yes, it is possible. Buddha lived in that state. Christ lived in that state. Narayana Guru lived in that state.

The Boon of Individualism and the Bane of Capitalism

The Western intellectual tradition has taught us two things. The first is individualism. Everyone is born in this world with unique gifts, and it is his or her duty to

develop these gifts fully. For this to happen, the atmosphere must be one of total freedom. One must throw off the shackles of the past, of tradition, by one's freedom of thought and speech. The second lesson is about democracy. Such a free climate of thought is available only in the political set-up of democracy.

These were two great boons to the world, including India. But next an unwanted thing happened, a twist in history. An aggressive capitalism was born. Some greedy minds, not usually of great intelligence but very cunning, entered the scene and exploited it for their personal ends.

Knowledge is said to be power, but these capitalists knew even better. They captured or created seats of power and employed men with great knowledge for a small fee. They leveraged the raw materials, managers, finance, land and knowledge to turn all these into industrial products. They reaped the benefits of science, technology and the industrial revolution for their own benefits. Today, according to World Bank statistics, about 40% of the world's money belongs to only 358 individuals. They say a worker in an underdeveloped country has to work for 1200 years to get the equivalent of one day's income of Mr. Bill Gates.

Globalized Vision Trumps Globalization

In order to avoid the accumulation of power in some hands, Marx tried state ownership in his theory of communism, but it proved otherwise. It failed. It did not solve the problem. Seats of power were occupied by selfish men and the same drama was enacted. Without these seats of power large societies cannot be governed.

A change of heart alone can solve the problem. Now this is not economics, nor politics. It is a moral question. It is spirituality. So we must accept the facts, the lessons taught by history. Only globalized vision trumps globalization.

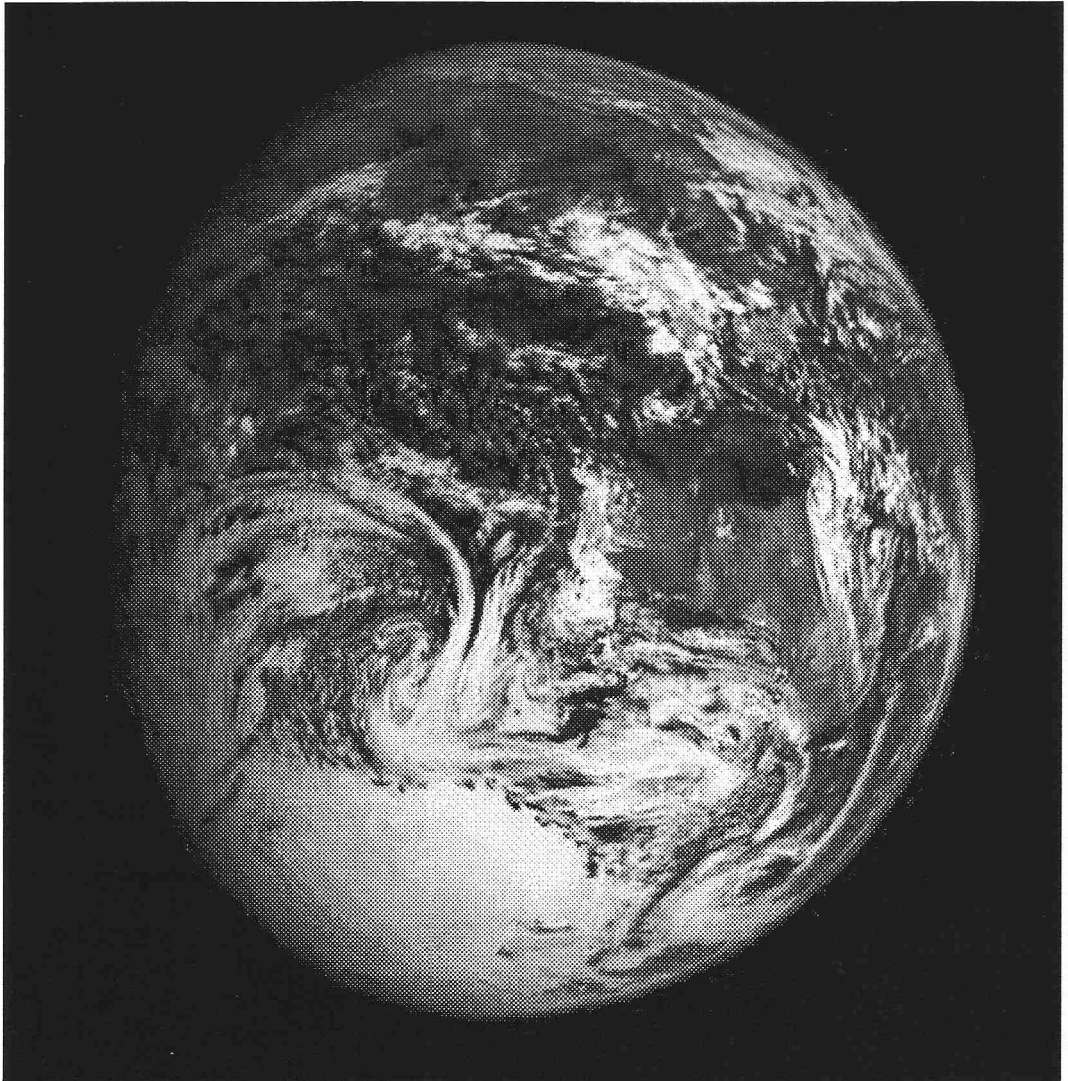
Globalization as currently promoted is in effect a form of cultural and economic imperialism, a kind of religious fundamentalism in which Capital is treated as

the supreme article of faith (at once god and goal of the state religion of Capitalism). In the voracious quest for markets every culture is to be converted into a consumer culture. And as part of this holy crusade all regional gods (including reverence for Nature) are to be sacrificed on the altar of Capitalism. At first maybe only the poor and the environment suffer, while multinational corporations and their stockholders feed off the planet's human and natural resources and then using the psychological warfare known as advertising try to sell the resultant products back to the same folks on whose backs and with whose sweat they were manufactured. In the long run with this scenario everyone loses.

But there is a spiritual economy behind political economy. Spirituality or morality is the life, the mother of all subjects of knowledge. And Self-Realization forged out of silence is the hallmark of spirituality. It is the universality and eternality of such a vision or state of being that vouchsafes the goodness, love, compassion and justice that characterize whatever actions ensue from such a lofty state.

Only spirituality can combat the pernicious effects of the current form of globalization propagated by a number of self-interested multi-national corporations and their minions and replace it with a truly globalized vision of both the source and destiny of all humankind. ❖

Edited with Comments by Peter Oppenheimer



Humanity is One: Reflections on World Citizenship

Narayana Guru expressed the essence of world citizenship in his *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* with the words:

*"That man," "this man"— thus, all that is known
in this world, if contemplated, is the being of the one primordial self;
what each performs for the happiness of the self
should be conducive to the happiness of another.*

Nataraja Guru wrote, in his *Memorandum on World Government* (dictated to World Citizen Garry Davis in 1956 in Bangalore, India):

Humanity is one by its common origin, one in its common interests and motives of happiness here on earth in everyday living, and one in its relation to the aspiration and ideals which bind humans together by bonds of sympathy to one another. A Unitive and Absolute Value is at the basis of human life....The zero hour for the declaration of a World Government, at least in principle, is long past. Such a government must voice human honor and self-respect. It must preserve the wisdom-heritage of humanity and hand it down to coming generations.

According to British historian Derek Heater, (*World Citizenship and Government*, St. Martin's Press, 1996), world government is one of the oldest ideas in human thought dating from the early Greeks and Stoics. Its list of supporters, ancient and modern, reads like a Who's Who of the world's thinkers. By shifting our identity and loyalty from citizenship in outmoded nation-states to that of world citizenship we can begin to address the complex threats that face not only all of humanity but all of existence on our planet home.

Responding to this crucial need, Guru Nitya wrote in 1997 that "We cannot sit around as passive witnesses of the doom that is steadily and systematically coming to a crucial point. The watchword that was given to us by Nataraja Guru was to take upon ourselves unlimited liability as the *Satya Dharmis*, the responsible custodians of the conscience of mankind."

As we seek to live this commitment each day we are guided by Guru Nitya's thoughts:

A World Citizen recognizes the entire world as his or her state and in principle does not recognize any member of the human race as an alien to the world community to which he or she belongs. Such a person recognizes the earth as one's sustaining mother, the innate inviolate law of nature as one's protecting father, all sentient beings as one's brothers, sisters and kin, and the world without frontiers as one's home. ❖

East-West University Report and Narayana Gurukula News



A new seminar of the East-West University has begun at Bainbridge Gurukula—*Living Creativity: Releasing the Imprisoned Splendor of the Unconscious*. It seeks to offer a series of opportunities to introduce each student to the depths of his or her own psyche as well as the infinite treasure house of the collective consciousness of the planet.

Aesthetic experiences will be explored as opportunities to gain insight into how our characters are built on our previous conditionings and how these conditionings influence our freedom of choice in the world of sense impressions as we seek happiness in life.

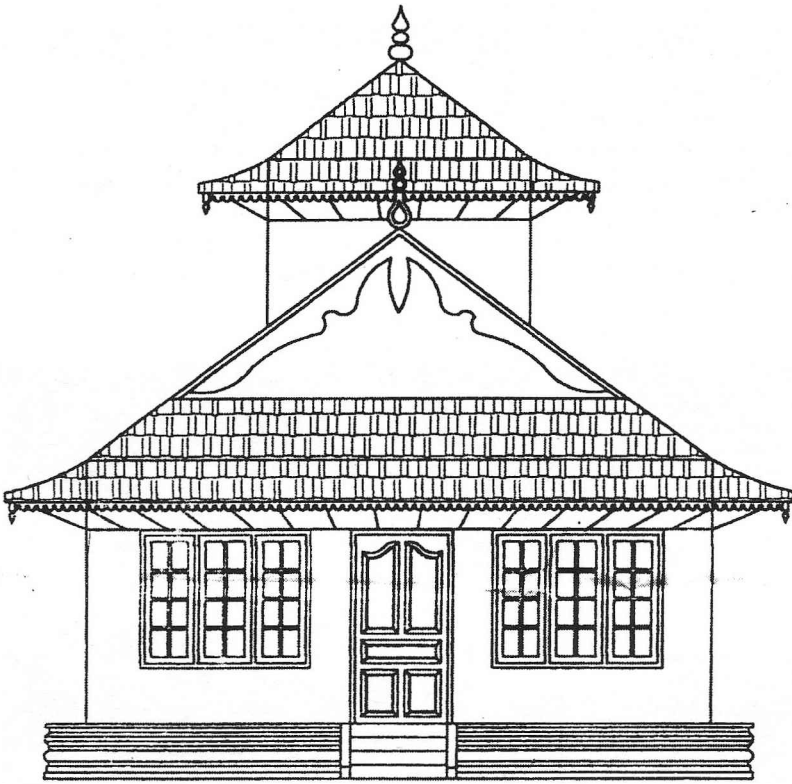
Ultimately, the class seeks to nourish the awareness that the highest form of creativity is to live our basic interest at all times, with that master interest filling our consciousness and continuously flowing from task to task, enabling us to find perfect meaning in our activities day after day. It involves an exploration of the universal archetypes functioning as the creative dynamics in our personal uncon-

scious and that of others through:

- tracing the creation of art from non-visual origins such as melody
- the transformation of symbols in poetry
- the visual appreciation of pure forms in drawing
- reacting to the richness of color and the suggestiveness of form in painting
- postures and modes captured in three-dimensional stills such as in sculpture
- graceful forms and postures depicting moods with rhythmic motion as in dance
- the spirit of melody, lyric, color, posture, mood all coming together in theatrical display.

The process will be one of considering that discovering oneself and discovering the world are not two things—the individual mind and heart are as big as the universe, encompassing all the known and the unknown. The essence in one is the essence in all. The class will explore both ways of discovering this essence: 1) turning to form, color, movement, and trying to understand by looking out; 2) turning inward with meditation to see the source which inspires art.

*Please Join Our
Twentieth Anniversary Celebration and Guru Puja
September 2, 2001
at Bainbridge Gurukula
8311 Quail Hill Road, Bainbridge Island, WA*



Construction has begun on the
Guru Nitya Samadhi Mandiram
at Fernhill Gurukula, Tamilnadu, India.

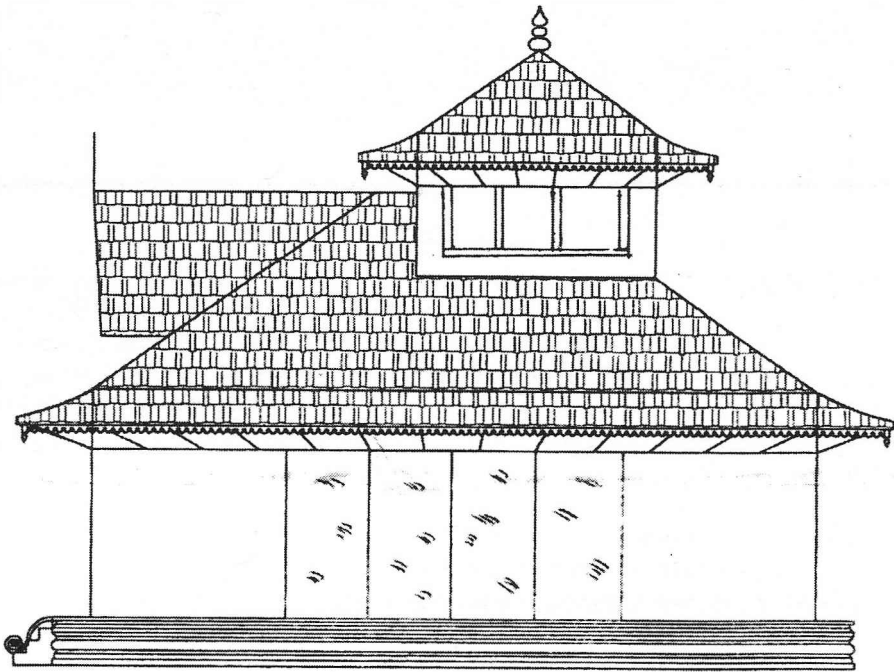


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44: Colorado Rockies, Summer 1998, photograph by Emily Teitsworth



Notice

Nitya's first guru was Dr. Mees, and a good piece of *Love And Blessings* deals with his very interesting apprenticeship with him. We at the Portland Gurukula have recently reestablished contact with his successors, who have reprinted Mees' monumental work, *Revelation in the Wilderness*. Some copies are now available through the Portland Gurukula (tapovana@hevanet.com); those closer to or in India can contact the ashram directly:

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Website: <http://www.geocities.com/islandgurukula>

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An Integrated Science of the Absolute (Volumes I, II, III)
Autobiography of an Absolutist
The *Bhagavad Gītā*, Translation and Commentary
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