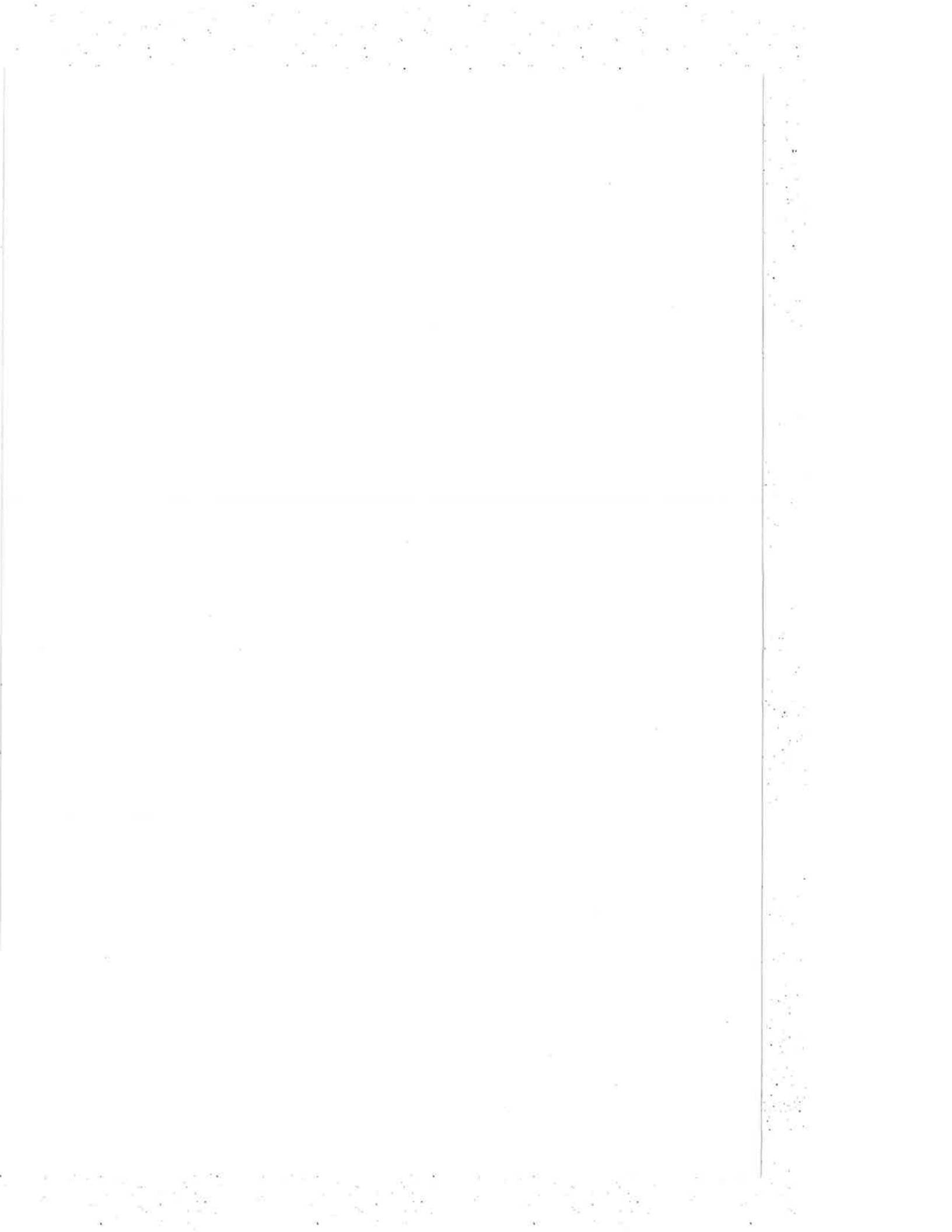
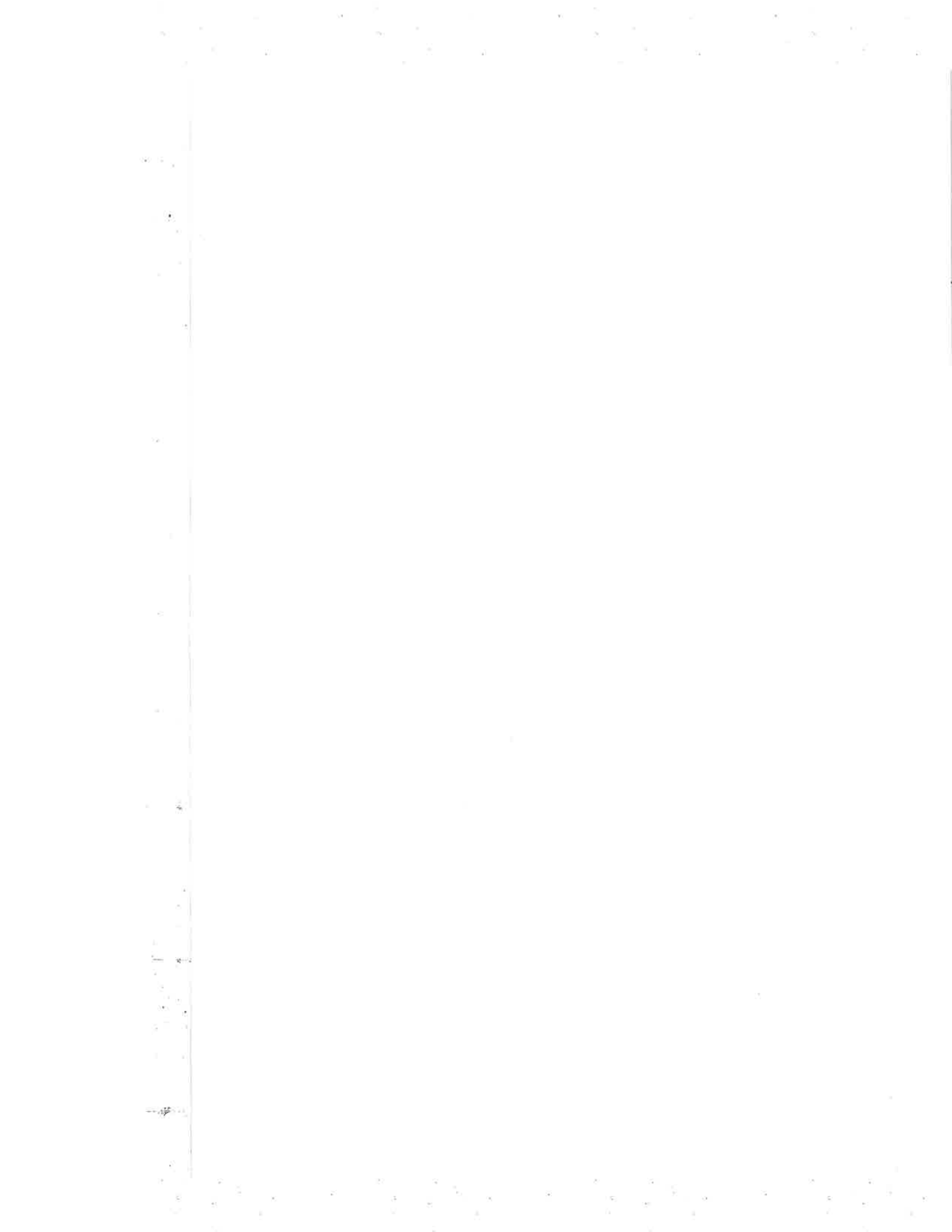


GURUKULAM



SPRING 2007





GURUKULAM

A Journal of Philosophy and the Arts

Spring 2007

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EDITORIAL

BY DEBORAH BUCHANAN

I sit at my desk, pen in hand, or at the computer pondering the blinking cursor. In both cases I am watching a white page and waiting for my thoughts to emerge. In this process there is a focusing of consciousness, an attention to the subject at hand. There is also an indistinct, almost vulnerable, openness, where I wait to see what will rise to awareness, what ideas and arguments will present themselves. The process can't happen without both of these strands, receptivity and attention. There are many ways of phrasing this polarity: doing and not-doing, action and non-action, making and receiving. Whatever the terminology, the actual situation requires both participation and acceptance—and, somehow, the intuitive knowledge to know what each of those is and to allow their mutual participation.

This interaction happens each time *Gurukulam* magazine is prepared. I may start with an idea for a central topic or for certain articles and talk to people about them. In addition I find written and artistic work coming in unsolicited through the mail and internet. As threads gather for the new issue, an interaction happens: organized plans and serendipity commingle to produce the magazine.

My intention for each issue is to include some article from the Gurukula archives or one on the early teachers and participants, like Nataraja Guru's *Kalinatakam* or John Spiers' *What Shall I Read?* There is as well a translation and commentary on a composition of Narayana Guru, one by Guru Nitya, one by Guru Narayana Prasad. Then some essays on a relevant theme of common interest; some poetry; and a presentation of a particular artist or two which can have its own focus or run throughout the magazine. I can plan some of this, but for much of it I have to see what will come forward. And always the intriguing, surprising part is how the disparate submissions come together into a whole.

For the Spring 2007 issue of *Gurukulam* I began laying out the articles I had and wondering what might be added to them. I had both Guru Nitya's commentary on *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* and Guru Narayana Prasad's commentary on *Advaita Dīpika*, both of which we are serializing in the magazine. Also in my files was Scott Teitworth's thoughtful essay on Hercules. I had Alope Kumar Paul's beautiful paintings that had been submitted last year, waiting for a color centerfold place. And during the last two years I have received the Gurukula reminiscences printed here together. A lighthearted, humorous suggestion led to Yati Durant's sending pages of his musical compositions along with a short introduction and a web connection for actually listening to them. At the annual Guru Puja in Bainbridge I had met and talked with Vasanthkumar about his years growing up at the Varkala Gurukula. When he went home he wrote the article included in this issue. A friend

and participant in the Portland Gurukula classes, Anne Pangborn, shared her poems with me; Ananad Jyothi, whose CD was reviewed last issue, sent some of his haiku. Peter Oppenheimer sent a disc of many of his wonderful photographs taken during sojourns in Kerala and Stella Tyson some of her photographs from Washington state. Peter's photographs of the recent Gurukula Convention illustrate this issue and go with Guru Narayana Prasad's *New Year Message*. Finally, searching through my papers, I found Guru Nitya's *One Hundred Steps to Realization*, his last written piece. Complementing it are some sketches he sent in a letter many years ago.

Goals and structures paired with chance encounters and unexpected surprises, action and non-action, doing and non-doing—without both parts of the equation we falter and become lopsided. But stitched together in a dynamic interrelationship, these two poles enrich our lives and endeavors.

The Chinese had a term for this: *wu wei*, which means not just non-action but no deliberate action that is unnatural. The following two poems (from *A Translation of Tang Poems* by Wang Hui-ming) illustrate the heart of that concept.

Reply to a Friend

Occasionally under these pine trees
the rock serves as my bed,
the boulder my pillow.
We don't count days by the calendar
in these mountains
nor do we notice the passing of the year
except we know it takes place
at the end of the coldest season.

Taishan Hermit

Reply to Chang Shao-Fu, the Keeper of the Archives

In my evening years, I enjoy nothing better
than doing nothing.
The world's multitudinous affairs
are no concern of mine.
I have no plans in life, no designs for living.
My mind is swept clean of all burdens.
I have returned to the woodlands I know so well.
A gentle breeze flowing through the pine
trees caresses my robe and the moon above
the mountain shines on my zither while I play.
You ask me: What is the true meaning of life?
The sound of fishermen invades the deep cove.

Wang Wei

ĀTMOPADEŚA ŚATAKAM

BY NARAYANA GURU

TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

BY GURU NITYA CHAITANYA YATI

VERSE 29

*manamalar koytu mahēśa pūja ceyyum
manujanu marṟoru vēla ceytiēntā;
vanamalar koytumatallayāykil māyā
manuvouruviṭṭumirikkil māyamārum.*

For the man who offers his mind-flowers to worship God
there is no other work to do;
pick flowers of the forest; or, if not that,
by ever-repeating the *māyā* formula, *māyā* will disappear.

In the very first verse of instruction in the Self we visualized a world of two opposite principles: the external, full of objects of interest; and the internal, like a stream of consciousness full of thoughts, sensations and all kinds of ideations. When the sun rises and illuminates the day, countless millions of things seem to exist. We become occupied with one task or another in order to actualize some hidden urge. Like waves on an ocean, these urges come one after another, and we are impelled, sometimes even despite our resistance, to do actions. Days and nights come alternately, and our moods and attitudes change accordingly.

It is hard for us to remember that we are of a divine origin and our pure state is of the Absolute. Our senses go out and feed on the fruits of enjoyment, and in this way we go away from the center of our beingness. We begin to think the only thing in life is the gratification of our urges. The desire for gratification envelops our whole being like a creeper which is blossoming all the time with some modifications of mind. Somewhere deep down in us is a spark of consciousness which is consistently shining, but it is covered over with the great darkness of ignorance. Our light is feeble, and even what little light there is is colored by our own egoistic tendencies. The Self itself is mistaken for our ego, and we get into various ego trips.

Our ego is motivated by latent urges. The actualization of an urge takes place in the concrete world of phenomenal manifestation. There, objects of interest are considered to be the source of our enjoyment. In this way we cut ourselves off from

the real source of all existence, knowledge and bliss, and make a fragmentary world. Like a man thrown into a desert land, we go from one mirage to another, always thinking that the water that can quench our life's thirst is outside of us. Search as we will, we never find it.

When we mistake an object as a source of joy, and have lost the inner vision to see the oneness of all, we fight with our own brothers and sisters. Since objects are limited we become competitive, elbowing into the thick of the fray, pushing people out of our path, and becoming totally selfish.

This is the scourge of *māyā*, from which we want to escape. How do we go about it? In the twelfth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna considers one possibility after another: if you can do this one, do it. If not, try this one. If you are not fit for that, there are still other alternatives. In the Bible, Jesus uses several analogies to describe the kingdom of God. If a certain analogy doesn't agree with you, there is another one. He embraces several paths leading to the same goal. If you have a temperamental difference with one of them, don't get disappointed. There is still a path for you.

In the present verse, Narayana Guru is offering three such paths. The first one is *manamalar koytu mahēśa pūja ceyyum*. Every word in it is pregnant with meaning. When a person comes closer and closer to his realization, this world no longer appears to him as a terrifying experience. It is filled with pure joy. Everything appears as sweet, fragrant and beautiful as a freshly blossomed flower. Last night as we listened to music, everyone present appeared to be going into a state of their own inner melody. When we have a musical evening, the music in each one of us also comes to the surface. Even the little baby felt like singing when the others were. Everything was so pleasing.

This is the meaning of *manamalar*. When your mind is such that modifications of it become beautiful like a flower, consider it as worthy of being offered to the very Lord who is the gardener of your life. Your mind is so like a garden that is tended, nourished, watered and cared for by your master, *mahēśa*. *Māhā* means more than just great. When you say *mahimā*, it means all the glories that you can think of, put together. Similarly the word *isa* means that which shines within you, animates you, gives you this never-ending supply of life's resources, and which functions as a definite, imperative law.

When you relate *manujan*, the man of contemplative nature, to his counterpart *mahēśa*, then you are establishing a bipolarity between man and God. Here the word 'God' is not to be taken in the ordinary sense, nor is 'man'. They mean a god that can be glorified as the light within you, and you as the one who is pondering on that all the time. Only in this way can all the passing moments become flower-like. Seeing all the passing events as moments of inner ecstasy, inner joy, can be experienced by anyone. On the other hand, if you are always haunted by fears you won't be able to consider those fears as beautiful flowers.

There is a certain state of excellence implied in the first part of this verse. This path is for one who has really advanced in spiritual growth, who knows the expressions of his mind are flowers to be offered. In the phrase *manamalar koytu mahēṣa pūja ceyyum* you get the feeling of one who is ever engaged in a state of adoration or worship. One who is thus fully immersed feels no compulsion to be always engaged in work in order to feel in balance.

If you are an artist, everything which you see is appreciated as an ensemble of meaning. You look at the composition of it. Wherever the artist turns, there is always a potential picture inviting him to immortalize it. When a musician bops around, music is always humming in his ear. He hears new possibilities, new ways to express musical ideas. For a poet, life is a variety of themes for him to express how the golden threads of joy and the dark threads of agony are interwoven in the warp and woof of the universe. He can dwell on any of it to get to the very meaning of life. To a physician, the Lord is there providing an opportunity for service to those crying out in sickness and in pain.

It does not matter what vocation you have chosen or what kind of life you lead, there is always a deity to be glorified and a flower to be offered. When the artist paints, it is a real offering. When the musician composes or sings, it is done as a most wonderful offering to the Supreme. Every drop of ink that comes from the pen of a poet is an act of worship. It should fill our life with such joy that this is a temple where we have gathered to pay our homage to the Absolute that we experience as beauty, goodness, truth, service, compassion, dignity.

If you don't feel that way immediately, you have to start from scratch. You should learn to cultivate beauty, love, and service-mindedness in yourself. If a man has an idol or a picture of someone he adores, it is not only meaningless superstition. At least his mind is drawn to that thing as the central focus of his life. In Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, Jean Valjean always kept a candlestick with him. It was given to him by the bishop, who was the first light to come into his life. For him the candlestick was the symbol of that light: Christian charity, the love of Christ, and the fearlessness of one who has turned to God for his guidance. He always kept the candlestick on the mantle, which he looked upon as an altar. He needed an object there. It possessed the magic to correct him.

To a person who is fully trained it may appear to be just a fetish, but to a beginner it is not a fetish, it is a spiritual necessity. You need a church to go to, a spiritual master to talk to, or something to adore and worship and revere as sacred, different from the rest of the world. You actually go and gather flowers and make an offering there. It may look ridiculous, childish, to go and stand before a picture, fold one's hands and say "aum." But it is not ridiculous when you are getting into this new mode of relating yourself to the Unknown. Certainly in the picture there is no one, but when you stand before it you are not thinking that God is in the picture, or that the brass piece or the stone idol actually contains the deity.



We say, "Close your eyes and look deep into yourself." What depth—the stomach? Is that all the depth there is in us? Physically we are not very profound—most of us anyway—but when we look deep into ourselves spiritually we see a real depth which has no end. When we say "sublime heights" we are not thinking of the sky. Within our own spirit we see a sublimity which soars high. You can spread out the wings of your imagination and soar like a lark into that unknown realm. So we need symbols like these only to gain the new dimensions of mind that we seek. Once you catch on they are no longer necessary.

If a man is in a place where he needs to build a fire, he takes two splinters and rubs them together. The splinters are cold and dead like everything else, but because of the friction he causes, fire is emitted. Once the spark comes and the fire is lit, the splinters are of no further use and he can discard them.

Sometimes when you want to start a water pump, you have to prime it. You have to pour a little water into it and then it will function properly. Once the water starts coming, you don't need to pour any more in. Like these examples, the altar you use is only to get started. This is the second way.

There is a third way mentioned by Narayana Guru here. Some people think, "This is too odd, too idolatrous, for me to put up a picture or some other image and worship it. Only primitive people do that. I am more civilized." Fine. If you are so rationally inclined, there is a way for you.

Begin by asking what is the phenomenon before you that appears to be true? Come, have a closer look at it. When you come to have a closer look, you will need the guidance of some basic dictum. Descartes tried to do it, and he found he was going from confusion to confusion, doubt to doubt. There needs to be a stepping stone from where you can go further. He came to the idea "I think, therefore I am." You need at least some basis for thinking. "I think: I am." This is one way of getting into the secret of the phenomenality of our experience.

There are a number of such dictums given by the masters. For instance, Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all else shall be added unto you." This is a very clear instruction. Then you ask, "Which is the kingdom of heaven? How do I seek it? Who will show me the path?" Then you hear, "Come to me. Those who receive me receive my Father in heaven. Those who receive my Father in heaven also receive me. I am your light and your life. I am the way; I am the goal." Here you have something to ponder over. This is called *mayamanu uruviṭṭu*; you have to repeat it again and again in your mind.

In the Bible it says, "Knock and it shall be opened unto you." In *The Cloud of Unknowing*, such kind of word or dictum is referred to as a hammer. The anonymous author who wrote *The Cloud of Unknowing* says, "Take this word. It is your little hammer to knock against this big wall of ignorance. Ultimately it will give way."

The Vedantins use *mahāvākya*. The Guru calls his disciple and says, "*tat tvam asi*, you are That. Use this as your key and meditate on it." The student meditates:

“How am I the whole Absolute? I am confined in this body.” That is his *māyā*. To get out of that *māyā*, he has to ponder on the nameless in the place of what has a name, the formless in the place of what has a form, the imperishable in the place of what is perishable, formless beauty in the place of what is merely ugly or pretty, eternal joy in the place of mere happiness or misery. He goes on doing this in so many ways. Slowly he pushes away the transient, the fleeting, the momentary, the perishable, the superficial. Then that phenomenality will give way to him, and he will come to the numenon, the ever-numinous.

The Guru has pointed out these three pathways, but in between them are many shades and varieties of search. In all of them the central idea is the same. Philosophers in both the East and the West have written volumes and volumes of instruction, but when we carefully examine them they all boil down to the same thing.

For Sartres it was “existence precedes essence.” He has to accommodate existence and essence. All the rest that he writes is only to elaborate on this one thing. So he is meditating on one dictum, one principle. For Jaspers, the seeming world before us is the only world that we live in. Yet the profound depth of truth, and beauty with all its musical excellence, cannot be just a fleeting experience. For him, to blend the two into one is his central theme.

We have to find out for ourselves what that central theme or dictum is, which we can endlessly repeat with fresh new insights and thus gain a key to get into the essence of any life situation. Then the world will change.

VERSE 30

*jadamaṛivilaṛivinnu cintayillō-
titukayumillaṛivoennṛiñṇu sarvam
viṭukil avan viśadāntaranganāy mē-
luṭalil amarnnuzalunnatilla nūnam.*

Inert matter does not know; knowledge has no thought
and does not articulate; knowing knowledge to be all,
letting go, one's inner state becomes boundless;
indeed, thereafter he never suffers confined within a body.

A child's first experience when it comes into this world from its mother's womb is being exposed to extremes of heat and cold and light. Birth itself is painful. The child is initiated into the world with a loud cry. Almost all of the child's initial behavior patterns come from acceptance of pleasure and avoidance of pain. It reaches out and it withdraws. Pain and pleasure, strife and harmony, are the principles that are operative in the physical body.

And how many kinds of physical pain there are! Virtually every part of the body can experience pain, ranging from minor irritations to major, overwhelming sensations. The body is a bundle of pains. They are compensated for by various pleasures, but compared to the many possibilities for pain there are relatively few areas where pleasure can be evoked.

We have two polar aspects in us. One is the inertness of the physical body, the body we can see and which can be laid in a coffin and taken to the burial ground. The other aspect is the pure soul or the Self. We are not troubled by either of these. When a dead body is put into a crematorium and burned, it does not undergo any pain. The body as such is painless. The pure soul as such is painless. In between these is a region that is full of pain and pleasure.

When, for instance, a person has to undergo major surgery, and the surgeon plans to cut deep into the body, an anesthetic is administered so that the patient does not know what is going on. He does not feel anything. It is as if that part of the body has no pain of its own. When the dentist pulls out a tooth or drills into one, after the Novocain has been administered we only know something is happening because of the sound. Inert matter as such does not experience pain or pleasure. What is the effect of the anesthesia? All awareness is taken away from the inert matter. As long as it remains as pure matter it experiences no pain or pleasure. What is it that is painful? It is not the tooth, eye, stomach, neck or back. There are certain sensory areas which become agitated, and there is a consciousness which accompanies these agitations. All our bondage to life and release from it are confined within this one region.

When we are physically hurt we live in the body. Most of the rest of the time we live in a social image of ourselves. We live in the physical body at the breakfast or lunch table, when some delicate dish is enjoyed. Even then, if there is good conversation, we attend to our social image and may not even notice we are eating.

Our social identity says: "I am so-and-so. In the eyes of my colleagues, my friends, my competitors and my enemies, this is the image I want to impress." Part of this image comes from the expectations of others. Other people expect you to wear a certain kind of dress, to have a certain kind of form, to speak with a certain kind of dignity. You watch all these social expectations and secretly try to conform to them. Thus, in about twenty years you build up a personality: your social image. Afterwards if any part of that image becomes tarnished, you get frightened. You think, "Now I'm going to be rejected because my social image is no longer perfect." Someone can now easily exploit you through character assassination or even blackmail. If someone's reputation is assailed, it is as bad as killing the body. One may even commit suicide. You should not confuse this social image with the soul or the Self; it is only the social ego.

We live in the body and the social ego. If we are not suffering from pains like a head or stomach ache we are suffering from the pains of what others think of us, or what happened to our trust in another person, or their trust in us, or to our love. This can become more gruesome and cause more suffering than physical pain. People have a remarkable resilience to physical pains, but when the social ego is tortured we may succumb rapidly to the pressure. This type of apperception is what was described in verse 28 as the knowledge in between. In between the bodily aspect and the soul aspect is an intermediary knowledge which includes the conditional states of consciousness. This alone is where we experience the awareness of pain and the awareness of pleasure.

We have four states of consciousness. One is wakeful experience, where we relate with other persons, things and events. We also have the dream experience. Consciousness alternates between the wakeful and the dream, and both these regions of awareness are filled with painful and pleasurable experiences. This is the horizontal movement of consciousness.

There is also a vertical possibility in the movement of consciousness. It can rise to the transcendental heights or sink into deep sleep where we do not know anything. In deep sleep there is no pain, no pleasure, no physical ailment or any kind of social humiliation. It is a state where we merge into nature.

Nature, or *prakṛti*, has the triple aspects of *sattva*, a pure-clear state of reflection; *rajas*, a turbulent state of distortion and conditioning; and *tamas*, an opacity where consciousness is veiled from everything. The inertial aspect of matter predominates in deep sleep; here the turbulent, kinetic aspect of the mind and its capacity to reflect or mirror are both enveloped by *tamas* or darkness. You do not know anything. Only when there is partial knowledge can you relate

yourself to a quality. In sleep, experience becomes nonqualitative because nothing is perceived. You cannot say ugly or beautiful if you do not see. In silence there is neither dissonance or resonance. You cannot say someone is talking sense or nonsense unless they speak. So when you are completely enveloped by *tamas* you are in the deep sleep state. There you escape all pains and pleasures.

The deep sleep state is the negative aspect of the vertical potential of consciousness. The positive aspect is when you transcend all three qualities of nature, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Then you are not in an unconscious state; you are all consciousness, through and through. Pure consciousness. This consciousness that transcends the triple modalities of nature is called *turiya*. The vertical axis includes all degrees of awareness, from none at the vertical minus to total at the vertical plus. Thus we have, in all, four states: wakeful and dream, deep sleep and the transcendental.

We need to cultivate an attitude in which we can clearly understand certain basic concepts. To begin with, we have a body. An aspect of Self or consciousness is illuminating this body. It is inevitable for the body to have the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The body is constituted of five elements, which display their characteristics in experiencing sound, form, touch, taste and smell. The three qualities and the five elements interact. What you hear will be elevating and musical when *sattva* functions, agitating when *rajas* functions, and depressing and deadening when *tamas* functions. What you see may be luminous, inspiring forms when *sattva* operates, exciting forms which can put you through all kinds of agitations with *rajas*, or a kind of blackout where you cannot see anything clearly when *tamas* operates. In this way the three gunas operate in all five elements.

Our manifested form consists of the five senses and the mind, intellect, memory and the ego. Any of these may have errors and defects. There can be defective hearing, defective vision, defective discernment of various tactual stimuli. A mind can be retarded, abnormal, or subnormal, malfunctioning in many ways. Some people experience too much memory becoming available all at once. In certain kinds of madness, a person remembers many unnecessary things at all the wrong times; so many memories crowd into the mind that it is overwhelmed. The person is helpless to stop them. Again, if the door between memory and articulation is opened, the memories come out endlessly as many disconnected statements. You can have trouble with the mind bringing up unnecessary worries about the past, the present and the future, and then you have intellectual disquiet. When this happens, you cannot make decisions: whenever you argue in your mind and come to a conclusion, a counter-argument arises. You are torn between two or more conclusions, and you cannot decide.

So you can have problems at any level: at the level of *manas*, the interrogating or questioning mind; *cittam*, the recalling mind; and *buddhi*, the deciding mind. Finally you can have trouble with the *ahamkara*, the ego. This might make you

personally self-conscious, wanting to be accepted by everyone. Often there is a great craving, a thirst for recognition. You look all around, thinking “who is going to admire me; who is going to recognize me?” You are always saying “I and the other,” “I and the world,” “I and the people.” You are suffering from “I and the other” all the time. What a wretched life. Somehow you have to transcend all these maladies, because without doing so life becomes a horror.

Narayana Guru’s suggestion is that we turn our affiliation from the physical body and the social ego to a third possibility, our own pure Self. He begins this verse by reminding us that the pure Self does not speak or even think: *jaḍamaṛivilarivinnu cintayillō*, know that the discursive thought going on in your mind is not your Self. When people like R. D. Laing say self, they are referring to this cogitating, thinking mind. This is what the Guru refers to as the not-Self. Not-Self is recognized in the Western world as self. Buddhists call it *anātman*, that which is not *ātman*.

Here we are not saying that when a person has physical pain there is no physical pain. Certainly there is physical pain, but it is of the body, not of the Self. The body is animated by a fragmentary aspect of consciousness which is colored and conditioned so it knows pain. Over time this becomes your major concern and major affiliation, until you cannot extricate yourself from it.

You must learn to free yourself from your absorption with your bodily and egoistic states. If you are a fully released person, you can still attend to your bodily states and social functionings, but with a certain amount of detachment. You attend to them just as you attend to your car or your computer or your radio or TV. You know your car or piano or radio are good things, so if something goes wrong you don’t just say “Oh, it’s only my car,” and walk away and leave it. It’s essential to get it repaired. In the same way, it is essential to take care of the body. Whatever is inevitable is inevitable, but if something can be corrected it should be.

The most essential thing here is to know that there is a third possible affiliation, one with your pure Self. After affiliating with the Self you can treat your relationship with the ego and the body with a normal attitude, rather than the exaggerated attitude of most people. The Guru says if you do this you become *viśadāntarangaṅ*, a person with an expansive consciousness whose mind is no longer confined to one little thing in life, such as your headache or your toothache. You are still aware that there is a headache or a toothache, but you don’t allow them to occupy your whole beingness to the point where you are nothing more than just an ache or a pain. You maintain your inner clarity in and through your pains and pleasures.

All the contemplation, meditation and discipline we do is only for this one purpose of disaffiliating ourselves from body identity and ego identity, and establishing an identity with our pure spirit. It is a pilgrimage. We are walking away from us to arrive at us. From where do we go? From the periphery of our skin and this feeling of ego. Where do we arrive? Deep down within us. The distance from our periphery to our center, seemingly so close, is in reality very, very far. That’s why the



Upanishads say it is far and near, inside as well as outside; it is the farthest from all and the nearest of all. Nothing is nearer than your center and yet nothing is a longer journey. It is very difficult to arrive at it, but once you do everything is expansive.

There is suffering in this world, but if you are too concerned with it you will miss your whole life. In spite of suffering, in spite of diseases, you should go on. Let the body drop off. One day it will drop on its own anyway. What do you do when your car won't go? You try everything, and when nothing works you have it towed to a garage. If the mechanic says its hopeless, it goes to the junkyard. You throw it away. With our body, it's the same.

When it comes to the ego, it is a hard nut to crack. Social acceptance has become a great necessity. A greater necessity, though, is your acceptance of your spirit, acknowledging your own truth, your real existence. Your primary and most valuable identity is not even recognized. Jesus asked what does it matter if you lose a limb? If you are losing your soul by saving your limb, that is a greater loss. Only when we understand this can the paradox of the great suffering of the masters on the physical plane and even the social plane, juxtaposed with their calm, serene life in the spirit, be resolved.

There are many such examples before us, like Jesus, St. Francis, St. John of the Cross, Ramana Maharshi, Sri Ramakrishna, Narayana Guru. Physically they underwent the highest degree of intense pain. Some of them also had to undergo the mockery of the whole society. Jesus was abused and spat upon. Sri Ramakrishna was treated as a madman. Even Mahatma Gandhi, a man of great wisdom, who came and saw Narayana Guru and was convinced of his greatness, still went and wrote in his paper that he was to be treated only as a *sudra*, an outcast. Such is this world. We are so socially conditioned. In spite of all these physical and social tortures and abuses, there comes from these masters the greatest peace on earth, the highest form of human consolation. They are our solace; in them we find our peace, our inspiration.

Clearly, it is the masters' identification with the spirit that calls to us, that beckons us toward our own pilgrimage. Jesus always referred to another entity he called "My Father in Heaven." The Upanishadic rishis always say, "Thus we have heard," or "Thus it is revealed." They don't say "I say," they say *iti susruma*, this is what we have heard which is very important, not belonging to any social ego.

To release ourselves from the clutches of the body and the society, we transcend. Thereafter, pain may be in your body but you don't suffer. Disgrace may be sitting on your name in the society but you don't suffer. This is a scheme given to us for working out our own release from a twofold misery.

This is really one of the most beautiful verses of *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*. For years and years I have used this one verse for meditation. In all my troubles, physical as well as social, this verse has saved me many times. Again and again I go over it. Sometimes when there are bodily troubles, people around are upset, and

the doctors are annoyed, giving me all kinds of medicines, I find over and above all this that the only medicine which gives me utmost relief is this one verse. It goes on saying, "This inert matter does not know anything. My pure soul is not the one which sits and thinks and worries. It is not the one which speaks to people. It's one all-pervading consciousness. This body is just one thing floating in that ocean of consciousness like a piece of cork. Sometimes it may be up and sometimes down." Thus there comes an expansive, transcendent consciousness. Is there pain? Yes, there is pain. Did someone say something terrible about me? Yes, he said I am a very evil man. Aum. Aum. "Are you not very evil?" Aum. Be it so. What of it?

You are really released. There is no greater achievement to make.



HERCULES' FIRST STEP

BY SCOTT TEITSWORTH

In order to become a hero—Greek for spiritually realized being—Hercules was assigned twelve impossible tasks.

The first Labor of Hercules was to defeat the invulnerable Lion of Nemea. Its hide was impervious to all weapons; it turned out it could only be cut by its own claws. The symbolic reference is to spiritual vanity or spiritual ego, which parries all attempts to destroy it and yet contains the seeds of its own undoing.

All of us are wrapped in a thick skin of words that has been growing thicker since birth. Words are very enchanting but they only represent reality, they are not real in themselves. By adulthood we have all pretty much substituted word reality for essential reality, which we often refer to as spiritual reality. It is not enough to merely recognize this. Somehow the beast must be killed and the skin cut away. The myth tells us how: we must use the claws themselves, nothing else will do the trick. This means that only through words can we slice through the web of words which binds us.

Many of us recognize the conundrum we're in due to being caught in word reality, but few understand the power of words to extricate us. We fail to realize that everything we think and do is based on words. False and misleading words can further entangle us, but wise words can actually set us free. The fact that this occurs in the very first Labor means it is of preeminent importance.

The appeal of drugs and religious rituals is that for a time one can enjoy nonverbal experience through them. It is very refreshing to be released for a time from the thrall of word-mediated reality. But the Herculean myth reminds us that this doesn't cut away the skin; it's only a temporary respite. We always come back into our persona made up of our own thoughts and attitudes. The solution is to find an intelligent orientation made out of the same thing that holds us fast.

Hercules overcame the Lion with his bare hands. Dr. Mees sees these as symbolic of the Guru, and he is probably right. But to me it also means that weapons (tools) are superfluous. We have to wrestle directly in hand-to-hand combat with our own spiritual vanity that is based on the beliefs we have made out of words. The weapons symbolize religions or thought systems. These are to be abandoned and the situation addressed directly.

The Lion is driven into a cave, where Hercules strangles it. This certainly looks like words being stifled in the throat, though I doubt it's as literal as it looks. Mere suppression won't work, but a successful attempt may stop the flow of web-weaving words or thoughts. (In fact, the futility of suppressing the life force is the issue in

the second Labor of Hercules, when he took on the Hydra.) Then Hercules tried to cut off the skin, but nothing would work. Finally he tried the Lion's claws and the skin came away with ease. As noted above, this means that words are the only way to defeat a defective philosophy. The claws are very sharp and pointed, like the words of the Guru.

Hercules next made a protective coat of armor and a helmet from the hide. This means he forged an intelligent frame of reference which henceforth would help him in his quest. His armor made him impervious to other weapons (beliefs) and the helmet gave him an invincible outlook.

Several Indian stories use an elephant's hide in the same way as the Lion's hide in this story. It is incredibly tough, but beautiful enough to appeal to one's vanity. Once wrapped in it, no outside influence can get through.

Vanity means emptiness. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity" means everything is made up of our ideas about it and in reality has only the qualityless Absolute for its nature. We have substituted our ideas for what is. We live wrapped in those ideas. If we sit and reflect, we know that the first time we experience something it is really profound and powerful. The next time it's still pretty profound, but mixed in are our thoughts about how good it is going to be, based on our memories. These in a way block part of the experience and water it down. Over time the memories become the whole thing, and the experience in itself is barely noticed. We have decided we like that object of experience, and don't much experience it ever again. Still, we are certain we know what we like.

The ego is the part of us that says "I know what I like." It holds fast to its little likes, and dislikes too for that matter. It knows what it dislikes. It dislikes anything that might dislodge it from being in control.

Spirit itself is a living, flowing emptiness that is ever changing. The ego is continually challenged by the movement of life, and so builds a defended nest where it coddles its likes and dislikes and protects them from the assaults of the newness of spirit. This ego nest is a lot like the thick skin of the Nemean Lion.

When we embark on a spiritual path, we do so because we have had some exciting or blissful experience that makes us think there is much more of that to be had if we follow a certain path. If we were truly open, then bliss would be our everyday state, but instead we begin to replace spiritual experience with ideas and memories about it. We replace bliss with notions of bliss. The skin that's woven around spiritual ideals is even thicker than the rest, and more impervious to any weapon, weapon meaning religion or belief system. Our own beliefs trump all others.

The Indian idea of the need for a Guru is based on this conundrum. We are helpless to extricate ourselves from our self-deception based on our best thinking. We have to have an outside agent who can cause us to surrender our spiritual ego. Hercules, however, was able to kill the beast through intense concentration and determination. Most of us are too lazy to bring that kind of intensity to bear, but I'd like to agree it's possible.

Still, our ability to delude ourselves that we are making spiritual progress when in fact we are merely stuck is legendary.

One thing that's very important is to cultivate and maintain a sense of humility. We are not much in charge of anything, even when we believe we are. Reminding ourselves of how much comes to us from the divine side of life, and how little we contribute ourselves, is very helpful. Admiring the zillions of really talented and wonderful people (and minerals and plants and animals) with which we are surrounded, helps keep things in perspective. And continually challenging our own assumptions is extremely important. Friends and family do this, but it can come from a simple openness to what's around us. Above all, extrication from spiritual egoism can be a gentle and sweet process, in contrast to the violent imagery of Hercules. The most important thing is to be alert.

The study of *That Alone, the Core of Wisdom* is a Herculean task which is sure to strip off the skin of the Lion and fashion it into a helmet of wisdom to guide your way on. We are unusually blessed to have that resource at our fingertips.



ADVAITA DĪPIKA

BY NARAYANA GURU

TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY BY

GURU NARAYANA PRASAD

VERSE 11

In the perception of the enlightened,
what appears as world is but *sat* alone.
It is *cit* as well, so is it *ānanda* in essential content.
It never is insubstantial,
yet it being so is not evident to the unenlightened.
The existence of the sun, easily perceptible to the sighted,
Is simply a darkish vacuity for the sightless.

Discriminating the real and the unreal is what was primarily focussed on in the first half of the present work. The conclusion thus arrived at was this: pure and unconditioned consciousness, *cit*, as the one underlying substance, and *sat* alone exists on its own; the apparent world has no existence of its own and hence is unreal. Why is it then that even after knowing this clearly and definitely, the world continues to appear as real to the senses? This is the major problem posed in verses 9 and 10, which form the very middle of the work. How the world thus appearing to be real to sense perception is adjudged by a *jñānin* (an enlightened one), the central point of the answer to the question, is what we see in the present verse. The remaining verses are a sort of elaboration appended on to what this verse says.

The Guru clarifies the point with the help of an analogy: the sun is shining in the sky on a bright day. It radiates its light everywhere, and everything in this world becomes perceptible because of its light. Still, such a sight is perceptible only to a sighted person. No blind man can see it; for him even such a sight appears to be a void of darkness. Likewise is the case of the sun of consciousness, the sun of *ātma*. It incessantly manifests itself as all the worlds. The enlightened one, with his inner eye of wisdom open, perceives the one eye of consciousness or *ātma* alone as assuming the form of, manifesting itself as, everything, all together forming what we call the world. In other words, a *jñānin* is fully aware that what he sees as the world is nothing but *ātma* or consciousness.

Reality, as the abstract substance that underlies all appearances, having no form or name of its own, is termed *avyākṛta*, the unmanifest, literally that which has not yet been made into specific forms. The same, in the state in which it has assumed specific, perceptible, understandable form, is called *vyākṛta*, the manifest. For instance, gold as a substance is *avyākṛta*, and when it appears in the form of various ornaments it becomes *vyākṛta*. So too, *ātma* is *avyākṛta*; the world is simply its *vyākṛta*, form. A *jñānin* therefore sees only consciousness or *ātma*, *sat-cit-ānanda* in essence, alone, manifesting itself as the perceived world.

What is ultimately Real is called *sat* in Sanskrit. The one and only ultimate Reality, *ātma*, thus is definable as *sat*. *Ātma*, as *sat*, has inherent in it the immense potential and urge to unfold itself as the world. It never remains, and cannot remain, unmanifest either. *Ātma*, thus become manifest, is what we call the world, which on its own is unreal, *asat*. A *jñānin* sees in the unreal, apparent world the one Real, unmanifest, *ātma* alone manifesting.

What in essential content is this one ultimate Reality (*sat*)? It, as we have already seen, is consciousness in essence. *Cit* is the Sanskrit word for consciousness. *Ātma* thus is definable as *cit* as well. This *cit*, as abstract reality, is *avyākṛta*, and, because *avyākṛta*, it assumes the form of all kinds of knowledge—both knowing the world as existing, termed *avidyā*, as well as knowing the world as not existing, termed *vidyā*. In other words, both *vidyā* (knowledge) and *avidyā* (ignorance) are different, mutually exclusive, manifestations of one *cit*. Sense experience—in the present case, of experiencing the world as existing—too is none other than a particular manifest form of *cit*.

Sense perception always is more than an event of knowing something; evaluating what is perceived in terms of the perceiver's value notion, relating it with his likes and dislikes in life, the pleasure and pain, also takes place along with knowing. He likes the object if it is pleasurable, dislikes if painful, and feels indifference if neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Whatever the resultant feeling, relating the known object to one's happiness and suffering always takes place, and that nowhere else than in the *ātma*, *cit* in essence. This evaluating aspect that serves as a measuring rod for discriminating pain and pleasure is what is called *ānanda* in Vedānta. Put conversely, it is the *ānanda* content of *ātma* that manifests itself as our pleasures and pains. A *jñānin*, therefore, sees only the *ānanda* aspect of his own beingness—*ātma*—become *vyākṛta* in all pleasant and painful experiences in the perceived world. In short, the world that continues to be perceived even after realizing it being unreal, in the perception of a *jñānin*, is nothing but the *sat-cit-ānanda* contents of *ātma* (the Self) become manifest. The apparent world, in other words, is nothing other than *ātma* manifesting itself.

This seemingly apparent world thus is not insubstantial, and not chaotic and orderless either, the reason why it is called cosmos. The one all-underlying Reality, when manifesting itself as the harmonious cosmic order, is called *ṛta* in

Sanskrit. Hence the Guru's words, "It never is *anṛta*," rendered here as "It never is insubstantial."

In short, the self-manifestation of the one consciousness, the all-underlying Reality, *sat-cit-ānanda* in essence, is what even an enlightened person continues to perceive as the world. The perceiver and his act of perceiving are also none other than *sat-cit-ānanda* in essence. What really happens in sense perception is not the event of one perceiving another; it simply is the one Consciousness-Reality unfolding itself and realizing the essential oneness of all the manifestations.

Not apparent to all is this truth; for a *jñānin*, on the other hand, it is something as clear as broad daylight. It would really be not a *jñānin* who asks, "Why does the world continue to be perceived even after realizing it being unreal?" One who asks for an explanation of some basic stand of Vedanta founded on experiential, dialectical awareness (*yoga buddhi*), is guided simply by ordinary logic. Such doubts are never answerable logically. On the contrary, the doubt itself vanishes on his becoming enlightened. The Guru therefore warns, "Yet it being so is not apparent to the unenlightened."

VERSE 12

One seed alone is it that manifoldly manifests itself;
In the manifest, no other meaning content at all is there existing.
As one, ignorant of the rope-reality, thinks of it as a snake,
Does it become existent apart from the rope?

The Guru, now we know, restates the philosophy of nondualism (*advaita*) in the present work, as the answer to the question why the world continues to be perceptible to the senses even after realizing its being unreal. That the apparent world is unreal does not mean that nothing has existence. One Reality does exist, and it, in essence, is *sat-cit-ānanda*, as we saw in the last verse. It is what unfolds itself as the world perceptible to the senses, as the perceiver and his senses, and as the act of perceiving. A *jñānin*, therefore, intuitively sees only one Reality—*ātma* or consciousness—as become *vyākṛta* and assumed the form of all these three.

A very tiny seed of a banyan tree grows into an endlessly branching huge tree that at times lives many centuries. Countless are the leaves, flowers and fruits that bud and then fall down year after year, but the tree continues to exist. The extremely subtle seed has inherent in it all these potentials. Comparable to this is the phenomenon of life. Countless individual beings form the leaves, flowers and fruits of the tree of life. They bud, they exist for awhile, they disappear, whereas the tree of life itself continues to exist endlessly. Life, in other words, is an eternal phenomenon that sustains through the birth and death of individual beings. The aggregate of those beings, in their gross form, is what we call the world.

Actuality is what is visibly apparent; the invisible one substance that underlies all the changing forms is the true Reality. The apparent pot-form is not the real; the clay that assumes the pot-form is the real. The one Reality that assumes the form of the world and life is what we saw in the beginning as consciousness and in the last verse as *sat-cit-ānanda*. Whichever the ornament-form gold assumes, it never ceases to be gold; nor are ornaments real on their own except as forms assumed by gold. Similar is the unreality of the world and the reality of *sat-cit-ānanda*. The world's apparent existence is as the ever-changing manifest form of that one Absolute Reality, also called *brahman* in Vedanta. An ornament, whatever its form, never ceases to be gold; likewise, the world, whatever its visible and knowable forms, whatever names given to them, never ceases to be the one *brahman* in essence. Hence the famous Upanishadic dictum *sarvam khalvidam brahma* (everything here indeed is *brahman*). Such is the vision the Guru's words enshrine.

A Vedantin's stand that the visible world is unreal only means that the form of the world perceived by the senses has no existence of its own. All such forms are superimposed on *brahman*, that alone really exists. Even when assuming the form of and appearing as the world, the causal reality continues to be the same. This phenomenon of effects perceivably appearing while the causal Reality undergoes no intrinsic change, is known as *vivarta* in Vedanta, exemplified best by the rope-snake analogy. Someone seeing a piece of rope as snake does in no way make any intrinsic change in the real rope; it continues to be the same. The perceived snake has no existence apart from the rope either. The snake is simply a form superimposed by the perceiver of the rope, and hence is *vivarta*. Likewise the *sat-cit-ānanda*, become *vivarta*, appears as the world to the one who does not see the former. In short, when one, owing to ignorance, does not see *brahman* as *brahman*, it appears to him as the world.

To become convinced of this, one simply needs to analyze what is perceived, as was done earlier in verse eight. Putting emphasis on this point is done in the next verse.

MYSTERY OF THE VERSE AND BLUE DUALITY

BY YATI DURANT

Music notation is a harmonious blending of art, sound, architecture and verbal meaning. Even by just looking at it, without fearing what it could mean, you can enjoy its natural-looking structure. I always experience joy when looking at a well written notated piece of music.

Music notation is like the photographic negative for the musician. The musician is the notation's projector.

It is a forgotten language, one without language barriers and one without political implications. Often, musicians from all different cultures and nations meet to play in ensembles together. It's a great way to get people to forget their differences and enjoy something together!

The meaning of notated music can reach far beyond the temporal surface of an ear's simple lack of perception. Sometimes even messages can be placed in a notated piece of music, such as J.S. Bach's famous initials placed in his *The Art of Fugue*, or the quotations against Stalinism in Dmitri Shostakovich's *String Quartet No. 8*.

However, regardless of the meaning implied in a musical work, one should always listen more than once in order to get a more accurate impression.

Mystery of the Verse was composed in 2005 and premiered in May of that year at the Rheinsberg Castle in Rheinsberg, Germany (near Berlin). This was my third composition inspired by Narayana Guru's *100 Verses of Self-Instruction*. It is not based on any particular verse, rather it is an attempt to find the inner calm in the verses' meanings. It starts out somewhat chaotically, but immediately sinks back into patient silence. The trills and ornamental melodic lines, contrasting a vacant tonal center, mimic the sound of spiritual India's discordance. At the end, just as a quiet street enters back into a busy marketplace, the chaotic beginning returns.

Blue Duality was composed between 2002 and 2005. This audio recording was made during the rehearsal. It was inspired by several verses: #52, #23, etc. The problem of duality is here represented through the contrasting styles of music: improvised blues and meditative atonality. The form is complex, with several "modules" following each other. However, the ensemble builds to a larger climax near the end, only to disappear into a piano cadenza, one which can only end silently.

For visual appreciation of their musical construction, the first page of *Mystery of the Verse* and the first two pages of *Blue Duality* are reproduced following this introduction. To hear the pieces go to the web sites listed below.

Mystery of the Verse

for piano trio

Yafi E. Durant 2005

Allegro con moto (M.M. $\text{♩} = c. 128$)

Violin

Violoncello

Klavier

Adagio poco rubato
con espressione $\text{♩} = 50-60$

VI.

Vc.

Kl.

half pedal

pp

mp

ord.

Mystery of the Verse for piano trio (quicktime streaming audio:
www.ydmusic.com ---> New Music ---> Mystery of the Verse)

Blue Duality

©Yali E. Durant 2005

Adiando con Espressione
♩ = 68

This system includes staves for Cymbals, Saxophone, Bass Drum, Vibraphone, Trumpet in B, Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, and Bass. The saxophone part features a melodic line with a 'solo' marking and dynamics of *pp* and *mp*. The trumpet part has a melodic line with a 'solo in C7' marking and a dynamic of *mp*. The bass part includes a 'Vibraphone' marking and dynamics of *mp*, *ff*, and *mp*. A note in the bass part is marked with '(finger - trem)'. A performance instruction at the bottom right states: '* arco may also be employed'.

Piu Mosso ♩ = 60

This system includes staves for Cym., Sax., B. Drum, Vibes, Trp in B, Vla. 1, Vla. 2, Vln., Cel., and Cb. The saxophone part has a melodic line with a 'tr' marking and dynamics of *pp* and *mp*. The bass drum part has a rhythmic pattern with dynamics of *pp* and *mp*. The vibraphone part has a rhythmic pattern with a dynamic of *pp*. The trumpet part has a melodic line with a 'solo esp.' marking and a dynamic of *mp*. The violin 1 part has a melodic line with dynamics of *mp* and *mp*. The violin 2 part has a melodic line with dynamics of *ff* and *mp*. The viola part has a melodic line with dynamics of *p* and *mp*. The cello part has a melodic line with dynamics of *p* and *mp*. The bass part has a melodic line with a '(finger - trem)' marking and dynamics of *ff* and *mp*.

2

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Blue Duality". The score is organized into two systems, each containing eight staves. The instruments listed on the left are Cym (Cymbal), Sn (Snare Drum), B. Drum (Bass Drum), Vibra (Vibraphone), Trp in B (Trumpet in B-flat), Vln 1 (Violin 1), Vln 2 (Violin 2), Vla (Viola), Vcl (Violoncello), and Cb (Contrabass). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (e.g., *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *sf*, *p*). There are also performance instructions like "trumpet" and "vibrato" written above the staff lines. The score is marked with a "2" at the top left, indicating a second page or system.

Blue Duality for trumpet, percussion, vibraphone and string quintet (quicktime streaming audio: www.ydmusic.com ---> New Music ---> Blue Duality)

MY GURUKULA

BY VASANTHAKUMAR RAJAPPAN

In Vedanta the words 'I' and 'mine' don't have much meaning or relevance. Narayana Gurukula follows the ways of *Advaita Vedanta* (non-dual philosophy) in its thoughts, words and action. Yet, when this writer says "my Gurukula," the emotional content and the value percepts those words evoke in him are quite unique. My memories of life in the Gurukula and the emotional, psychological and spiritual strength I derive from my ongoing affiliation with it are rooted in my consciousness. Hence I believe it is appropriate to say "my Gurukula." At the same time a Gurukula in its true meaning belongs to all seekers of truth.

The first time I went to the Gurukula was in the last week of May in 1974. For the last thirty-two years, Guru and Gurukula have remained an inseparable part of my life. To me the Gurukula is not merely a spiritual organization or religious institution. And Guru is not just a person either. Throughout the history of India one can see a model of Guru-disciple relationship where the Guru shines the light of knowledge and wisdom on the disciple, and the disciple in turn pays keen attention to the Guru's words and attends to his needs. This model can still be seen in India. It is not unique to India in its essence, as we can see similar models in the Socratic traditions and in some of the Christian traditions. In fact, one of the best examples of this model is Jesus Christ and his twelve disciples. The relationship is complementary in its nature. The Guru is essentially shining the light of knowledge and wisdom through his or her disciples on the entire world. This light leads the disciple not only to Self-realization but also enables him or her to show the world, through words and deeds, that the individual self (*ātman*) and the universal Self (*brahman*) are one and the same.

The Self-realization that is mentioned above does not refer to any kind of auto-suggestive experiences, like a magical and wonderful blanket of light enveloping the person. Rather, it should be understood as the meaning of what Narayana Guru says in Verse 88 of his *One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction*, where it says, "Everything is real in itself; one who grasps the basic truth will understand everything as one." Therefore, the Gurukula has two missions: one is to impart the kind of understanding that is given in the verse mentioned above to all seekers of truth. The second is to use that truth to remove all sorts of religious, cultural, racial, and ethnic and caste-based bigotries from the world. This will help to instill an awareness of universal citizenship and camaraderie in people. In the deepest sense the cultural, political and economic boundaries man has created are imaginary and their roots lie in the consciousness of each and every individual. Therefore,

in order to remove such boundaries there has to be a modification in individual consciousness. One needs to elevate one's narrow and compartmentalized consciousness to synchronize with the unitive and all-encompassing consciousness of the Absolute.

One has to understand Narayana Guru's words and teachings, and the commentaries written on his works by the three successive Gurus of the Gurukula, namely Nataraja Guru, Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati and Guru Muni Narayana Prasad, as a guide to accomplish the above mentioned two missions. It is difficult to find any other organization in the world that is devoted to such a mission. Most of the organizations that we know of are affiliated to religion, political ideology and national, racial, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic identities. Some organizations even serve the narrow and often dangerous interests of personality cults. Almost all of these organizations

have contractual obligations to the ideologies and interests with which they are associated. The Narayana Gurukula's mission and means are very different from these. In fact, Narayana Gurukula doesn't ask or appeal people to follow its path so that one can attain his or her salvation. Instead, it is holding out a



mirror in front of individuals to look into their own consciousness and see for themselves what their individual awareness is constituted of, and then to look into the world and realize that it is the same Truth that shines in all. In fact, in the last temple Narayana Guru founded he installed a mirror instead of another deity of the Hindu pantheon as he had done in the previous temples. That was an act of tremendous symbolic importance.

In his spiritual quest, man has to go beyond the perceivable and tangible, and vertically dive into the depth of his awareness. Therefore, in order to achieve this level of understanding one has to learn to integrate multiple disciplines of knowledge that fall under the broad categories of science, mathematics, art and aesthetics, literature, psychology and philosophy, and religion and spirituality. As part of creating such awareness in individuals, the Narayana Gurukula teaches how Narayana Guru integrated all these into an *Integrated Science of the Absolute*.

When we look into every facet of life we can see varying elements of unity. Modern science points not only at the biological unity among the myriads of beings in the world, it also emphasizes the logical and mathematical necessity to understand this unity. Of course, every now and then we see science and scientists falter on this. Similarly, there is a unity in the appreciation of pleasurable experiences and avoidance of painful events. Aesthetic values in art and literature are appreciated universally even though with varying sensibilities and sensitivities of the appreciator. These are all subjected to rigorous study by the Gurukula. Above all, the Gurukula as an institution studies, understands, accepts and disseminates the teachings of all the great masters who have contributed to the wisdom heritage of the world. It is in this sense that I have said earlier that the Gurukula has a unique mission and role to play in this world.

Jesus Christ says, "Man does not live by bread alone." So there is something that is above and beyond the physical necessity that is referred to here as bread. It is this counterpart of physical necessity that we understand as the spiritual quest at the personal level and divine presence or benevolence at the universal level. All the great spiritual masters have shown us how each individual can tap into this benevolence for his or her personal realization and for the benefit of society at large. Traditionally it has been considered the primary objective of religions to prepare man to seek and realize truth or God. But when we take into consideration the current affairs of religions and their leaders, we see a pattern of gross distortions and political interpretations of religious values for the sake of the narrow interests of one or the other group. This not only leads to conflict of values within a particular religious group itself, but also to conflicts and confrontations across religions and cultures. It is in this context we have to understand the philosophy of Narayana Guru and the mission the Gurukula has undertaken.



THEATER OF LIGHT

BY AURORE GAUER

Through these figurative paintings, Alope Kumar Paul invites us to enter a strange theatre of shadow and light, illusions and surrealism, where gods and goddesses appear as puppets, undone and yet burning in spiritual intensity.

An enchanting universe in twilight which might be alarming were it not for the color of life and being bathed by the Grace and Feminine energy. *Śakti* with opulent bosom, spindly hands and wild hair, Devi with amputated arms, sirens and sacred dancers...they fascinate us by their sensual forms and their magnetism.

We see in his work, an alchemy of primeval colors that ravage and burn the eyes. Phosphorescent black, red and white, these three tantric colors remind us of the three gunas, the constitutional quality of the universe according to the Ayurveda: *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*.

The painter's curious figurines relentlessly question us behind their faceless masks, by their pupil-less eyes which intrigue us, by their hands without arms, by their wires abandoned by an invisible puppeteer. Behind the metaphor of these inarticulate clowns, we must see without a shadow of a doubt the interrogation about our human destiny. If the gods are themselves manipulated, who then holds the reins of our existence?

This young Bengali painter, lucid and serious, shows us quiescence and contemplation behind life's seductive game, and the "divine game" or *līla* machinations of a monstrous farce.



DESCENDANT by Alok Kumar Paul



TIME OF DEPARTURE by Alope Kumar Paul



BRAIN CHILD by Alope Kumar Paul



LIFE by Alope Kumar Paul

JANUARY

BY ANNE PANGBORN

The dregs of last year's garden, turned to mush now,
Are sinking with a sigh into the earth again.
The sky seems so low and dark,
Endless days of monochromatic marble,
That I feel its weight on my back,
As if I'm creeping underneath it,
Holding it up,
My bones ache.
The dog is always damp.
Tree limbs, broken by the wind,
Have finally surrendered
Fallen to ground by the weight of last week's snow.

But as I sit in my yurt, I hear
The liquid warble of a thousand red-winged blackbirds,
Vying for territory, and
Looking out I see, near the lake that has formed in our pasture,
A blue heron, hunting
And tulips pushing up through the melting slush.

With quiet confidence, while I have been looking at the walls
Of my cocoon of self-absorption
They have been hard at work
Plotting the resurrection.

WORDS

BY ANNE PANGBORN

Why do they heap scorn on the love of words?
Words, like looks and touches,
Mesh me with the outside world;
Like awestruck gazes or the wandering fingers
Of a wondering child
Words probe the only world we have to live in,
And help us see
And see that others see with us
That nothing's new,
But everything can still be sensed as new at every look
And loved in new and fresh configurations
Of the old way.
Yesterday morning's cormorant had a sheen
Like new dug coal – the glossy green
Of yester-eon's leafy swamps.
This morning's cormorant's mat black in the rain,
His bony wings half-hung out Hapsburg style
Like an old umbrella set outside to drain.
he's two-faced as the emblem of the tsars,
But could I know him so
Without the power of words
To take the shape of each new glimpse,
Compound it then with everything else in my mind,
And offer it for someone else to share?

ONE HUNDRED STEPS TO REALIZATION

BY GURU NITYA CHAITANYA YATI

Guru Nitya's last work was begun on November, 8, 1998, and was abruptly terminated by his massive stroke on the 29th of the same month. He had already suffered a number of smaller strokes, and may well have sensed his life was winding down. Since *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* had played such a central role in his teaching career, he wished to present his immediate disciples with a final interpretation of it. Despite being unfinished, it provides a unique angle on this perennial source of insight. It was taken down by Gurusaran Jyothi and Sundari in Palghat, Kerala.

These steps are in the form of a dialogue, a dialogue within myself.

STEP ONE

Are you in a wakeful state?

Yes, I am.

How do you know you are wakeful?

Because I am aware of my thoughts.

How do you know your thoughts?

Because I look into my awareness.

What do you see in your awareness?

Certain ideas.

What are ideas like?

Ideas come as an awareness of some particular notion.

Can you express your ideas?

Yes, I can.

What are they like?

It is like a word and it's meaning sitting dormant.

How do you bring it out?

When I try to express the word, it comes up like any other word of the language I speak.

Does it come only as a solitary word?

No, an idea can be expressed in one word or many words.

Why many words?

Because one word can mostly give only a scanty picture of awareness.

Then what do you do?

I look deeply into the source of the idea coming to the surface. Then I get more words associated with the original idea that can create a chain of ideas to give me a more complete meaning.

Where do you look into?

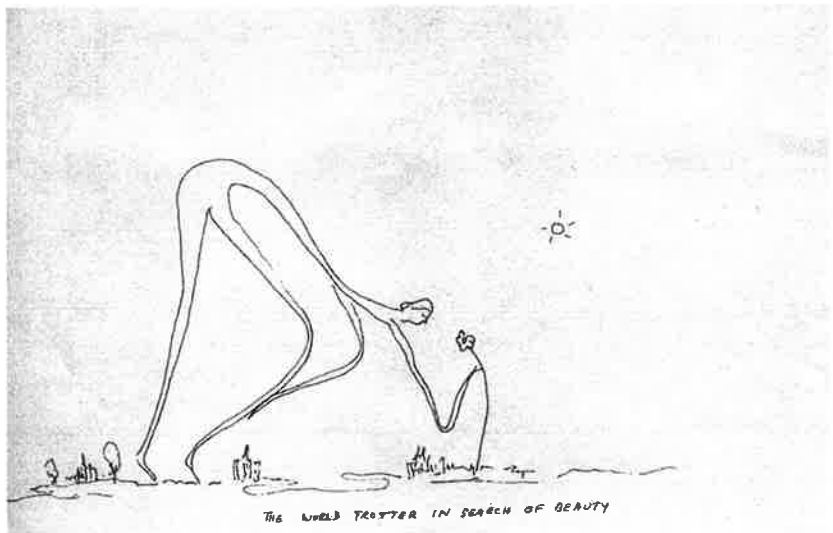
I look into the depth of my awareness, from where ideas come.

What happens when you look deeper and deeper?

When I look deeper and deeper, it is as if I am going to the core of my consciousness.

How does that appear to you?

It appears to me like a source and a fountain.



What does the source look like?

The source looks like a state of ignorance from which knowledge bubbles up.

Does that knowledge correspond to the external world?

Yes, of course it does. It's as if one truth is coming to light with two faces.

What are they?

One is my self-awareness, and the other is the awareness of the world outside, which corresponds to my self-awareness.

Is it like you are experiencing two worlds simultaneously?

Not exactly, because the self-awareness comes in the form of the appearance of a word projecting its meaning. The projected meaning is manifesting outside, as a confection of the word, its meaning, and the object with which the word and meaning together belong.

That is a great discovery. Can you compare the fountain source of your idea to anything?

Yes, I can compare it to a germinating seed buried in the earth out of which a regular life form is emerging.

When such manifestations come, do you apply an instrumentation to verify whatever is manifesting?

Yes, I do. I compare the idea to ideas emerging from my senses, such as hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling.



When you compare these sensations, what happens?

I find a mysterious synthesizing of all the five sensations taking place, as if there is an inner engineering of synthesis happening.

Do you attribute it to some agent within you?

Yes, I call it my mind.

So what are the instrumentations that stimulate ideas in you, to then project them into words and read their interpretation in terms of words?

My mind has the ability to initiate a deeper search. The answer to the search comes from the five-fold imageries of the senses, which then are synthesized. I see it assuming an objective, phenomenal prospect which I call my external experience, and I see within me the projective face of my mind which I call my subjective cognizant vision.

Is your disciplined and continuous search for deeper and deeper meaning worthwhile?

We all should feel that we are well rewarded for our internal search, and whoever is producing these beautiful responses to our search should be given thanks with great gratitude.

THE SECOND STEP

In the first step, you've compared the origin and development of your internal awareness to a fountain source, such as an entire form of life issuing out of a germinating seed. Now look back into its function.

What is the initial thing that happens as you watch the fountain source?

A question arises in me.

What is the question?

The question is to find out what the new phenomenon is that has appeared.

Who puts such questions?

I suppose my mind is directing my senses to find out what this new phenomenon is, and therefore I presume this is how any new idea comes to my mind. My mind wants my senses to observe and report back to it what is happening.

Very good. So the questions arise from the mind? Shall we presume that mind is primarily of the nature of putting interrogations such as What is this? Where does it come from? To what class does the phenomenon belong? What is its quantity? Is it of a short duration or a long duration or is it going to be continuous like a chain of association?

I suppose all these are true of mind.

When these questions are asked, who responds to them?

My five senses respond to all these questions.

How do they respond?

Each of my senses addresses the same question, and at that time my sensations identify themselves with mind and make interrogations such as, What do I hear? What is the sensation of touch? What do I see? What do I taste? And what do I smell?

Do you have a special nomenclature for how the senses are directed by the mind?

Yes, the mind wants to know four graded varieties of information. The first is accepting the question to prepare for a response. That is called entering into a state of inquiry.

What is the second step?

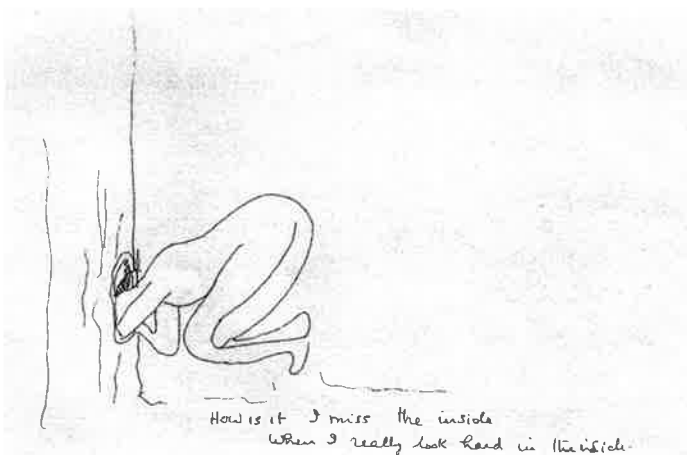
The second step is to retrospect and to look into the memory log to find out if there was ever any previous experience similar to the new phenomenon.

What is the memory log called?

It is called *citta*.

Why is it called citta?

Because all the self-luminous information comes from the self. The proper name for the self is *cit*. As the information of memory has the quality of self-luminosity, it is called *citta*, meaning that the information is pertaining to *cit*.



Who helps in bringing out memory?
The preconditioning of all the five senses.

Does memory recognize only ideas?
No it recognizes objects also.

Which is the main object that you recognize?
I recognize my body as an intimately known object of my awareness. It is called *kalevara*, meaning the physical matrix to which my senses (the *indriyas*) and the body limbs (*karana*) belong.

Does that search end with your conscious body?
No, my conscious body is just one object in the world of innumerable objects, which are all in a flux of appearance and disappearance.

What is that world called?
I call it *jagat*, the phenomenal world.

Can you compare the appearing and disappearing world phenomena to anything?
Yes, of course. When sunlight illuminates this world, the mixture of light and shade that enables us to objectify millions of forms bearing millions of names, appears for some time and then disappears.

What is the source of that knowledge?
The Self.

How do you compare the Self to the sun and its light? What prompts you to compare the sun to the Self?
The sun is also a source of illumination. At the same time, it is merely a phenomenon. It can throw light and shade only on the bodies of the external world, whereas the Self is a deeper principle, attributing a correct perspective to light and shade from the point of view of life.

When the Self enters a body, what is it called?
It is called the *ātman*, the individuated self.

Is it a conditioned Self?
Yes, it is qualified as *jivātma*.

How do you relate an individuated self to the pure Self?

Self-luminosity belongs only to the Self, but there can be a certain resemblance brought through reflection or refraction. That is what creates phenomena.

From this what do you conclude?

My conclusion is that even our sensory experience exposes us to the ultimate Self, which sometimes we mistake because we do not have proper self discipline. In the course of time we can apply our discipline to discern the Self from the non-Self.

THE THIRD STEP

What was your last reference?

The Self.

Just what is the Self? Is it a thing or an idea or a thought or a memory or an all-inclusive vision or an all-exclusive vision?

Sometimes I see the Self as exclusive of all objective factors and sometimes as a subject running into encounters with all objects.

Is the Self an outside factor or an inside factor?

The Self is inside.

How do you discern inside and outside?

By outside I mean that which enters into my consciousness through sensation. By inside I mean what is inherent in me which enters into manifold interactions with stimulating energies presented by the senses.

When you see a rainbow of the seven complementary colors, does the phenomenon enter through your senses?

No.

Where is the bow-like vision structured and from where does it get its colors?

It is an experience generated within me, called *vivarta*.

What is vivarta?

A specific effect of my mind.

Why is it called vivarta?

Vi means specific, *varтам* means a manifestation or inner notion of time and space. A rainbow effect is appearing to the senses as a manifestation in the sky of both time and space.

Then why do you call it inside?

Because it is a mirror reflection of the mind manipulated by the biochemical effects of the visual area of the brain, which is inside.

Is it not a paradox that you are experiencing certain effects in your consciousness while the phenomenon occurs?

Yes, it is. All mirror effects paradoxically combine inside and outside into one. The sky is seemingly outside but it is the ground on which all mental modulations happen momentarily. It is coordinating the inside and the outside. That is why the Self experience is both inside and outside. The Self is all pervasive.

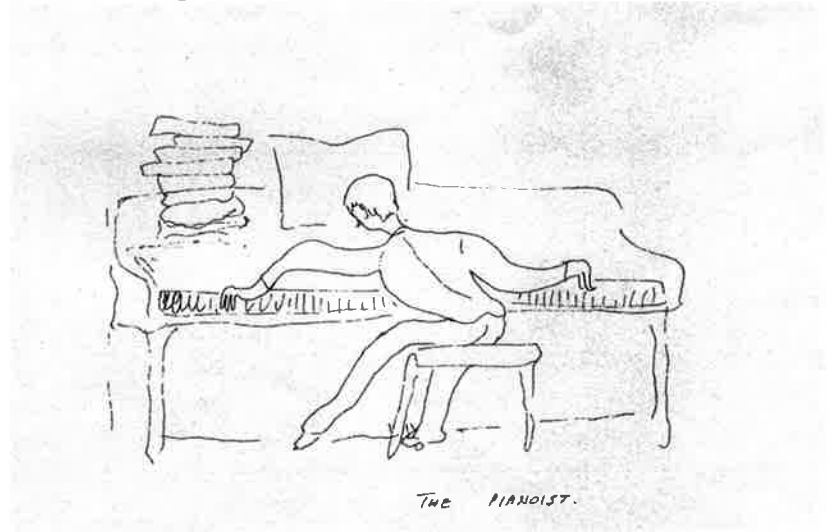
How do you contemplate paradoxical factors like sky?

The sky is part of the contemplative factor of consciousness; therefore a philosophical status is given to the time-space continuum. Consciousness involves sound and meaning, momentary feelings of touch, the altering appearance and disappearance of light, and the permissive appreciation of taste and smell. All these are specific manifestations, *vibhuti*, of the Self.

How do you interpolate an effect of sensation into the consciousness of contemplative apperception?

Just by recognizing the momentary nature of the wave effect without detaching it from the factuality of water to which the wave belongs.

Take your time to ingest what you have just read now. When you are ready you can go on to the fourth step.



GURUKULA RECOLLECTIONS

BY K. V. ANANDAN AND RAMAN DHARMALINGAM

In the year 1960 my uncle (who was also my father-in-law) told me about a one-month class on Narayana Guru's *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* given by a young swami, Nitya Chaitanya Yati, in Tellicherry Town Hall. That was the month of February. I gave no interest at first but through my uncle's insistence I attended the classes regularly. The Town Hall was only a facility of 500 seats. People unable to enter the hall gathered on the veranda outside the hall. Some came from distant places like Calicut and Kasaragode. The young swami conducted the class by using a blackboard and charts with a fusion of Oriental and Occidental ideas, which gave a new experience to the listeners.

One evening Swami Nitya informed the class that on that day his own Guru, Nataraja Guru, would be passing through Tellicherry by evening train. So he wanted to stop the class fifteen minutes earlier. But then he said, with his usual smile, if the train comes fifteen minutes late, you will be lucky and will hear the full class. Then he asked the railway officials to go and inquire about the train's arrival, which was exactly fifteen minutes late. Those who were attending the class sought permission to go with him to meet his Guru, which they received.

At the time Tellicherry railway station had only one platform, which is now the present Platform Two. The train arrived and the Guru's compartment position was on the exact point where, in those days, bundles of fish were kept for loading on the goods train and where there was a flow of dirty water with a foul smell. Nataraja Guru detrained and his disciple, Swami Nitya, prostrated at his feet, taking no care of the dirty water flow. The people with Swami Nitya also tried to prostrate at Nataraja Guru's feet, but he prevented them by his hand gestures and spoke in English, "No, he's my disciple." Then he looked each and every one who gathered around him with his penetrating, zooming eyes which were full of grace, love and mercy. That was my first meeting with Nataraja Guru and Guru Nitya.

The following incident happened during an early Convention in Varkala, either 1971 or 1972. There was a class by Nataraja Guru on Narayana Guru's *Jiva Karunaya Panchakam* (Five Verses on Kindness to Life), where he explained the verses in both English and Malayalam. He asked the students, "Do you know from whose pen these verses came?" Then he narrated the following event which happened while he was living with Guru Narayana at Sivagiri.

One day Narayana Guru was sitting with his disciples near Sarada Math, Sivagiri. Guru pointed to a mango tree whose branches were bent from ripened

fruit. Guru asked, "Do you know the *tyaga* (sacrifice) of this tree? The tree which suffers all the rain, cold weather and heavy, hot summer and which gives shade to those who take shelter under the tree and which gives us these sweet fruits to eat? This is the real *tyaga*." Nataraja Guru continued his story saying that when Narayana Guru spoke these words, "This is the real *tyaga*," two drops of tears rolled over his cheeks.

Nataraja Guru continued his class, noting that when one travels to Wynad from Tellicherry and Kannur, on the way we can see "herds of cattle" that are being led towards Kannur district. These innocent animals do not know that they are going to be slaughtered to fill the belly of the Tellicherry and Kannur people as "snacks for their evening tea." The Guru then looked meaningfully at me. At that moment I decided to refrain from having non-vegetarian meals. Synchronistically my wife who was in Tellicherry also decided to give up non-vegetarian meals.

by K. V. Anandan

While working in Kodaikanal Hills for the development of plantation crops and the improvement of the rural peoples, I came to Nilgiris for the holidays, as it is my native place. In 1979 my brother Professor Krishnaraj took me to the Gurukula at Fernhill in Ooty for the annual function. This was my first visit and contact with Guru Nitya. I continue to visit and try to learn the concept of humanism and the unity of mankind, and Dr. Thampan Swami, Peter Oppenheimer, and other inmates have helped highlight the nature and function of the Gurukula.

My father, the late Dharmalingam, knew Dr. Nataraja Guru since the 1950s, and participated in Gurukula functions. Father was a Gandhian and worked for the National Congress Party for 45 years. I read the autobiographies of both Nataraja Guru and Guru Nitya and have often read about the life of Narayana Guru. For us, in the rural Nilgiris, Narayana Guru came in the form of a God.

In 1991 Guru Nitya helped me to prepare an article on "Crime Against Women" which I presented at the Rabindranath Tagore Law College in Pondichery, which was well received by the delegates from all over India. When Dr. George of Kerala, who lives in New York, came here to talk on Bio-food, I translated his talk into Tamil. Whenever I find time, I go to the Gurukula and spend at least some hours studying the philosophy of One Caste-One God-One Religion.

I was a student at Sri Ramakrishna Mission School in Coimbatore during 1956-1958, where I was trained to be a Village Development worker. The Ooty Ramakrishna Mutt is also in Fernhill and I do admire the work of Swami Vivekananda to uplift spirituality and humanism.

The East-West University is an eye-opener to know society, the universe and oneself. I take time now to read and know the beginning of human society and the origin of this world, both the physical and metaphysical aspects of its nature.

by Raman Dharmalingam.

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE 2007

BY GURU NARAYANA PRASAD

We, in the onward flow of history, welcome one more New Year with new hopes and new aspirations. It is our wish that this New Year makes the life of those assembled here, as well as the entire human race, more meaningful by sowing the seeds for further ennobling aspirations!

Why do we study history? In order that the past events may clear the future's track. Events happen in human life as an incessant flow of contexts in which there is a confluence of the almost predictable human will and the ever unpredictable will of nature. Of these two wills, we have the freedom only to control our will. Bringing the flow of nature under human control is quite impossible. Therefore, whatever be the human efforts with good intentions, events do not necessarily happen in life as we desire. Let us therefore take well-considered decisions striving for the well being of the entire human race, and then let us remain with equanimity towards the success and failure of such efforts, not letting these disturb our internal peace.

It is with such an attitude that we try here to regard and evaluate one of the most noteworthy political events of the past year, and deliberate on how to insure the secure existence of the human race on this beautiful planet of life. What we refer to here is the event of condemning to death Saddam Hussain, the past President of Iraq. The trial of the case and the pronouncement of the verdict were all carried out by a court constituted by and meant to safeguard the interests of the powers that invaded that country. In the meanwhile, one of the invading powers has already openly admitted that their act of invading Iraq was wrong, and the other super-power has been compelled to tacitly admit the same.

Was Saddam Hussain right or wrong in massacring thousands of his own subjects, and resorting to many other cruelties, simply to safeguard his own political authority?

Were the super-powers of the world right or wrong when they invaded Iraq killing thousands of innocent people and their own soldiers, and causing mass-scale destruction of the infrastructure of the country by cruel and inconsiderate bombing?

Was condemning Saddam Hussain to death after a farcical court trial right or wrong?

Is making the Islamic countries one by one the playthings of the super-power right or wrong?

Is the super-power treating the Islamic countries unwilling to be submissive as terrorists and assuming the overall right to fight terrorism right or wrong?

Terrorists assume themselves to be the protectors of a religion and stifle the people of their own country and religion, devising terrific lightning attacks on countries and people that do not abide by their will. Is it right or wrong?

Is making use of religion as a tool for gaining political power right or wrong?

Many are such questions that could be asked. "Right" is the answer given by some; some respond that these actions are "wrong". Certain things thought of as right turn out to be wrong as the situation changes unpredictably and vice versa. What is absolutely right never becomes wrong and what is absolutely wrong never becomes right. Adjudging something as right or wrong at the same time means doing so has for its basis only certain relative and conditional value notions. Relying on absolute and unconditional value concepts as the firm basis alone would enable one to evaluate what is absolutely right and what is absolutely wrong.

All the available modern political ideologies have merely relative, temporal, national and narrow value concepts, mostly money based, for their foundation, and hence are constantly unstable. In their place we need a political science that has an absolutist, ever-lasting, all-embracing and open-minded value concept for its firm basis.

Who will guide us to the path of such a long overdue radical revaluation of politics and its science? And what is such a path? That path is of the integral vision



of the Total Reality, of which the field of politics is an essential part. And that Reality is made clear to us by great gurus and prophets.

As long as man remains a social being, politics will remain unavoidable in human life. The one Reality that forms the firm basis of the phenomenon of human life has necessarily to be the basis of politics also. This human necessity remaining unknown to all the present politicians and most humans because of

their ignorance, was identified and pointed out to us by Nataraja Guru on his becoming enlightened about what Narayana Guru perceived as Reality.

Many are the problems of universal magnitude that we face at present; and more, of course, will emerge in the future. Such is the way modern technology is developing, leading man astray from himself. The final and decisive solution to all such problems demands from our part a clear scientific perception of total life and nature. That perception is what Narayana Guru and all the jagad gurus of the past have clearly set before us. What we lack is the eye to perceive it and to make use of it in our own individual as well as collective life. Everlasting is the wisdom path cleared by gurus who are also everlasting.

The perception many of the followers of Narayana Guru have is mostly confined to the closed circle of casteism. Will the Guru's teachings become irrelevant the day the problem of caste and its evil are resolved? No. The ever-new and all inclusive philosophical vision of the Guru has to be understood and made use of by us to find out decisive solutions to all the temporal problems that arise in the everlasting flow of human life. What we need at present is a discriminative awareness to understand it and its real value in our lives.

Will this awareness ever crop up in the human mind? The answer, as was stated in the beginning, depends on the confluence of the human will of good intentions and the will of God or the Tao. We are not sure whether it will ever become a historical fact. yet let us dream of that best tomorrow. Such noble dreams having sound value notions for their basis, have always been the most reliable beacons in the beginningless and endless onward progression of the phenomenon called human life.

Let us welcome this New Year with such an aspiration! This is the message we wish to give at this moment of noble feelings!



Gurukula Heads, Annual Convention, Varkala, Kerala, 2006



Top: Gurukula inmates, 2007 Gurukula Convention;
Bottom: Mealtime, 2007 Gurukula Convention, Varkala, Kerala.



Top and bottom: Homam ceremony, Brahmailyia Mandir,
2007 Gurukula Convention, Varkala, Kerala

AUTUMN LEAVES HAIKU

BY ANANDA JYOTHI

Not going there
Not staying here
slower and faster
autumn wind being everywhere...

an orange insect
slowly moving
between the lines
of guru's old book.

everything is strange
in this far away tropical country
only moon rise
and silence are real

firefly whispers
inside the little palm
of our lalita mol

a green grasshopper
sitting on our ganesha statue
bringing us good luck

distant stars
shine in one
firefly

a flash of lightning
a butterfly comes
out of its cocoon
is it enlightenment ?

evening thunderbolt
tabala and sitar strings
sing in silence

autumn sunshine
even the narcissus flowers
watch their shadows on the wall

GURUKULA NEWS

The 2006 Gurukula Convention took place in Varkala, Kerala, in December, with various Gurukula members and affiliates attending. Lectures and seminars on Nataraja Guru's *Science of the Absolute* were presented.

Swami Vinaya Chaitanya of the Somanahalli Gurukula will be going to the Sri Sankara University in Kerala for a seminar on Unitive Religion. He is continuing to translate Narayana Guru's works into the Kannada language. Vinaya and Margaret Chaitanya are also developing a new center, about 35 km. from Somanahalli, adjoining a forest with elephant and deer.

The annual Guru Puja was held at the Ooty Gurukula in Fernhill in March.

Nancy Yeilding was in Kerala during February, hosting seminars and classes on *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* at a variety of Gurukula centers.

The extended Gurukula family lost several longtime members this past season. Mr. Madhavettan who helped start and support the Edappally Gurukula died at home in Kerala. Mr. N. C. Kumaran of Chennai who was a long time associate of Nataraja Guru and Guru Nitya died at the age of 93; his wife Mrs. Kumaran died three weeks later. For many decades their home was a center for Gurukula activities. Dr. V. J. Pillay of Crown Point, Indiana, also died this spring. He was a school friend of Guru Nitya, and he and his wife Girija hosted many Gurukula members, seminars and classes over the years.

In this issue of the magazine, we are printing two reminiscences of Gurukula associates, memories of early days and encounters. We hope to solicit more of these for future issues; please send your photos and writings to the Gurukula magazine, 11290 NW Skyline Blvd., Portland, Oregon, 97231, USA.

Web Addresses:

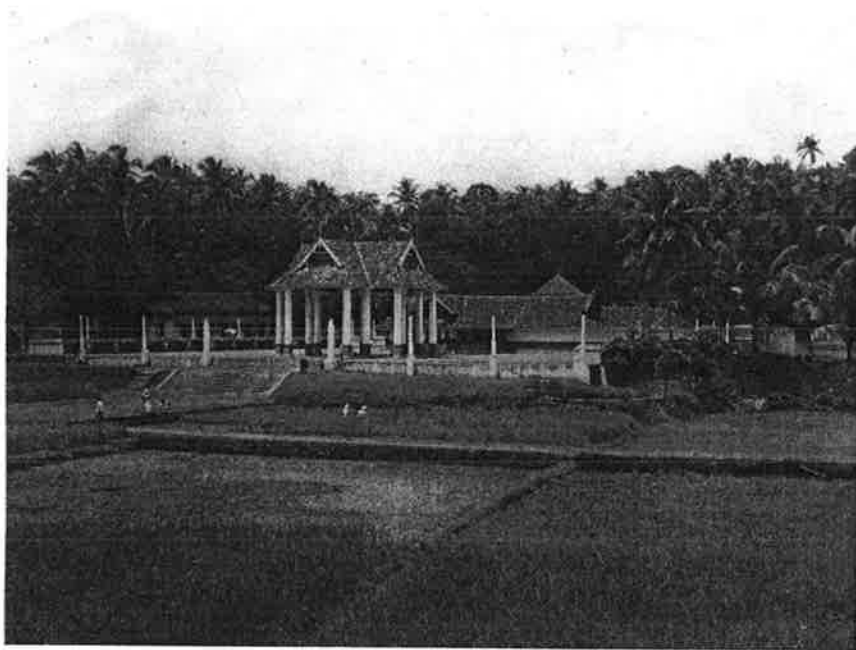
<http://www.geocities.com/islandgurukula> (Gurukula homepage)

<http://homepage.mac.com/vyasa> (Swami Vyasa Prasad's homepage)

<http://www.sraddha@ispwest.com> (Sraddha Durand's photo page)

<http://scottteitsworth.tripod.com> (Scott Teitsworth's homepage)





This photograph is a correction and addition to the one printed in the Spring 2006 issue. The one previously shown was the Narayana Guru shrine at the Śrī Jagannātha Temple and this photograph is an overview of the temple complex.

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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GURUKULAM

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDITION

GURUKULAM magazine is a publication of the Narayana Gurukula, a spiritual and educational organization dedicated to sharing the teachings of Narayana Guru and his successors, as well as to the exploration of the world's many philosophic and artistic traditions. Our attitude is best expressed by Narayana Guru: "Our purpose is not to argue and win, but to know and let know."

NARAYANA GURUKULA was founded by Nataraja Guru in 1923 as a world-wide contemplative community. His successor, Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati, continued the wisdom teaching from 1973 to 1999. The current Guru and Head is Muni Narayana Prasad.

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