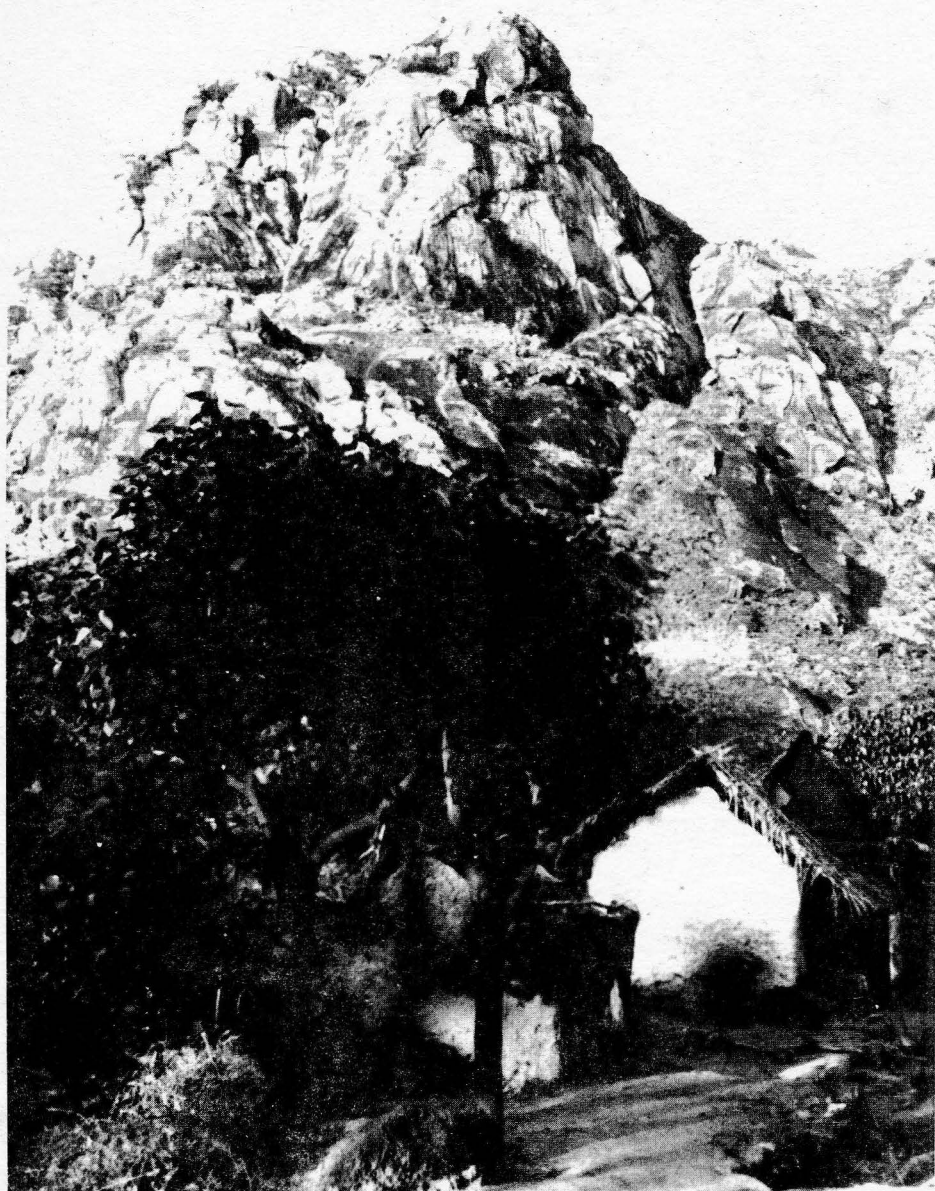
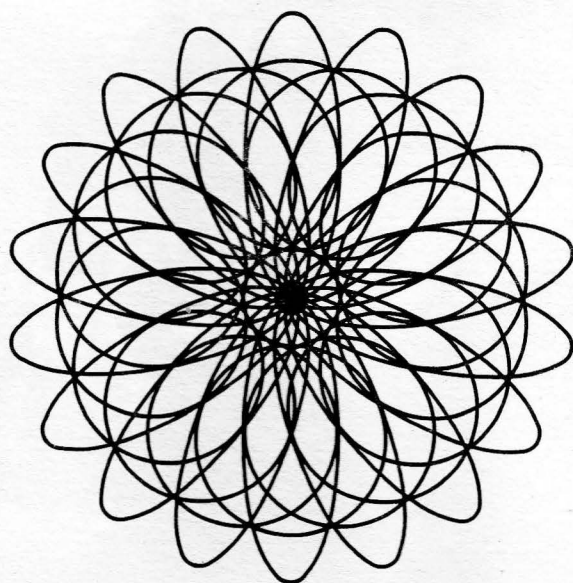


GURUKULAM

VOLUME III • 1987

THIRD QUARTER





GURUKULAM

VOLUME III • 1987

THIRD QUARTER

- 3 SITA'S SONG by Nancy Yeilding
- 5 ACTING OUT RĀMĀYAṆA
- 6 EXPERIENTIAL AESTHETICS AND IMPERIENTIAL
TRANSCENDENCE: Commentary on Narayana Guru's
Svānubhāvagīti Śatakam by Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati
- 15 THE KATHA UPANIṢAD
Translation and Commentary by Muni Narayana Prasad
- 18 THE SCIENCE OF HARMONIOUS UNION
Commentary on Patañjali's *Yoga Śāstra*
by Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati
- 27 THE SONG OF THE SNOWY TREE CRICKET by Jim Nail
- 31 TROPICS AND OTHER TOPICS by Peter Oppenheimer
- 36 THREE POEMS by Aaron Eden
- 38 MUSICAL MANDALAS by Scott Teitsworth
- 40 BOOK REVIEW by Steve Bryson
- 44 PHOTO AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

GURUKULAM

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDITION

GURUKULAM is published by Narayana Gurukula and the East-West University of Unitive Sciences. Its policy is that enunciated by Narayana Guru when he convened the Conference of World Religions at Alwaye, South India, in 1924: "Our purpose is not to argue and win, but to know and let know."

NARAYANA GURUKULA is a non-profit organization and all contributions are tax-deductible.

FOUNDER: Nataraja Guru

GURU and HEAD: Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

CHIEF EDITOR: Muni Narayana Prasad

PUBLICATIONS BOARD: Deborah Buchanan, Sraddha Durand, Carolyn Eden, Peter Oppenheimer, Scott Teitsworth, Robert Tyson, Nancy Yeilding

PRODUCTION STAFF: Steve Bryson, Deborah Buchanan, Darlene Dehlin, Sraddha Durand, Bill Hughes, Andy Larkin, Suellen Larkin, Nancy Leedy, Robert Lucas, Nancy Richmond, Fred Simpson, Scott Teitsworth, Jane Swanson, Robert Tyson, Steve Weckel, Nancy Yeilding

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: Yearly: \$16.00 for four issues. For outside USA add \$3.00 for surface mail, \$10.00 for air mail. Write to: GURUKULAM, 8311 Quail Hill Road, Bainbridge Island, WA, 98110, USA. In India write to: Narayana Gurukula, Srinivasapuram P.O., Varkala, Kerala, 695145, India.

PRINTED at Island Gurukula Āraṇya, Bainbridge Island, Washington, USA.

COVER: Marutva-malai, the mountain cave where Narayana Guru meditated, photograph by Steve Bryson

Sita's Song

Perhaps it was the dazzling quality of the sunlight after days of grey rain or the light mist rising from the damp earth, rich with all the smells of garden soil and plants in bloom, perhaps what I heard was just the happy buzzing of the bees and singing of the birds, bursting out again after the storm, but when I entered the garden this morning, I found a delightful presence there. She seemed to be waiting for me and gently beckoned me to come close. Rather than standing on the ground, she seemed to be half enfolded by it, like a child held in its mother's arms.

As I drew near, I marvelled at how she seemed now to stand out and now to blend in to her surroundings. Her voice was like the sigh of a gentle breeze in the trees: "I came because you are interested in my story: I am Sita."

"Sita!" I exclaimed. "How can you be here so many centuries after your story was recorded and so many thousands of miles away from your homeland?"

"My homeland is not India, even though that is where the *Rāmāyana* was written. Earth is my mother and she is one whole, despite man's habit of thinking of her as broken up into nations. I am at home wherever human beings cultivate the Earth for their sustenance and reverence her as the foundation of life."

"Oh, now I remember how your story begins. Your father, King Janaka, was plowing the Earth in preparation for a sacrifice he was planning because of his wish to have children. His heart must have already been full of sincerity and devotion, because even while still plowing, he found you, an infant, in the field."

"Yes, it is he who named me Sita, which means a furrow, the cultivation of the ground. He cherished me as his daughter and raised me as a princess in his palace. He was a very remarkable

person. Even though he was a king surrounded by all the luxuries of life, he was indifferent to them."

"It sounds like life in his palace must have been dull and boring, especially for a child."

"Oh, not at all. He did not shut out the world. He encouraged the finest cultural values. All that was beautiful and pleasing was readily available to me. My father handled all the affairs of the kingdom with justice and compassion so the palace was always buzzing with activity. He tended to everyone else's needs with great caring, but he did not seem to need or desire anything for himself. In the midst of all the activity, he was always serene. Despite all the amusements of the palace, my happiest hours were the ones spent simply being with him. It was like warming myself in the rays of the sun on a chilly morning or being bathed by the cool sheen of the moon after a hot, bothersome day. I always felt that if I could dive into the vast lake of his serenity, I could float there peacefully forever."

The garden was full of peace as Sita smiled reflectively. A golden-brown butterfly that had been sunning itself on a nearby plant fluttered its wings and flew off to a distant blossom. "It sounds like you were very happy there. But, as the story goes, you left your father's kingdom to marry the prince, Rāmā, and live with him in Ayodhya. Your origins are often forgotten but your relationship to Rāmā has been celebrated through the ages. Your loyalty to him, even in the face of his harsh treatment of you, has been idolized as the epitome of Indian womanhood. The grace with which you always conducted yourself and the strength of your dedication make you appealing to everyone who hears your story, even now.

But, (forgive me for saying so) women these days, even in India, don't want to subordinate themselves to their husbands."

Sita drew herself up and her eyes shone as she answered: "No, women should not subordinate themselves to their husbands and neither did I. That is a very narrow interpretation of my story. It is true that my mind was always fixed on Rāmā and my heart was always full of love for him, but that devotion was not to a man or even to a husband.

"Rāmā means delight and rejoicing. If what I had taken delight in had been manly charms or the security that a good marriage is supposed to provide, I would have been doomed to bitter disappointment. The strong and gallant man Rāmā fought to deliver me after I had been abducted and imprisoned but, having done so, publically doubted and rejected me. Even after my truthfulness was proven, my husband Rāmā abandoned me, pregnant, in the jungle. Like all human beings, he was bound by circumstance and played his role as best as he could."

My heart filled with anger at how she had been treated and my eyes overflowed with tears of compassion for her

suffering. After a while I realized that what I had taken for the song of a bird was her sweet voice musically chanting, "Rāmā, Rāmā, Rāmā...."

"Sita, how did you endure all that with such steadfastness, and how can you still sing of Rāmā so happily?"

As she spoke, the peace in her eyes was like an ever-flowing fountain: "My mother is always there to nourish and support me and the clear truth of my father always guides me to a fulfillment beyond the comforts of life which come and go, leaving dissatisfaction and longing in their wake. Shining at the core of each moment of pleasure or satisfaction is joy itself, a reflection of the joy which perennially shines within each of us -- this is what I adore as Rāmā and which always gives me reason to rejoice."

As she spoke, my compassion and anger dissolved into the joy which permeated the garden, making it more vibrant than ever. Sita shimmered with all the hues of the garden blossoms, shining so brightly that I closed my eyes, only to discover that her radiance completely filled me: "Rāmā, Rāmā, Rāmā," sang my heart. "Rejoice, Rejoice, Rejoice," echoed the garden.

Nancy Yeilding





Valmiki tells the story of Rāmā and Sita.



Sita sees the golden deer near their hut.



The demon Ravana captures Sita.



Good Vibhishana and faithful Hanuman.

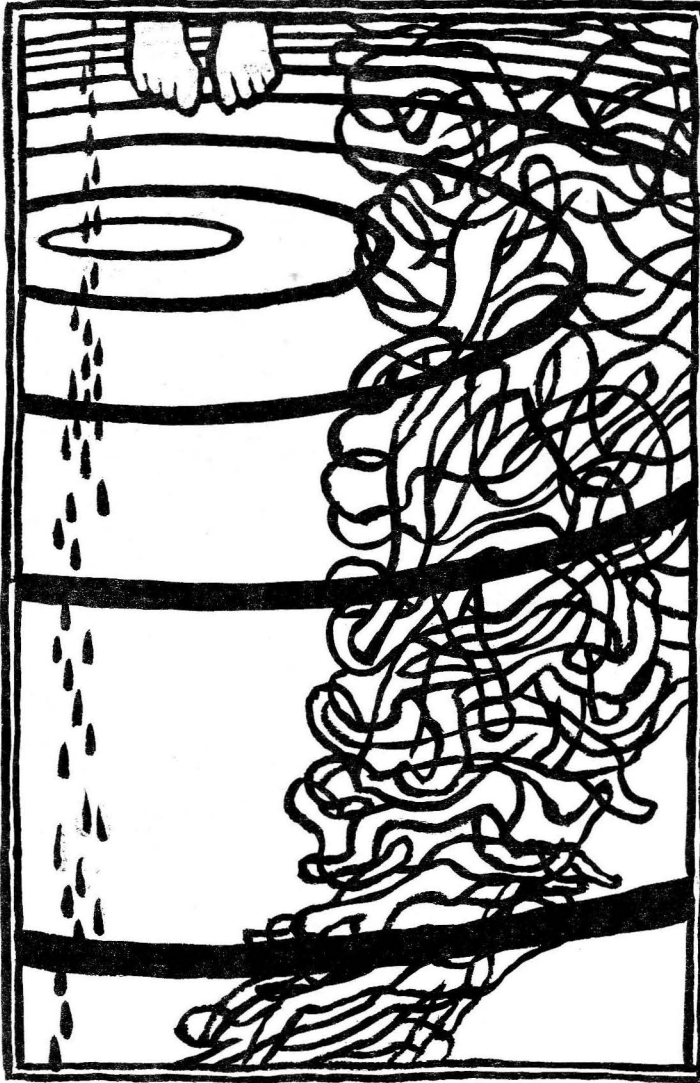
*Acting Out Rāmāyaṇa for Guru Puja at Island Gurukula Āranya
June 28, 1987*

Svānubhavagīti Śatakam:

Experiential Aesthetics and Imperiential Transcendence

by Narayana Guru

Translation and Commentary by
Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati



Verse 2

Your divine name, the sacred ashes with which
your body is besmeared,
and your twin feet, rich in merit, will sever
all strangling thoughts.
For the constant remembrance of this panacea,
I pray and seek intimacy with you.

We are always reacting to this world. Some reactions come in the form of our response to physical stimuli: light, heat, gravitation, and the like. Our interactions with air, fire, water, and the intake of our food and drink cause various chemical reactions. Despite being an individual, a person is also an integral part of the society in which he lives. Such a person has some notion about his social identity, being quite conscious of the society to which he belongs, its cultural and economic structure, the laws he is obliged to obey, various conventions, and the language in which he is supposed to communicate. His acceptance or rejection of any part of the society comes in the form of his reactions to it.

In such a complex relationship between the individual and his environment, there inevitably arise disharmonies which can cause mild or serious biochemical changes in his system. Hidden and irrational causes can also afflict his consciousness. Such upsets may be experienced as fear, anxiety, or social challenge. When these disturbances disrupt the smoothness of a person's social functioning, he is said to have dis-ease, and to require care and attention to bring him back to normalcy. In such a state one seeks therapy.

The body is constituted of millions of cells, which are always decaying and being replaced by new ones. Such natural decay and replenishment does not usually affect the smooth functioning of our system. Malfunction or dysfunction is diagnosed either as a result of wrong or inadequate motivation or as a result of interior disconnection caused by a blockage or break. The first case is connected with the causal consciousness of the individual, which is normally expected to give orientation and purpose in directing actions and reactions for the achievement of certain biological or psychological end results. The second kind of defect is a flaw in the structure.

Most members of the species *homo sapiens* do not fully subject themselves to nature's requirements. The sex appetite is put by nature into an animal or other biological species for the purpose of reproducing that species, while man very often defeats this purpose by putting his emphasis more on the accompanying visceral excitement or pleasure, converting nature's incentive into an end in itself. This misbehavior of man is not allowed to pass without adverse consequences. Sexual infatuation wears out one's higher sensibility, and frustration sets in. As one advances in age, erotic pleasures which were once enjoyed dissipate into a meaningless conditioning. From the perspective of an advanced state of meditation, one has the feeling that he has forgotten to live his life. In the present verse, the author is making a supplication to the Lord to rectify his forgetfulness of the true purpose of life.

When a person is obsessed with the craving to relate himself with his love-object, he repeats the name of his beloved in his mind with a mechanistic compulsion. He behaves as if he were in a state of somnambulism. Set patterns of behavior are repeated whenever a stimulus is received. Even when the stimulus is slight, the response is complete. This is most evident in the case of people who cannot pull themselves out of the urge to cohabit or masturbate.

The remedy for this is to set a block in repetitive activity by conscious deliberation. Instead of repeating the beloved's name, which acts as a stimulus to compulsive behavior, the Guru suggests that one intervene in such habitual activity by chanting the Lord's name, *nāma śivāya*, which is considered to be an efficacious mantra to direct one's mind from the immanence of the psychosomatic system to the sublime state of beatitude which represents transcendence. Every name has its value association. The dynamics of a word come from the affective quality of the value purport it brings to the mind.

In the previous verse, the great task which Śiva takes upon himself as a redeemer is contrasted with the self-seeking pleasure hunger of the supplicant. He is remembered mainly for the steadfastness of his two feet, which are firmly planted on terra firma. The aspirant admits his fickleness and wants to cure it by coming into closer relationship with the feet of Śiva, which stand for uprightness, dedication, and serious commitment.

A third element in the scheme of therapy given in the present verse is symbolized by the sacred ash with which the Lord's body is smeared. It is all that remains when the triple qualities of nature, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, are consumed in the fire of wisdom. At some stage in one's spiritual discipline a drastic turn is to be made from the ephemeral values of life to its core aspect. Narayana Guru alludes to this in his *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction, as a principle of obversion that is obverting one's overt value sense to arrive at the intrinsic nature of one's own Self, which is none other than *ānanda*. In verse 8 he says:

Enjoying the five fruits, such as beauty,
mounted on a foul-smelling gun and evasively flying back
and forth
are five birds; having brought them down, through an inversion,
that radiant inner awareness should fill one's entire being.

Verse 3

Wanting to put up an invincible fight against all in the
vicinity is compulsive erotics.
Am I an equal to fight it back?
You should mercifully hold me close to you
and should not allow me to live in indulgence,
forgetting the floweriness that halos your tender feet.



A stray bitch is loitering in the courtyard, followed by four street dogs, all male. They are compulsively attracted to her because she is in heat. The bitch probably has no preference, seeming to look upon the situation as a nuisance. She turns back again and again, baring her teeth and snarling menacingly. One of the male dogs looks weak and famished, but is overwhelmed by his fascination with the bitch. Two stout dogs pounce upon him, biting the poor creature on the mouth and buttocks. Yet the famished dog's physical weakness is more than compensated for by his sexual compulsion. No amount of fight can turn him away from the bitch, who is piteously looking at him out of the corners of her eyes as if she is in sympathy with him. Now a particularly large and fierce looking dog is attacking all the other suitors from every vantage point. Here the fight is not triangular but quadrangular. Men also behave as dishonorably as these dogs when they are stung by erotics.

Nature has a way of regulating the libidinal outbursts in ani-

mals and birds with many designs, such as restricting the time of heat, fixing the mates as exclusive couples, and so on. Only man has the freedom to choose, controlling himself through the artifice of legislated norms and tacit conventions of moral behavior and social nicety. In spite of all such well-fortified social contracts, man can run amok when he is erotically disturbed. In animals sex has only one purpose: the reproduction of the species as willed by nature. In human society the female is often impregnated "by mistake," and man is trying to safeguard himself with technological protection. In sexual matters Adam wants to eat his apple without paying for it.

In the courtyard a terrific fight is now going on between the contending dogs. The bitch is witnessing the menace, holding herself in a neutral position, wanting both to be there and to run away from the situation. This ambivalence is typical of all amorous male-female dialectics. What is surprising in this situation is the hidden source of energy being so lavishly released in the lean and famished suitor. It is a strange phenomenon experienced in love life by all living beings, irrespective of the species to which they belong. In man this instinctual energy source of the lower animals is augmented by the triggering of certain preconditioned reflexes, which have been registered by rewards and punishments received on previous occasions.

Indian systems of philosophy detail a threefold source of energy. The first source is *jñāna śakti*, energy dynamics ensuing from knowledge. The second is *ica śakti*, energy dynamics stimulated by volitional determination. The third is *kriyā śakti*, a package of energy that is specifically released for the accomplishment of an action programmed by one's will in accordance with the information data given in a situation, either preplanned or arrived at by sheer chance.

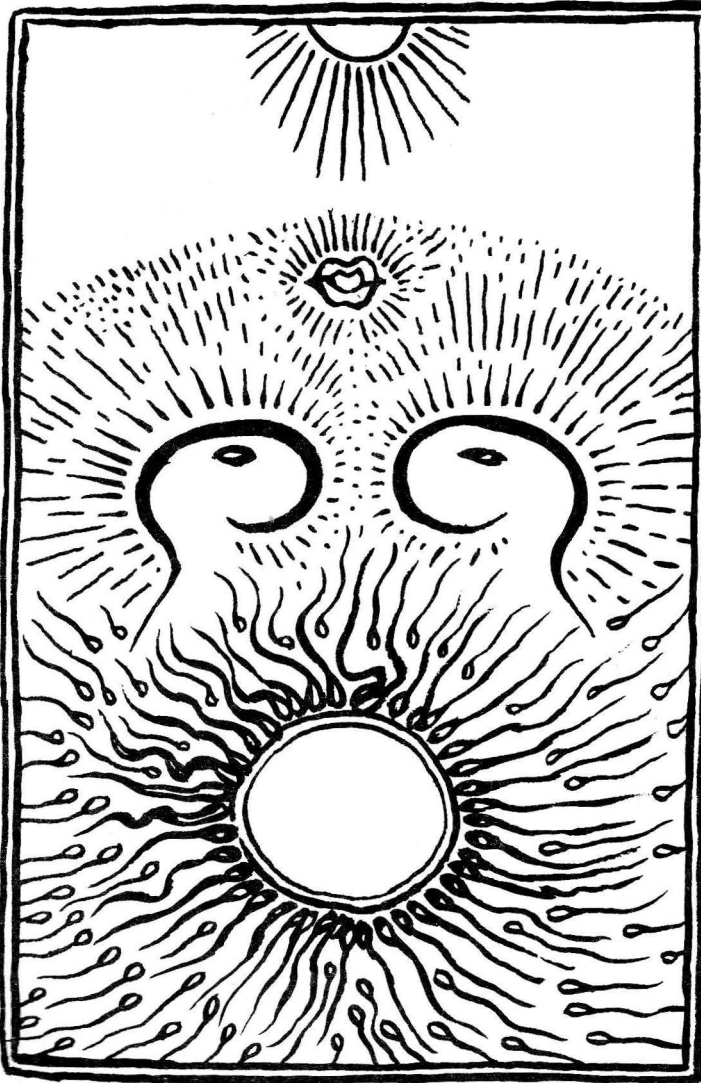
The discretion which man can exercise in asserting his will becomes meaningful and successful only when there is a correct envisioning of the value involved in the accomplishment of a certain goal. No value stands isolated as a singular attraction. In the evolution of an individual's character a whole spectrum or matrix of interrelated values arises.

In an uncritical mind there can be the shimmering of certain values which are highly exaggerated and basically superficial. Putting all of one's energy into the pursuit of such a goal can only be a wild goose chase. In this way the rash behavior of vulgar people leads them to deplorable acts like rape or abuse of different sorts. There is an equally dangerous exposure to false values in sophisticated societies where sexual repression is held in great veneration, such as in the life of religious people who practice celibacy. Repressed people are not fighting anyone outside their bodies, but within them a terrific fight is going on all the time.

The social evolution of a value is a historical process, with the vested interests of many theocratic and socio-economic groups getting into a confection by which certain values are extolled as commendable. In reality such values are bound to be pretentious hoodwinking. Personal values which the individual arrives at can be equally fallacious because they are often prompted by pathological states of mind or undisciplined compulsions. What is most commendable is a value that is adopted to be one's own moral foundation on which his or her entire

character can rest, and which can give continuous incentive for the pursuit of a higher goal in life. For this one requires a model that is universally appreciated. In the present verse the Guru is asking for such a model to sit close to him and give him continuous inspiration.

The reference to the floweriness of the Lord's tender feet allegorically combines the finest aspects of aesthetics coming from the ontologic side with the excellence of transcendence belonging to the teleologic world of axiology, where the immediate present can also be the eternal present of pure duration.



Verse 4

Confused in head, exhibiting buxom breasts,
carrying a sea of agitation within, and with
restless eyes ever seeking new prey,
those who sportively wander, it is with them I dwell
in this shack filled with the filthiest of dirt.

When we probe into the origin of life, even before we come across anything that can be identified as organic, we see a repetitive conformity to certain physical laws. This is exemplified in the formation of crystals. Each crystal has its own unique shape. All crystals of the same order can be recognized by their identical structure. Although we notice proliferation and growth in varieties of crystals, they are not considered to be living organisms. But we see a link from the formation of periodic crystals as we pass on to the aperiodic. This indicates that if evolution is a fact, it is not monitored by blind forces.

Certain entities cannot be classified definitively as being either living or non-living. The virus is either an extremely complex molecule or the simplest microorganism, which multiplies and grows like a parasite within living bodies. When we pass on from the virus to the bacteria we enter the threshold of living beings. Like viruses, bacteria do not mate or become pregnant. They increase by the division of their cells. But as we go further up the ladder of life, it becomes imperative to have male and female for the propagation of a species.

Yet even where sex distinctions exist, each member is basically both male and female. During gestation, it is only a slight emphasis of certain hormones that causes a fetus to become male or female. In some cases we even see a male changing into a female or vice versa after a period of previous identification. So male and female are not to be looked upon as different species.

Man and woman are complementary counterparts. Jean Paul Sartre uncharitably describes this complementarity as a causal factor that induces frustration in man. Sartre says man and woman are counterparts that can unite into a whole. A woman's body is full of holes, and with each one she is trying to suck in man. She even goes to the extent of sucking the entire spirit of man within her womb to imprison him. However, for the fulfillment of the life of each, the other has to imperatively be there as a spouse or mate. This complementarity goes far deeper than their social relationship. In chromosomes there is a male-female complementarity. The first cell manifesting in the womb is a product of the union of a sperm and an egg.

This androgynous aspect is considered as a basic factor in the worship of the Hindus. They think of their primordial god Śiva as half male and half female. The anima and animus which Jung speaks of, referring to male and female counterparts in the psyche, are important elements in Indian iconography. The image of Śri Krishna is an excellent example. He has a muscular male body and a beardless female face with curly hair. Men are attracted to his female face, and women are attracted to his male body. Thus he is adored by all.

There is an ancient Indian legend of creation. When God was alone he wanted a companion. For this purpose he created a man. Man was not as perfect as God, so he found it hard to sit in serenity and mumble God's name all the time. Seeing the first man in a state of depression, God wanted to create a companion for him, the first of all creation. He distilled the beauty of the rainbow, added the agitation of the waves, put in its core a hard diamond, made it ferocious with the killer habit of the tiger, gave it the talent to weave the webs of a spider, and endowed it with a smile of such innocence that it could surpass a lily. The net product was woman.

When God first presented her to man he was immensely delighted. He praised God and took her away as a gift from the divine. Man and woman made of this earth a beautiful grove, and settled down in it. After a few days of intimacy, man discovered that woman was an impossible being. Sometimes she would sit silent and shed tears. At other times she would shout and shriek hysterically, creating a hell of a noise. She was basically paranoiac and suspected her man's every motivation. Soon man came to frustration. He dragged her to the presence of God and in anger shouted, "God, take away this woman. I cannot live another day with her." God accepted this.

That night the man discovered how miserable it was to be alone with no one to touch, no one to speak to. He felt as if he had fallen into a vacuum. Hunger left him; sleep failed him; inhospitable winds were blowing. He was filled with self-pity, and regretted that he had been cruel to his best friend. Whichever way he turned he saw the smile of the woman. He remembered how kind, tender and caring she had been. When the first light of dawn came he rushed back to God's abode. When God asked him what he wanted, he said, "Give me back my woman. I cannot live without her." God agreed on one condition: that he should not bring her back again.

Life is to be shared smilingly or tearfully. Man and woman are like warp and woof as they endlessly weave the fabric of karma. Phenomenality and all its drawbacks are only in their bodies. In the soul there is no such distinction. The physical limitations of man and woman should not deter either of them from their aspiration to become perfect.

Male-female differences exist in all orders. If there are gods, there are also goddesses. If there are demons, there are demonesses. *Yakshas* have their *yakshis*. As in the human species, there are male-female counterparts among animals and birds as well. Woman can be seen as mother, sister, wife and daughter. Man can be seen as father, brother, husband and son. Birth marks the beginning of all this. To become pregnant, nurture a fetus in the womb, and give birth to a baby nine months after conception is no trouble to a man. It is a woman's burden. She deserves only praise for increasing the progeny of mankind.

Love life is not as troublesome as that. The initial attraction between the male and female is to have a chance to love and be loved. This is to be admired and remembered with gratitude. It is true that this body has in it filth and urine and several other forms of dirt, but in the same body we have a heart that becomes excited with love and a mind that can cultivate the finest of values. Human intelligence has not only discovered many secrets, but has also perfected many technical devices to make life on earth easy.

Considering all this we may say that nature, like the sphinx, is offering us a riddle. Wriggling worms are born in dirt and live there to the end only as filthy worms. The lotus plant also lives in the dirt, but it produces a fine flower of exquisite beauty in the light of the sun, with pretty petals full of fragrance and the sweetest honey in its calyx. These two possibilities are there for man also. Either he can live as a wriggling worm, a pig revelling in dirt, or he can single out his mind from all physical anomalies and direct it toward the achievement of the highest. A woman can be a great inspiration and full of blessings

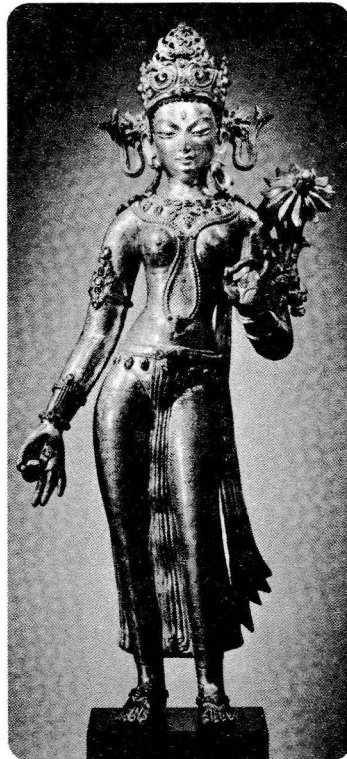
for man. Man can be a source of strength and an unfailing guide to woman. Or a woman can cause a man endless misery, while a man may destroy a woman heartlessly and ruthlessly.

Three areas of a woman's body are pointed out as a source of either blessedness or curse: the genitals, breasts and lips. These are the three areas a lover seeks to give him most of his erotic pleasures. They are also the three traps in a woman with which a man is infatuated. It is the genitals through which the man's sperm enters the woman to re-incarnate him as a son or daughter. Then the genitals are not a symbol of pleasure, they are the sacred origin of life. Do not despise a woman's genitals. They are man's gateway to life.

When a baby is born, the breasts are the source of the child's nourishment. Then they are not a source of erotic love. The first food that all mammals enjoy comes from the mother's breast. Now the woman is a mother. Her kisses to the child are not like the kiss she gave to her lover. It is from these lips that the first words come to the child. She becomes like a veda, the great wielder of truth, to her child. Her kiss is the nourishment she gives to her child's soul.

Śankara, in the *Saundārya Lahārī*, compares the genitals, breasts and lips of a woman to wine, milk and honey. The wine of life, the milk of nourishment, and the honey of wisdom symbolize woman, the mother of mankind. It is a pity when a man does not realize this. If he lives only in indulgence he is no better than a worm living in a filthy gutter. The echoing of a foolish man's lamentation can be complemented with the wise man's aspiration to free himself into the expanse of the spirit's liberation.

(Continued in next issue.)



Katha Upaniṣad

Translation and Commentary by

Muni Narayana Prasad

II. 5

Those fools who exist in the middle of ignorance, thinking themselves to be learned and always relying on devious ways, always go around deluded, just like blind men led by the blind.

Desire for achieving fame and respectability is very common, especially among the wealthy. Many people are willing to suffer to gain recognition and salutations in the market place. They want to ensure themselves prominent seats at social functions. Yet, real scholars are treated with respect and always seated honorably. There are those who desire to be respected as scholars though they are not real scholars. They are willing to spend money to gain this reputation. Such lovers of fame are called *panditam manyas*. Perhaps when they were young there was no one to guide them properly, so they made mistaken decisions about the goal of life. Then, over time, they became rigid and unable to change themselves. They don't care for the advice of others. So they are called *svayam dhīrās* (wise and brave by themselves). Such people are living in the midst of ignorance. They may have some model whom they imitate but such models also live in ignorance. If one blind man leads another, both of them will be wandering aimlessly - they might fall into dangerous holes. The same is the

case with an ignorant person who accepts the guidance of another ignorant person. Both of them will go round in the vicious circle of suffering, the farthest extreme of which is death.

Most people spend a major part of their life preparing for a happy life. They are even willing to go to the desert or the middle of the ocean to toil and suffer hoping to gain future happiness. They are not really living but only preparing to live. This kind of preparation goes on for a long time. In the middle of it one may happen to die without ever having lived. Such is the state of those who are in the midst of ignorance.

Life is not to be lived in the future. When every moment is lived in the present, we see that life doesn't terminate with the ceasing of the individual entity called 'I', and that life is an eternal and infinite unfoldment of an unfathomable creativity. Those who do not have this experience go to death as mentioned in the seventh *mantra*.

II. 6

The transcendental aspect of truth does not become clear to the ignoramus who is heedless and deluded by the desire for wealth. One who thinks that this world is what exists and that the transcendental does not exist, comes under the control of death.

The transcendental aspect of truth does not become clear to the ignoramus who is heedless and deluded by the desire for wealth. One who thinks that this world is what exists and that the transcendental does not exist comes under the control of death.

Nachiketas' question was regarding death. Death is a phenomenon which causes great anxiety and fear in life. Even when we are aware that it is unavoidable, we try our best to avoid it. No one is willing to die. Birth is the opposite pole of death. When a child is born it is accepted with great jubilation and the parents feel that their life in this world has become more meaningful. At the same time we are completely oblivious of the fact that life in this world is continuing forever through the process of birth and death. We are unaware that it is the ultimate Truth that makes life an actual experience through the phenomena of birth and death. Because we are not intent on the search we remain deluded, thinking that what we see with our senses and our resulting experiences of suffering and joy constitute the Truth. As a result, we fear death and feel jubilant on the occurrence of birth. We have the impression that life is only the interval between birth and death. The aim of life thus becomes that of making this interstice as pleasant as possible and accumulating wealth to ensure it. This delusion which is due to our inability to discriminate truth from falsehood is here called *moha*. It does not occur to the minds of the deluded that there is a Truth which is beyond birth and death or that there is a way of knowing it. Such people are called *mūḍhā-s* (fools or ignoramuses) here. For them the endless cycle of birth and death and the resultant suffering is reality. There is nothing truer than that for them. They again and again go to death.

The question of what will happen to one after death arises only to those who think that death is a reality. But for those who understand that Reality transcends death the question does not arise at

all. Thus the direct answer Yama gives to Nachiketas is that this question is pertinent only to those who have the delusion that this world is reality. This misunderstanding of Truth due to delusion is called *bhrama*. Getting free of this delusion and being aware that Truth transcends birth and death and is attainable is called *prama* or certainty. When one has this certainty, one transcends the need to ask such a question.

II. 7

Even to hear of that (Absolute Self) is not available to many, and it is not comprehended by many even on hearing. The declarer of such a Truth is a wonder. The attainer of that Truth is a proficient one. One who comprehends that Truth, taught by such a proficient teacher, is also a wonder.

It was indicated in the last *mantra* that the problem of death is to be finally solved by realizing the Absolute as the birthless and deathless Reality. This happens only for those who give up the idea that what we see before us is the only truth and who fully understand that there is a changeless basic reality behind everything that appears as changing. This is a turning point in one's attitude towards life. However, even after one becomes interested in the ultimate Truth, the path to attain it need not necessarily be opened up. That this attainment is not possible with one's own intellectualization and critical study will become clearer as we proceed. It is possible only with the help and guidance of those who have already attained it. Finding such a guide occurs only by chance. Wise men are not readily available when the seeker is in need of them. The arousal of thirst for knowledge in a seeker and his meeting

with a true Guru is a very rare event. So it is stated here that even hearing of this teaching is not available.

Being inquisitive and finding a true Guru need not necessarily lead one to the attainment of Truth. It was indicated earlier that the attainment depends on the competency of the seeker also. According to Upaniṣadic stories, some seekers had to remain with their Guru for three years, some others for twelve years and still others for their whole life. It is not guaranteed that a disciple will understand the secret of the teaching of the Guru even if the seeker's whole life is spent with the Guru. This shows the different grades of competency among disciples.

There is one more aspect which fulfills the search for Truth. That is the intimate bipolarity a disciple establishes with a Guru. The hidden truth that is with one's Guru, which is not really expressible through words, can be made one's own only through an intimacy in the Self. This intimacy or bipolarity is called *guru sishya parasparya*. Thus the desire for wisdom, competency, and the bipolarity between the Guru and the disciple are essential prerequisites for the

imparting of wisdom. In the case of those who have not fulfilled these prerequisites, whatever they hear from the Guru goes over their heads. Or, whatever is heard remains only heard and is not made one's own by contemplation (*mānana*) and realization (*nididhyāsana*). So the Upaniṣadic rishi says, "Even among many hearers only a very few really know it."

That a seeker becomes a seer of Truth is a very rare event and a wonder in the history of mankind. Such a one's experience is also a wonder. The words, "The declarer of such a Truth is a wonder," could be understood in both these senses.

For the man of wisdom, this life is not full of suffering and is not to be feared. Life is only the unfurling of the dynamism of the Self which is Existent, Subsistent and Value at the same time (*sat-cit-ānanda*). For those who can realize the pulsation of the same Self in every aspect of life, individually and collectively, life has a flow which is harmonious with a holistic vision and acquires its own proficiency. Such proficiency is called *kuśalata*. To become a disciple of such a proficient teacher and to become illuminated is a wonder. Such a one also becomes filled with the sense of wonder.

(Continued in next issue.)

When we take it for granted that the atom bomb is not in keeping with the dignity or destiny of mankind, education conceived in terms of a whole lifetime, and as applying to the whole of humanity at once, is the only factor with which to counter this ever-staring disaster which threatens the race.

Nataraja Guru

The Science of Harmonious Union

Commentary on Patañjali's *Yoga Śāstra*

Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

Sutra I:12

*abhyāsa vairāgyābhyām
tannirodhah*

abhyāsa: by practice
vairāgyābhyām: : by desirelessness
tad:: they are
nirodhah:: restraint

They are restrained by practice and desirelessness.

Every individual is subjected to two kinds of conditioning, genetic and environmental. Genetic conditioning is a conditioning in depth. This is viewed differently by Western schools and Indian schools.

The Western notion can be indicated by an example from Schrodinger. He calls our attention to a new born calf. Just after the emergence of the calf from the cow's body, it lies helpless for only a couple of minutes. Then it gets up, walks straight to the udder of the cow, finds the teat of the mother without difficulty and sucks milk. From where did the calf learn that this is how it should find its nourishment? After posing this question, Schrodinger says that in the calf there are the footprints of memories of ten thousand lives the calf has undergone. Schrodinger is a quantum physicist and not a theologian. He is not speaking of rebirth. His reference is to genetic repro-

duction and the accumulation of information bits as the stream of life passes from parent to child through countless millions of years. Thus the Western scientist sees the depth of memory as an evolutionary system responsible for the present biological world.

The Indian seers postulate the vertical perpetuation of an individuated personality that assumes new bodies after a pause called death. Thus the Indian seer sees a psychic depth whereas his Western counterpart sees a somatic depth. The Western notion is a horizontal view while the Indian one is vertical.

Body and mind are not two separate entities. They are the polarized counterparts of a single system. The Western and Indian views can be profitably combined into a complementary whole. Whether taken genetically or as a psychic continuance, we come to the conclusion that every thought in us is deeply engrained. Our fear and hope are not surface manifestations. In that case, the problem of erasing a conditioning, changing a habit, and reorganizing one's mind cannot be easily accomplished. The whole theory of conditioning and deconditioning is epitomized in a verse of the Bhagavad Gita. In Chapter IV, verse 13, Krishna says: *cāturvarṇyam mayā śṛṣṭam - guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ tasya kartāram api mām - viddhyakartāram avyayam* -- "The four-fold color grades (*varṇyas*) were created by myself on the basis of innate



disposition (*guna*) and vocation (*karma*) that accorded with each; know Me to be the maker of such, as also to be its non-doer, unexpended."

The four colors spoken of here are analogically similar to Jung's classifications of extrovert-introvert. The two main dispositions are to be active by temperament or to be contemplative by temperament. Among the activists, there are those who are very obsessed with the necessities of life and they spend all their time tied up with action, especially of an obligatory kind. They slave under other people, seeking nothing but the physical sustenance of life. Such people's minds are colored with self-pity (*śoka*). Because they are perishing in their state of despair as if they are dissolving in self-pity, they are called *śudras*. Then there are those who are obsessed with the need for security. They are always scheming and planning. With their cunning, they make reserves for themselves. They enjoy the freedom they buy with their earnings. They are the transactionists, *vaisyas*. Then there are those who are romantic in their ideologies and are willing to sacrifice their body and leisure for upholding high human values. They take upon themselves the burden of facilitating an orderly, peaceful life for others in their community. They are *kṣatriyas*. Then there are the pure contemplatives who value the freedom of their souls and sacrifice only a minimum of their freedom

for the sustenance of their lives. Learning is their main pursuit. Wisdom is their reserve for security. They are *brahmins*. These are natural colors which give specific characteristics to people's personalities through the laws that govern the biological, psychological and sociological needs of the human species. Unfortunately, in India these have been looked upon as permanent classes and the system has degenerated into a rigid caste system.

In this verse Krishna says, "As the abiding law in everyone and everything, I am the creator of psychic colorations." At the same time he graciously points out that each person can also be the undoer of the color that he or she has accumulated in the present life or through several lives. Where you are the undoer of the psychic coloration of your personality, God does not interfere. Therefore, He is said to be the non-doer of the transformation you effect upon yourself. In another of Krishna's teachings in the Gita, it is said that what can manifest in you can only be what is already latent in you. However, everything latent in you need not necessarily be actualized

For your actualization, you require appropriate instruments, congenial environments and the will to actualize. Thus it is up to you to live in an environment which is not conducive for drawing out the potentials of any evil disposition with which you are genetically endowed.

Again it is up to you not to will an action that can strengthen an evil *samskāra* (a malignant disposition). It is again in your power to nullify the potentiality of a negative force by accentuating the positive thrust of a benevolent disposition. This freedom of the individual to change himself or herself, to reorganize the psyche, is given in the present aphorism as cultivation of detachment and repeated exercise in the building up of benevolent dispositions as well as the eradication of malevolent dispositions. The cultivation of non-attachment is here termed *vairāgya* and the repetitive practice by which a desirable potency can be actualized is called *abhyāsa*. We will have occasion to go into detail on these in the section on discipline.

Modifications of mind ensue from mind's triple characteristics: knowing, doing and experiencing. These correspond to the three terms we gave at the very outset: *prakhyā*, *pravṛtti* and *stithi*. *Prakhyā* is knowing. General awareness is the backdrop of the several roles we play in our drama of life. It is within this general knowledge that several modifications arise. Each modification comes from the special attention that is given to properties that affect our sense organs and the impact that a sense impression creates on the affectivity of our psycho-somatic system. By affectivity we mean the dual principles of pain and pleasure, and consequent attraction and repulsion. Pleasure, attraction, and the incentive to return to the same experience are motivated by self-preservation. Pain, repulsion, and the accompanying fear are the negative counterparts of the instinct of self-preservation which is of the nature of defense. Thus *prakhyā* is a very large field of awareness which is tied up with all the major instincts of life. The natural interests of a living organism spontaneously accept the role of the farmer and the hunter, the role of the procreator, the role of the defender, etc. In all these roles, the person has to become very active.

Man is not merely a physical ani-

mal. He has several other dimensions apart from physical, chemical and biological. The more subtle realms in which man lives are the familial system in which he has to play definite roles, and the social matrix in which he has to represent himself as a person, as a member of a family and as one who carries out his civic responsibilities. This social dimension requires him to adhere to the mores of his society, to respect conventions and to uphold the enacted law of the community to which he has to show his allegiance. As the past is overbearing in the form of the collective memory of the community and the recorded chronicles of man's story on earth, the individual is a continuator of culture and tradition. Part of the culture is the aesthetic consideration of the community and the several trial and error adventures which people at each age were undergoing. It is like a tapestry that is woven through ages and every person living in the present has to add or subtract a little in the interplay of aesthetic interest, which consequently becomes one's personal contribution to that knowledge. Thus knowledge and action are always going hand in hand.

Every conscious appreciation of a situation is a new commitment to the world order. To uncoil one's personal consciousness which is interwoven with the collective unconscious is not as easy as one might imagine. In certain cases there has to be an abrupt breaking or the burning of bridges. This process is called *tapas*. For the cultivation of detachment and the repetition of helpful practice, *tapas* is the general name.

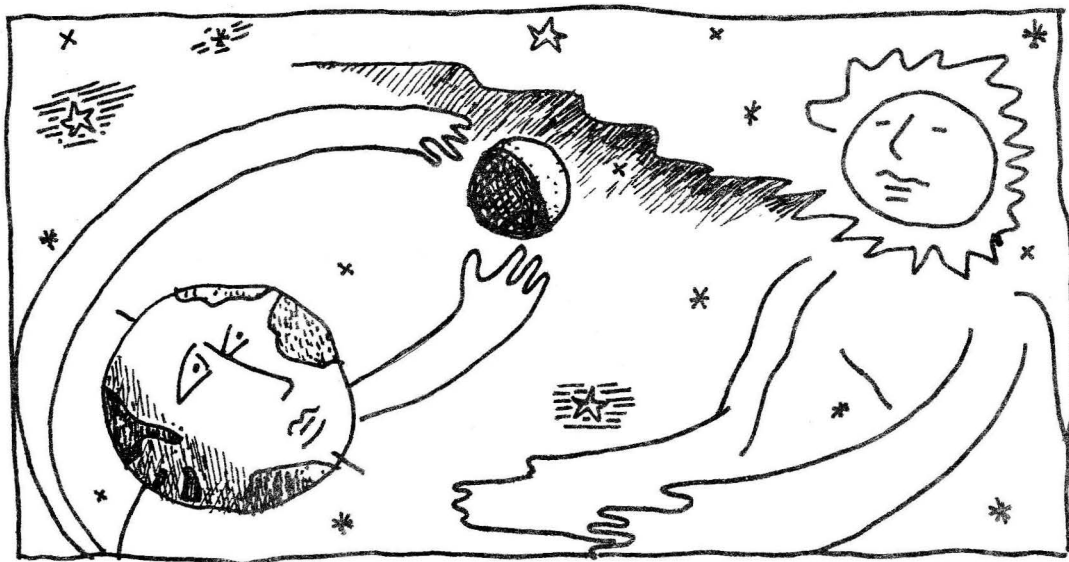
However advanced in the execution of a throughgoing scientific technology and cool in the critical logical consideration of facts most Western scientists may be, their minds still seem to be haunted by some Semitic archetypes, such as an angry Jehovah and a cunning Satan. This is evident in Freud's concept of the super ego which is identical with the jealous and angry Jehovah. The satanic, evil rebellious hankering of the Devil is passed on to the id. The ego stands in between as

the tormented sinner. The biographers of Charles Darwin are obsessed with his sins which they see as extricating from God his power to create and having incest with Mother Nature by assigning her the ingenuity of instituting evolution. The Indian elite, on the other hand, could never pay more than lip service to their gods. An Indian god is never more serious than Shakespeare's Puck or Ariel. After all, Brahma, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Devi are all only poetic fancies, metaphorically referring to deeper psychic realities. This is what we have to bear in mind when we think of disciplining of consciousness - yoga - which is different from the religious pursuits instituted by theistic religions.

Yogis refer to two tendencies of human nature. One is giving oneself into the hands of nature's pranks and living like a pig in the filthy swamp of life or becoming uncouth and selfish like wild animals who ruthlessly kill their prey, or always living in fear like a deer chased by a pack of wolves. This is what they describe as the descending path of *raga* (attachment) and *moha* (delusion). It is to contradict these tendencies that *tapas* is prescribed. It is an ascending path like a fish swimming against the current, a boat going upstream or climbing a mountain with a heavy load. To drop anything, including one's own body or even

mind, is always aided by the gravitational pull of earth and the earthiness in one's mental attitude. Only with resolute determination can one ascend the path. This ascending path of *tapas* includes several disciplines which are to be integrated into one holistic attempt, which is at once a purification and the actualization of a hierarchy of values.

We are presented with a number of phenomenological illusions which are customarily recognized as the facts of life. A person with an uncritical mind deems them so until he or she becomes disillusioned. Theoretical knowledge of the truthful, the good and the beautiful is to be obtained from a bonafide teacher or the source books of recorded wisdom. The aspirant has to take initiative with unflagging interest, to have a critical examination of his or her preformed habits, and then scrape or modify the behavioral pattern in such a manner that it is cleansed of ignorant adherence to evil or superficial modes. Instead of a static view of an effect or a cause, the aspirant yogi is expected to develop a transparency of vision by which he or she can clearly see the manifested effect and the entire process through which, from the primeval cause to the present effect, the manifestation came. He or she should also have the sagacity to unhook all expectations of the future from the performanc-



es in which he or she is presently engaged.

Nature is said to have two inverse impacts on our minds. One is the concealing of truth and the other is the precipitating of imaginary pictures which are easily taken for true. The veiling principle is called *avarana* and the projecting principle is called *vikṣepa*. Eliminating the *vikṣepa* from one's mind will automatically pull off the veil. Every moment is thus a moment of challenge to decipher the mystery of life presented in the form of enigmas, paradoxes and conundrums. That is why it is said that there is no holiday in spirituality and no one can act as a proxy. In India, this straight and honest approach to life has been watered down to the level of puerile snobbishness in the name of *bhakti*. Many spend hours chanting and singing and getting nowhere other than into hysteric frenzies and raising their blood pressure. In the second *pada* of this book we will have ample opportunities to dwell on the details of the discipline and the methods of actualization of values.

Sutra I:13

tatra sthitau yatno'bhyāsaḥ

tatra: of these

sthitau: as regards steadiness

yatnaḥ: the effort

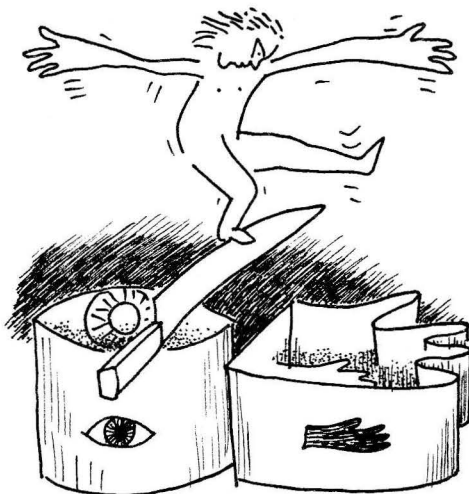
abhyāsaḥ: what is called practice

Of these, practice is the effort to secure steadiness.

It is everyone's common experience that their mental alertness is not always the same. In the morning, body and mind are fresh and it is easy to apply one's mind to anything that needs close attention. After an intake of food, a heavy breakfast or lunch, the body metabolism is affected by the secretion and action of the digestive juices. Attention becomes less and there is even a tendency to doze off. The flow of energy into the motor system becomes less and there is even a

tendency to doze off. As night advances the energy flow decreases more and it is hard to restrain sleep. No cogitation takes place in sleep and it is as if many faculties of the psycho-somatic system are closed down temporarily. It is with such a body and mind that an aspirant has to practice the very difficult equalization of the oscillating function of consciousness that moves between the knower and the known. Half of one's attention is to be given to objects that are external to one's physical person, and the other half has to remain with the cognizing consciousness. The fluctuating attention which alternately gives the idea of "I am knowing" and "this is what is known," is a state where active modification is going on. This modification has to attain a state of serenity in which the vibratory function of consciousness becomes so very even that attention does not shift from the mental space it occupies to any new item of perception or cogitation.

The effort required is sometimes said to be equivalent to the attention applied by a person who is dealing with a lion or a tiger that is performing for the spectators at a circus. The slightest slackening in the ringmaster's attention can result in a wholesale tragedy. Another example is given of a man balancing on the blade of a sharp sword. The same



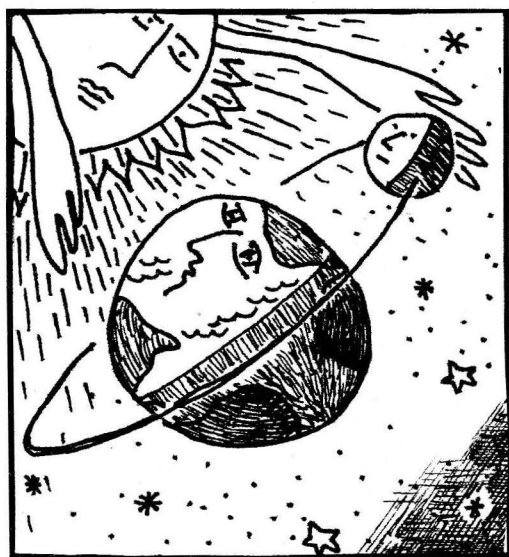
principle is nowadays spoken of as bio-feedback. We can take an example of bio-feedback to show how the yogi manages to keep up his effort in a successful manner to occupy the neutral zero of his consciousness and remain in that state, first for a long time and then perhaps forever.

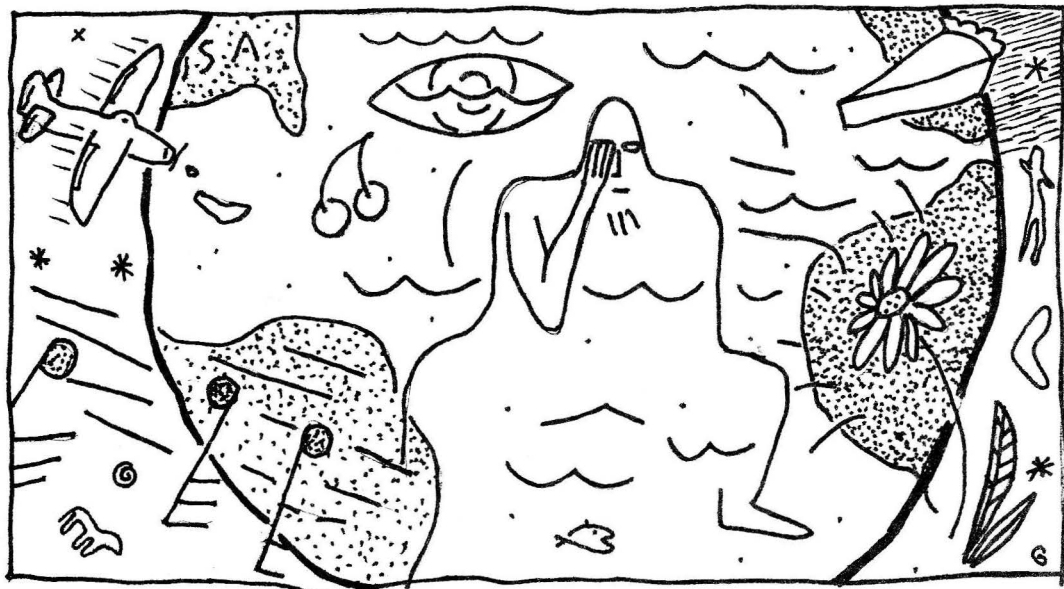
One of the devices used for bio-feedback training to establish the alpha wave of the brain is as follows: the trainee sits upright in a comfortable position. Three colored bulbs - red, yellow and green - are placed at eye level. Cathodes are fixed on his temples and forehead and connected to a polygraph device. A person's brain waves are usually active between beta and delta waves. If they are delta, the red bulb will be the indication. When they oscillate between beta and delta, there will be alternate flickerings of the yellow and red lights. If the trainee can compose his mind and make it as serene as possible, the red light will go off and the oscillation will be seen between the green light of alpha and the yellow light of beta. Finally when the alpha is well established, the green light will show itself steadily. Now the trainee knows that his alpha is established; the green light he sees acts as a bio-feedback. He puts all his efforts into being effortless and retaining the green light. It is a circulation of energy be-

tween the perceiving eye of the trainee and the motor system with which he restrains energy from flowing into any channel of distraction. In the beginning it seems very difficult, but after four or five trials one automatically becomes familiar with bio-feedback and the neutrality of attention comes to stay. This mechanical conditioning, or rather electrical conditioning, requires one to look at an object outside. To that extent, one is confronted by perception.

In advanced yogic training, the yogi does not lean on any such crutches. He keeps the exercise going simply by not feeding any memory with another associated memory. Thus, cognizing consciousness turns on itself to cognize cognition. Even that can tire one out because attention is also associated with an activation of the mind supported by *rajas*. *Rajas* can corrode into the serenity of *sattva* and the yogi can consequently become exhausted. Where there is a depletion of mental energy caused by the over-activation of *rajas*, *tamas* sets in with its benumbing inertia, and the attention lapses into fatigue and sleep. Thus *rajas* and *tamas* are two cardinal enemies of meditation. Because of their interference, the meditation will come to nought.

Consciousness is not static. It is like a flowing stream. There are several conveyors of flow within us. The blood-stream flows through arteries and veins. The vitality of our breath is carried to all parts of the body through conveyors of *prāṇa*. There are channels where lymph flows. The nervous system is a matrix of conveyors carrying sensory and motor energies. The yogis add one more conveyor, *praśānta vāhitā*, that which carries peace to every cell of our being. Because of the many stimuli that bombard various receptors in our sensory system, the agitation that is brought in through our sense organs is different from that which comes from any other organ. Although the world is attractive in its colors and varied in its forms, by simply dropping the eyelids we can hold back the stimulation arising out of sight in a fraction of a sec-





ond. We cannot shut out the sounds that enter our ears in the same manner. Smell is another villainous stimulus that can attack us when we do not desire it in the least. With some will power we can refuse to taste what we do not like. Nowadays there are devices to regulate the heat and cold that come through the faculty of touch.

To gain tranquility, we have to secure our consciousness from exposure to the five sensory stimuli. There are a number of devices very ingeniously invented and practiced by yogis to tackle each sense organ. Most people close their eyes. This is not always an effective method because, to most people, closing the eyelids is a preparation for sleep. Of course, sleep can stop the agitation that comes from external stimuli, but that brings the inertia of *tamas* and one may indulge in day dreams. It is therefore necessary for those who want to keep their eyes open to have disciplines that can stop the wandering habit of the eyes and stabilize the aspirant's interest in one single form. At this stage we do not want to enter into the very many methods devised by yoga practitioners. Advanced yogis first isolate the agent of illumination from the object that is illuminated. In other words, they focus their attention on the light that falls on an object rather than

being carried away by the effect of light and shade that suggests phenomenological forms. When a person acquires that ability to see only the light and not the illuminated object, nothing separates the light of consciousness from the external light which consciousness illuminates through the act of reciprocation. Thus the seer sees the seer in a union in which the seer, the act of seeing, and the seen do not have separate identifications.

Similarly, on hearing sound, an advanced aspirant can discard the suggested meaning of the sounds as conditioning of the faculty of audition. The yogi goes into the homogenous vibratory function of all sounds and listens to the unbroken sound which is beyond all patterned sound formations. This is what is called merging into the voiceless voice of *nada brahman*.

The most difficult stimulus to pacify is that coming through touch, especially where the touch has an erotic purport. Two persons are erotically aroused when they touch in a certain manner. It is not by cultivating an external numbness in the skin that one pacifies the impact of touch on one's system. From the individual and specific object of touch, when one extends the sphere of love to the all-embracing, one comes to have the touch of the Absolute called *brahma samsparsha*.

Even when these modes of pacifying one's consciousness from being stimulated by external entities are all successful, there are other sources of agitation which come from one's own physiologic malfunctioning. What makes life so easy is one's respiratory system. Even the slightest malfunctioning of the *prāṇa* such as breathing in and breathing out can be an obstruction to one's peaceful consciousness. *Prāṇa* is a handle not only to tackle the body but also to pacify one's tormenting mind. Equalizing *prāṇa* and *apāṇa*, the ascending vital breath and the descending vital breath, can have great effect in harmonizing the functioning of the body and, consequently, in securing inner peace. So yogis watch their breath, cultivate intimacy with its natural rhythm and correct it if the breath is too short or very hard. If breathing is incorrect, and the lung air is not respired fully, that can create a cumulative effect of carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide which is not fully flushed out. The varieties of *prāṇayāma* and the literature explaining the process and discipline are many and we do not intend to make any reference to any particular form of *prāṇayāma* here.

Even when the body remains still and the *prāṇayāma* is harmonized, one's mind can be frequented by chains of thoughts and other forms of mentations. To get rid of these inner irritations, one has to tune to one's higher understanding of consciousness and apply that knowledge to devalue the entertaining of thoughts, ideas and memories that are unwholesome. Here knowledge is used with advantage.

When even thoughts are controlled there are blockages that stop one from going beyond the pale of consciousness constituted of thoughts which are made up of words. A breakthrough at this level is bound to be mystical and non-verbal. After going deep into such states of consciousness, one comes to a state of waiting in peace and receiving light or guidance from within. Thus the field of pacifying consciousness and remaining in serenity is an enormously vast one. In one's lifetime

one cannot explore all the paths and employ all the methods. What is most appropriate for one to know and practice will be given in the next section.

Sutra I:14

*sa tu dīrghakāla nairantarya
satkarasevito drdha bhumih*

sa: that

tu: and

dīrghakāla: for a long time

nairantarya: without interruption

satkāra: with devotion

āsevitaḥ: being well attended to

drdha bhūmih: firmly rooted

And this is firmly rooted, being well-attended to for a long time without interruption and with devotion.

Even simple habits, such as smoking or addiction to tea or coffee, cannot be easily erased. The conditioning that arises from narcotics, caffeine, etc., can only have a short history. But the conditioning of our psychosomatic systems through genetic transference from one bodily state to another has a continuous history of several million years. It is from such an unbroken, consistent repetition of behaving in a particular manner or arousing certain urges through the long force of genetic habit that we behave in a certain way in our present bodily form. Correction can be carried put only by consistently engaging, for long periods of time, in practices that amount to the devaluation and decoloration of the conditionings that have gone into the system. From our personal experience we can easily understand that our bodies are such that they can acquire a habit of repetition. This vulnerability of the body and mind can be fully taken advantage of in teaching it to obey. If a person starts a new routine of rising regularly at four o'clock to study, after about a month he or she will automatically wake up at four. This discipline can be broken by forcefully keeping oneself in bed after four o'clock in preparation to

sleep. Then the habit of waking up early can be replaced with another habit such as sleeping until eight o'clock in the morning.

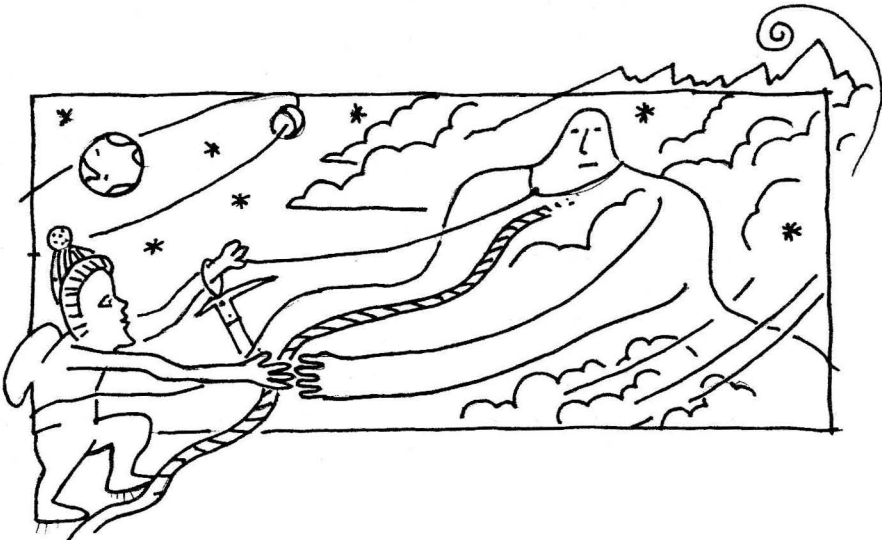
We have superficial conditionings which are consciously acquired and changed at a surface mind level. But there are deeper conditionings which are controlled by generic principles of biology and atavistic imprinting in the psyche. To change a generic habit and establish in its place a special attitude, a disciplined way of life, one has to change even the contents of one's dreams and dislodge certain memories which are religiously adhered to by the community to which one belongs. Our social behavior is not rationally grounded. It is instituted with the aid of irrational fears generated by a community over several centuries. For example, the Muslims consider it a great virtue to live in fear of God and to believe in the accountability of each person on a supposed day of final judgement. Guilt feelings and various kinds of neurotic repressions arise out of the pressure of collective consciousness or even the collective unconscious. Most of the normative notions of ethical life go against natural urges, especially of one's sexual behavior.

We have already mentioned that practicing discipline is like climbing a mountain with a heavy load on one's back. An aspirant should have a lot of energy resources to tap; in the pursuit of perfection a lot of energy is consumed. To facilitate this, one has to economically

portion out as little energy as possible for carrying out the daily vocation of life. The remainder of one's energy is to be entirely used for advancing towards one's goal. In youthful folly, much energy is wasted on programs which are specially conceived for the vain display of the ego and for the temporary gratification of sensuous craving and sexual infatuation. People who are drawn to autoeroticism and other unnatural forms of gratification disturb their sex rhythms. They are not only impoverishing the perennial energy supply of their bodies, but also endangering the tranquility of their minds by indulging in activities which they consider shameful.

The purification of the mind needs careful planning and the execution of it takes long periods of time. Śri Ramakrishna says that if you mix creamy milk and water, they blend easily. But if milk is left to curdle for a sufficiently long time and its cream is churned out, then the cream (butter) can even be kept in water and the two will not mix. Similarly, one has to isolate oneself from the mad rush of competitive life to give one's mind a sense of stability. After a long period of sublimating one's crude urges, one comes to the gathering of the cream of one's spiritual life. One can then return to society and assume the position of a therapist or an educator. All such self-training needs time and devotion.

(Continued in next issue.)



The Song of the Snowy Tree Cricket

Jim Nail

The following is an attempt at applying the scientific method of inquiry to a subject which has long fascinated me. To explain why I submit it to Gurukulam, I include this anecdote:

Once I was sitting with Guru Nitya in Portland, begging him to throw some light on a dark nightmare world of consciousness I occasionally stumbled into. He looked at me and said, "Jim, can you play a C-major chord on the piano?" I said "yes, I can," and got up and did it. Then he said, "You should think more about C-major, less about yourself..."

Insects of the order Orthoptera have long been known for their characteristic "singing" abilities. Their songs are produced by a diversity of frictional mechanisms, generally consisting of two main parts. The file, a surface studded with a row of teeth is drawn across a hard ridge or knob known as the scraper.

The Snowy Tree Cricket (*Oecanthus fultoni*), native to California, carries its file on the underside of its right front wing and its scraper on the upper surface of its left front wing. It has two different songs, one a repetitious chirp most often associated with mating behavior (only male crickets sing), and the other, more commonly heard, a continuous high pitched trill. This insect is sometimes known as the "thermometer cricket" because it varies both the pulse rate of its chirp and the pitch rate of its trill with changes in ambient temperature.

In this experiment I attempted to analyze the sonic components of the cricket's song and determine the effect of tem-

perature change on these components.

Several specimens of *Oecanthus fultoni* were collected in an aquarium which contained a celsius thermometer and a dynamic microphone connected to a remote tape recorder.

Soon after the crickets were left alone, they began to sing. For the most part, however, only one cricket sang at one time, and when they did occasionally sing together, there was an audible discrepancy in pitch between them. So I removed all the crickets except the one which seemed to be the most persistent singer.

When plotted on a graph, both the frequencies in pitch and amplitude demonstrated a linear relationship with the rise in temperature (figures 1 and 2).

The first person to note the relationship between pitch frequency in the song of the Snowy Tree Cricket was A.E. Dolbear (1987) even before the insect had been scientifically classified. Dolbear worked with both the trill song, as investigated in the present report, and the chirp song associated with mating. For the latter he was able to determine the temperature in degrees fahrenheit by counting the number of chirps delivered in fifteen seconds and adding forty. Concerning the former, he suggested that anyone with perfect pitch might be able to estimate the temperature from the tone of the cricket's song.

My own data suggests that Dolbear may have been wrong in this later assumption. A friend of mine who tunes pianos listened to the tapes and said that at higher temperatures he could hear

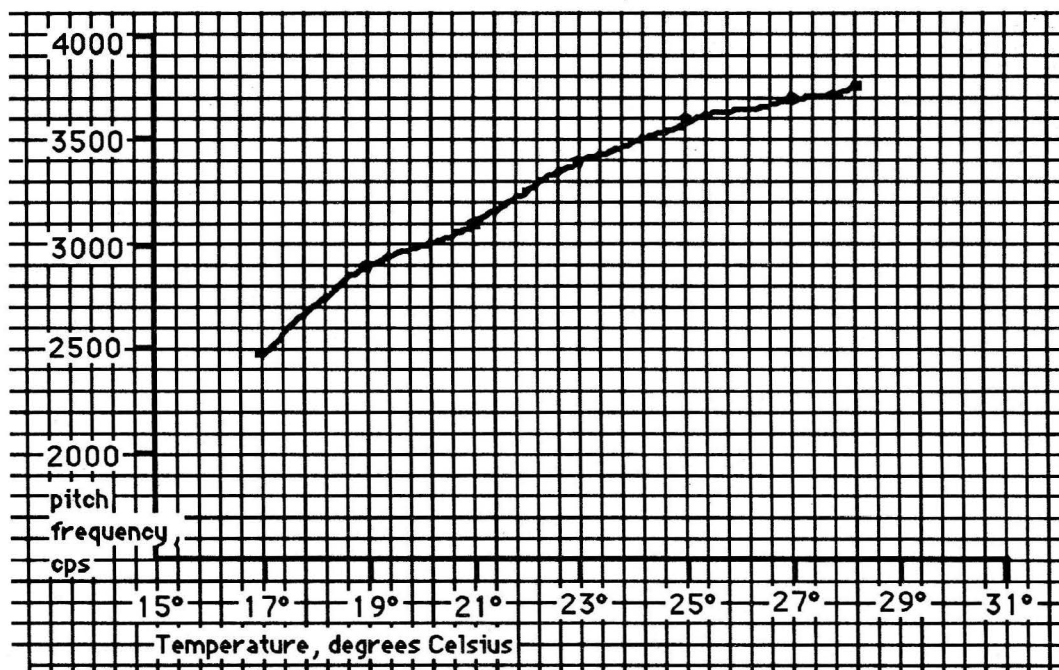


Figure 1. Snowy Tree Cricket, carrier wave (temperature vs. pitch).

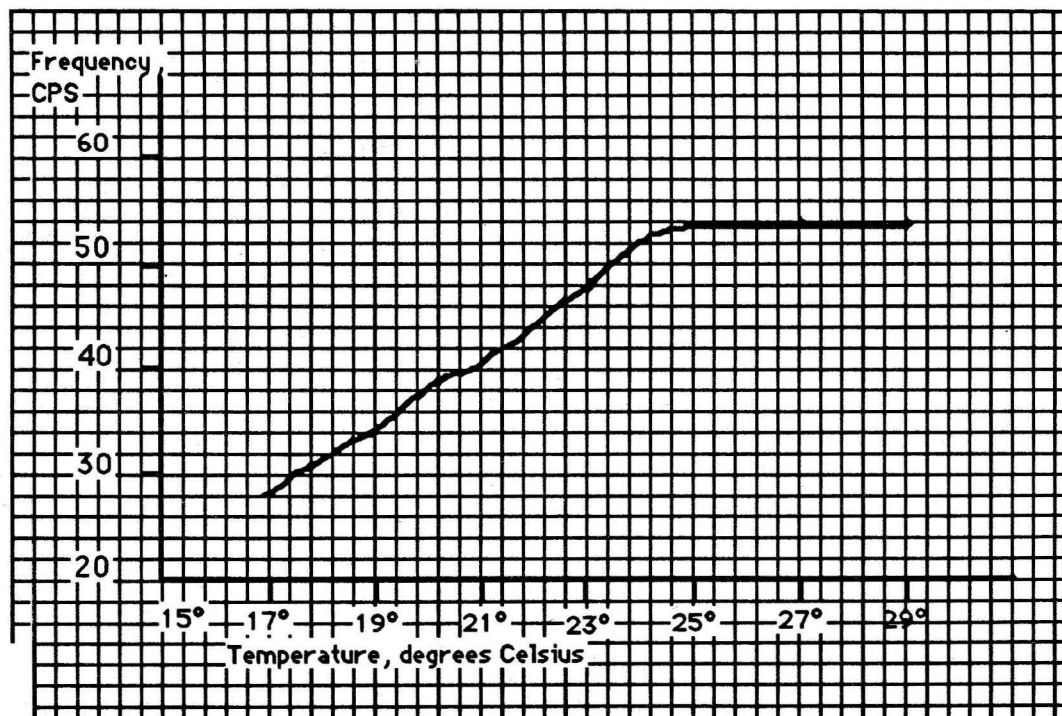


Figure 2. Snowy Tree Cricket, modulation wave (temperature vs. amplitude pulse).

many overtones and secondary frequencies within the sound which made it increasingly difficult to locate the primary pitch of the song. The oscillograms demonstrate that the carrier wave retains a remarkable purity of pitch, even at higher temperatures. Therefore the other tones must be created by the slower modulating waves. At around 40 cps a frequency becomes audible as a tone. In the case of the crickets the modulating wave reaches 40 cps at around 21 C. and rises to 52 cps before peak temperatures are reached. The trill of the cricket is not a true musical trill, i.e., a rapid fluctuation in pitch, but rather a single pitch fluctuating rapidly in amplitude. However, the human ear cannot hear fast enough to discern this complexity and hears, rather, the illusion of a musical trill, produced by the standoff between the carrier

and the modulating waves. Dolbear probably did not have perfect pitch. Perhaps if the technology of the oscilloscope had been available to him, he might have worded his assumption differently.

Another reason to suspect Dolbear's assumption is the slight discrepancy in pitch I observed between two separate insects on those rare occasions when both would sing at the same time. The Audubon Field Guide (1980) states that several males in the vicinity will retune their songs to match one another, creating a stereophonic effect. I myself observed this phenomenon while catching crickets in the field. It may be that the controlled environment of the aquarium was too stressful for such behavior to occur under laboratory conditions. This suggests that the crickets in their natural environment are territorial, behaving in a harmonious

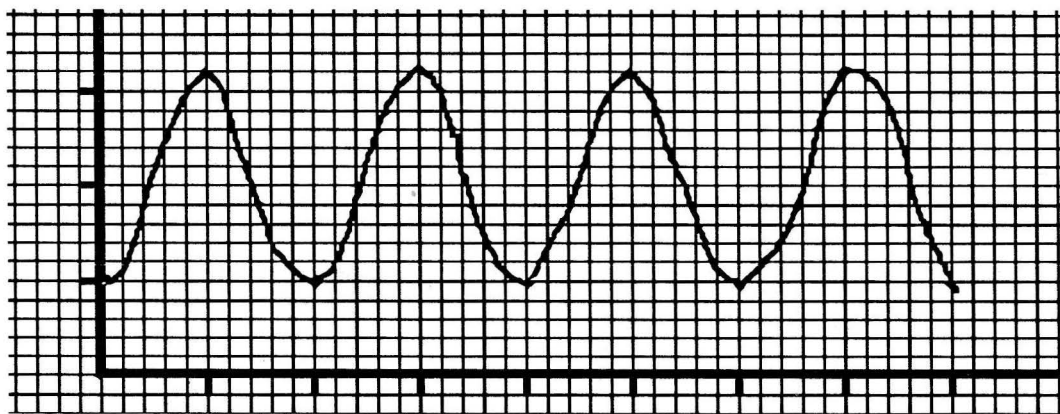


Figure 3. Carrier wave viewed at 50 microseconds/division.

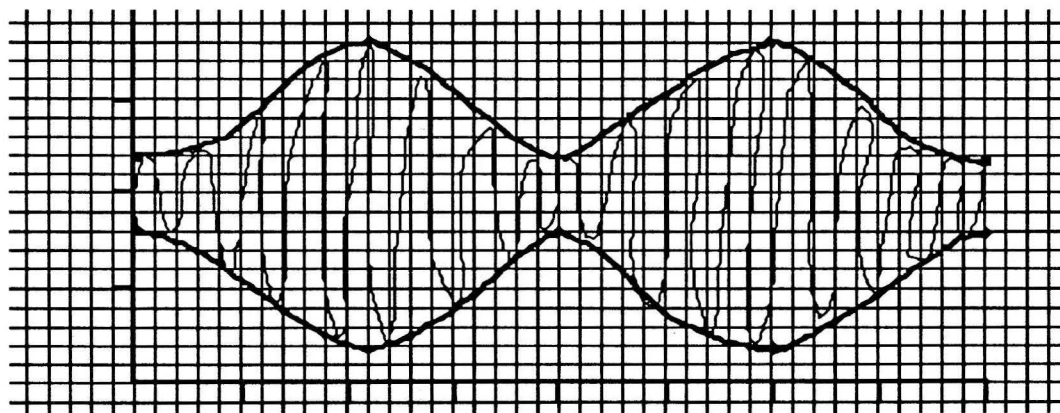


Figure 4. Modulating wave viewed at 1 millisecond/division (17).

fashion only when they can keep a comfortable distance from one another. While observing the crickets in captivity I often saw what appeared to be aggressive behavior between them.

This aspect of territoriality would make an interesting future project. At just what distances from each other are the crickets comfortable enough to sing, i.e., what is the radius of a single cricket's territory, if such territoriality exists? And what is the relationship between territoriality and the mating rituals of the cricket? Such a project would probably be more easily undertaken out in the field rather than in a controlled laboratory environment.

An even more interesting but far more difficult question concerns the function of the modulating wave, especially the way it changes from a steady pulse at low temperatures to a seemingly chaotic pat-

tern at high temperatures. Is the cricket simply moving his wings too fast to effect any control over the rhythm of the pulse, suggested by the fact that at any greater temperatures he stops singing altogether?

Or could it be that at colder temperatures the cricket is in a sort of dream state, reflecting only the rhythmic pulse of the universe, while at higher temperature he begins to wake up and express himself? Haskell (1961) describes in great detail the difference between the organs of hearing in insects and in humans, both in the perceptions of ultrasonic frequencies as well as infrasonic complexities within the sound. Could it be that the seemingly chaotic pattern that the modulating wave shows at higher temperatures is actually the picture of a complex language spoken between crickets, evidence of unsuspected intelligence even among the smallest of creatures? ♦

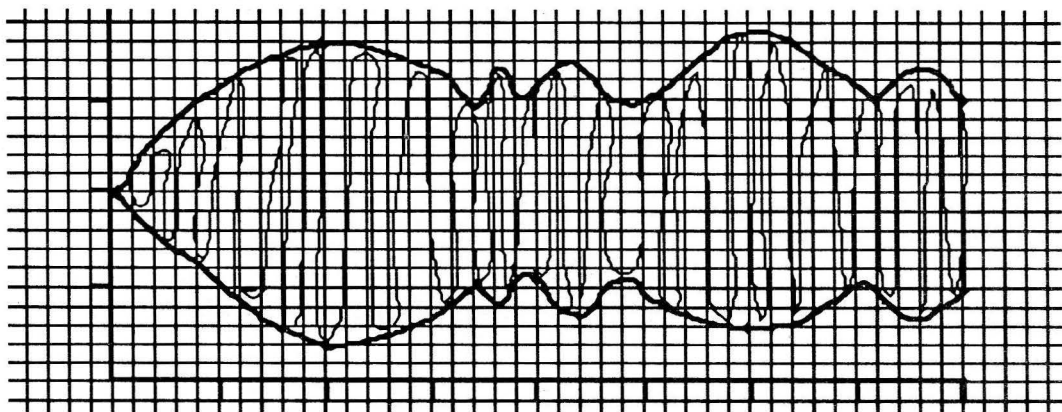


Figure 5 (a). Modulating wave at 1 millisecond/division (20°C).

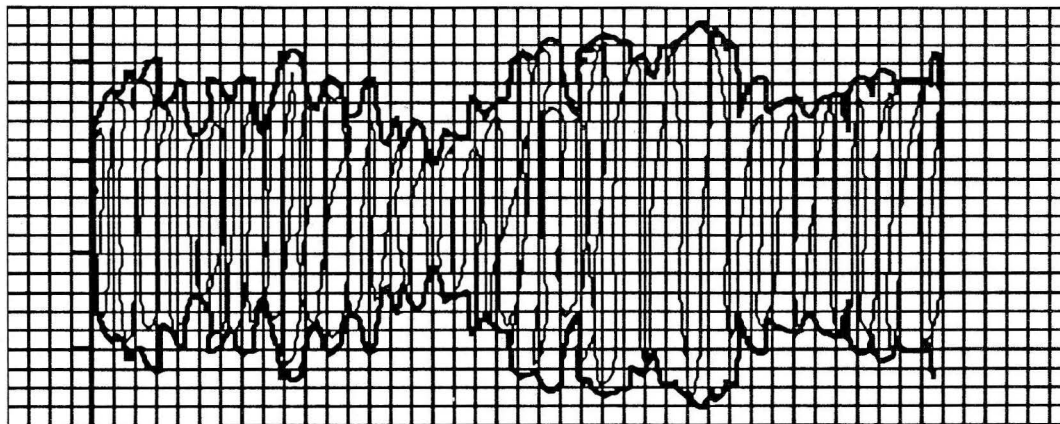


Figure 5 (b). Modulating wave at 1 millisecond (28°C).

Tropics and Other Topics

The Flights of Fact and Fancy of a Traveler's Journal

Peter Oppenheimer

The Indian Honeymooners: Over the Pacific; November 22, 1986.

My aisle-mates for this leg of the journey (Honolulu-Hong Kong) are a handsome young Indian couple - she with fine delicate features, long eyebrows and large deep brown eyes and he with short black hair, pleasantly pudgy cheeks, polyester clothes and an oversized silver watch. I find myself wondering if they married for love or parents. In a way that I recognize as typically Indian, they are very tender with one another, even discretely caressing each other in the covert manner characteristic of the new generation of Indians. On my first visit to India fifteen years back, even on-screen kissing was not yet permitted in Indian movies.

As they seem very wrapped up in one another and I am feeling somewhat shy (I must not have my travel legs beneath me yet), our communication does not exceed a few friendly nods. Yet, just as the passenger on the Marin Airport bus sent me off from my home base, I feel as if in some way this couple is silently welcoming me back into the world of India.

No sooner did I close the journal after the last sentence, than did the young man, as if on cue, lean towards me and smile. He paused and I reciprocated to his subtle opening with a question about his destination. They are on a round-the-world honeymoon. He is a pharmacist in Wales, and neither of them has been back to India in ten years. When he sat back, she leaned forward and began interviewing me, which was a rare treat, as non-

Westernized Indian women are far more reserved than American ones.

It tickled me that they had been unsuspecting victims of the geographical rivalry between Los Angeles and San Francisco. They had planned to spend four days in each place, but their host in L.A. had assured them there was nothing to see in San Francisco that they couldn't see in one day. They had extended their L.A. stay accordingly and then felt terribly shortchanged in S.F. This can serve as a good warning to me on this trip to not necessarily accept as gospel the biases and prejudices of the people whom I meet and upon whom I will be depending, to some extent, to guide my movements.

Singapore's Veneer: Singapore, November 24, 1986

Singapore is a fascinating, if not altogether enchanting, place. Three ethnic currents flow parallel to constitute its cultural identity - Chinese, Malay, and Indian. The common thread and meeting ground is an unabashed mercantilism that has assumed the proportions of a national creed. A guide I read on the plane opened with the ironically boastful claim that visitors to Singapore expecting pre-modern quaintness and quiet times will be surprised at the commercial dynamism that thrives as the nation's lifeblood.

To me that sounds like a backhanded endorsement, but within the frame of reference of the shared values of Singaporeans it bespeaks the fulfillment of a collective aspiration. Of course, each geo-



graphical region has its own particular value system. I remember the example given by newspaper columnist Herb Caen ten years ago: the two most common questions asked of a new acquaintance in New York were, "What's your salary?" and "How much rent are you paying?" Whereas in San Francisco at that time they were, "What's your sign?" and "Who's your guru?"

This morning I was inside an "Art Center" gift shop and my eye was caught by a glossy book entitled *Colorful Scenery of Singapore*. I thumbed through it and fully one-half of the photographs were of the concrete jungle, glowingly captioned as "Singapore's Commercial Center." Colorful scenery indeed! Aesthetics is a matter of taste.

Still I have three or four very positive things to say about Singapore:

It has a tropical climate with the unencumbering side effects of being blanketless, sockless and even sleeveless.

There are the traditional "hawker centers" consisting of food stalls of delicious Chinese, Malay and Indian dishes, such as vegetable bee hoon, which is noodles, tofu, vegetables, quail eggs and

gravy.

There is the coralarium on Sentosa Island with living exhibits of tropical coral in heart-stoppingly beautiful colors and forms.

And there is the loving and generous Kashyap family with whom I have stayed, an Indian family that is fully Westernized except for the spirituality and hospitality of the elders and the patience and sweet sensitivity of the children.

A Passing Shadow: Singapore Airlines - flight 42; November 25-26, 1986.

Strange occurrences on the way to take-off tonight (Singapore to Madras). First off, when the plane was 95% full and we were all buckled in, a delay was announced. It seems one of the confirmed passengers on our flight was caught traveling with a forged passport. Airport regulations require that the three pieces of that fellow's luggage, which had been checked in earlier, also be removed from the plane for fear they may contain a bomb or something. The only way that could be done was by pulling off all the luggage until the pieces in question were

found.

One hour later all was settled. As we were pushing back from the loading ramp and listening to the last minute safety instructions, there was a commotion a few rows up and across the aisle from me. Apparently someone had passed out. The plane pulled back to the ramp and after thirty minutes the man was pronounced dead. Next it was announced that before we could leave the police were going to come aboard and conduct a brief investigation which would take another hour.

The upshot of all this was that we took off at 12:30 a.m. on the 26th rather than 9 p.m. on the 25th, and we were less two passengers. It was hard to feel too grumpy about it though as each of us felt the shadow of death had swept ever so close, while sparing each of us who remained for at least one more night.

Benign Chaos: Madras, India; November 26, 1986.

How to describe the scene below my fourth floor balcony overlooking Egmore Railway station? "Hub-bub" doesn't quite do it, even with "helluva" added as a prefix. And yet with the great clamor of noise and movement, there is still something mellow or peaceful about it. That can only be because the hub-bub does not consist of numerous conflicting or competing individual elements but is rather symphonic or holistic in its seeming chaos.

The entire scene is presided over by the two-square-block structure which is Egmore station itself. The station building is a grand combination of Colonial Victorian and Moslem mosque. The fact that such a seemingly incongruous blend makes it architecturally is an illustration of what I am trying to describe as peaceful or benign chaos.

Two-tone green open air buses, yellow insect-like three wheeler auto-rickshaws (the golf carts that move a nation), multicolored bicycle-rickshaws, taxis, fancifully painted trucks, motorcycles, bicycles, street cart vendors, cows, dogs and pedestrians weave in and out of each oth-

er in a pattern reminiscent of a *Life* magazine photo I once saw of the web of a spider dosed with L.S.D. Yet no harsh words are exchanged, and even the horns, bells, and buzzers seem more like simple self-declarations than threats. Boys pass by in shorts, women in saris and girls and men in skirts.

There are many images from my 3:30 a.m. bus ride from the Madras airport into town:

A waning half-moon that seemed to be almost dripping with enchantment, perhaps from all the dreams of those sleeping here below;

White-sheet shrouded bodies sleeping curled up in doorways and beneath bus shelters who, since I had been forced to sit up all night, elicited rather more empathy than pit;

Fluorescent-lit tea stalls with small nocturnal gangs of men circling around shop keepers mixing tea, milk and sugar by pouring it back and forth at arms length from dipper to dipper;

Small groups of early-bird women with saris pulled up between their legs, beating the morning rush to the district water tap, cleaning last night's pans and pots, filling jugs, washing clothes and gossiping much as have generations done for centuries with the main difference being that the village well has been replaced by a spigot;

Young men hosing down lorries (trucks) with the dim light only hinting at the wildly colorful hand painted scenes covering their four sides;

And billboard after billboard beckoning those below to forsake their simple roots and join consumer society through possession of this or that modern "convenience."

The bus let me down at the Taj Coromandel Hotel in Madras where my friend Mr. N.C. Kumaran was to be waiting to drive me back to his home. Given the lateness of my flight and the hour, I was not surprised that he was not there. But I was surprised to learn, upon calling his house, that he and his wife were staying in the hospital where he was recovering

from an unexpected surgery. Thus I found myself at 4:00 a.m. on less than two hours sleep without knowing where to throw my pack or lay my head or how to get there.

The Taj, where I stood, is a luxury hotel with the cheapest room renting for 720 rupees, about 600 rupees above my "splurge rate." The night manager was very kind. When I asked for a pay phone to call the Kumarans, he gave me free use of the hotel phone. When he learned of my predicament, he called a less expensive hotel nearby. They were fully booked.

I decided to go find a hotel myself near Egmore Station, which is centrally located. From there it would be easy for me to go to a bank to change money, the airline office to reconfirm my flight to Cochin, a bookstore to get postcards, the post office to send a telegram to Guru in Cochin, and the hospital to visit the Kumarans. The manager called an auto-

rickshaw, the driver of which, upon seeing the paleness of my skin, insisted on charging four times the normal fare. The manager entered the argument on my behalf and, upon failing to budge the driver, offered to send me in the hotel car. "Just tip the driver (of the hotel car) whatever you wish." All of this free aid and support would be most unlikely even for a guest at a swank Western hotel and completely unthinkable for a non-guest.

A pre-dawn stillness, like the calm before a storm, hung around Egmore Station as I drove up with my personal chauffeur. The first lodge we tried, the Madras Tourist Home, was also full-up. They directed us a block away to the Chandra Internationale Lodge, where for 55 rupees (\$4.50) I booked a room with a cement floor, wooden cot with foam mattress, one straightback chair, an Indian-style bathroom with a squatting toilet, a clothesline and an overhead fan.

Noting with relief the cleanliness of



the room, I switched on the fan, off the light, and lay down on the bed. As it was nearly 6:00, I figured I could catch at least 2 or 3 hours sleep before getting up for the day. But I was prevented from even this much due to a combination of the excitement outside of a city awakening and the excitement inside of being back in India again. At 6:30 I got up, washed my flight clothes by hand, and took my first of many cold water and dipper baths.

Feeling surprisingly refreshed I packed up the Japanese pickled ginger and American See's chocolates I had brought for Mrs. Kumaran and walked down to the bus stop to ride to Vijaya Hospital. When I first sat down on the 3/4 full bus, I assumed the increased chattering and tittering was the common reaction to the presence of a funny-looking Westerner (all Westerners are funny-looking), but then I realized I had plopped down right in the middle of the "Women Only" section. In a feeble face-saving effort, I remained seated in as dignified and circumspect a posture as possible. At the first stop I got up, but by then the men's section was full, and I had to stand in the aisle for the forty minute drive to the hospital.

Even though it was not yet visiting hours, I was ushered to the room like a proper sahib. The Kumarans were surprised and happy to see me. They had not received the letter announcing the details of my arrival. Mr. Kumaran is a well-to-do retiree with a childlike sense of humor and wonder, who loves to discuss philosophical or spiritual matters. His round face, broad grin, and big specs give him the appearance of a cuddly version of the old cartoon character, Mr. Magoo. His wife is a small, soft-spoken woman who lives and breathes (rather than talks) spirituality.

They were just sitting down to breakfast, and she insisted I join him by eating her share. From years of exposure to Indian hospitality, I knew it was useless to resist, though appreciated to protest. Protestation in such a case substitutes for

a more overt display of gratitude, which sometimes even shocks and offends the Indian sensibility. Surely a book could be written explaining the subtleties of cross-cultural etiquette.

Thus my first Indian meal was destined to be a hospital serving of *idli* (steamed rice-flour cakes) and *vada* (fried graham-flour doughnuts), with *sambar* (a runny curry stew) and coconut chutney. It tasted fairly good, although frankly I hardly noticed, so engrossed was I in far-ranging conversation with the Kumarans that slipped easily between gossip and updates about mutual acquaintances and relevant aspects of Guru's teachings as they applied to the unfolding life-dramas of each and all.

After about an hour I excused myself to take care of onward travel business, with a promise to return again in the evening. I enjoyed my day of moving about Madras, having something of a feeling of homecoming and "family" with the various officials, shopkeepers, bureaucrats and passers-by with whom I interacted. Even the several beggars who I encountered seemed to have been expecting me as I indeed had been them. All of this implied a unique blending of the personal with the impersonal which is characteristic of the Indian view of selfhood.

From a street vendor I sipped my favorite drink in the world (or a close second to cool, fresh water): tender coconut juice. I had a very good lunch of rice, six curries, yogurt, soup and sweet pudding for 50 cents (seconds of everything included). This was approximately double the price from my last visit three years ago.

I slept for a couple of hours under the ceiling fan in the afternoon, ventured out again by bus to send a telegram and buy stamps, returned to bathe, and, refreshed once more, have come to sit out on the balcony to observe and reflect upon the above-described scene below.

(Continued in next issue.)

*As Sad and Deep as You**

*Eyes that are your windows
Eyes that are the earth of you
Eyes that tell a story
As sad and deep as you
Eyes that are your contact
With the old and with the new
Eyes that tell a story
As sad and deep as you
Eyes that open up the world
And let you see the morning dew
Eyes that tell a story
As sad and deep as you.*

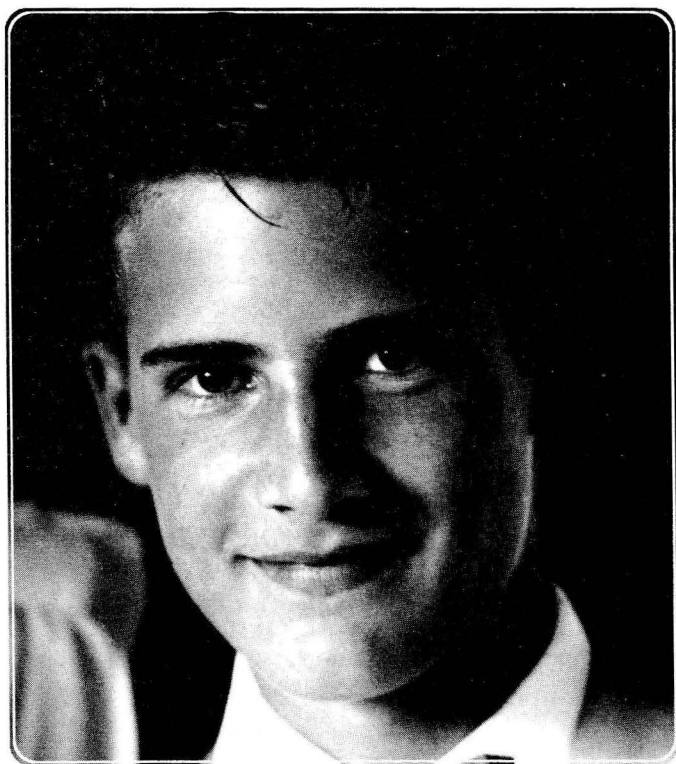
The Willow Tree

*Oh weeping willow
Why is it that you, a tree,
Bring such peace to me?*

*This title and theme line is taken from a song by Dave Mason.

Whispers and Fountains

*Just as whispers are part of wailing winds
And dirt hills are part of great mountains
No more beauty is in a giant waterfall
Than in the smallest,
Most delicate of fountains.*



Aaron Eden

Musical Mandalas

Scott Teitsworth



Sabda, sound, representing the purest form of vibration, is symbolically connected with the etheric realm of the beginning or origin of manifestation. Pure sound is transported through Air, the realm of the spirit. As sounds clash they beget the heat of Fire, representing the dynamics of intelligence. Heat dissipates, and the products of Fire coalesce and precipitate into emotions and feelings, symbolized by Water. Finally, emotional attachments bring a state of fixation and solidity to vibration, producing the rocks and bodies of the Earth element.

Bodies take those rocks and form them into musical instruments. They offer the body a means of expressing unspeakable emotions. The magical coherency of these musical sounds leads the body to think and ponder over the natural patterns that emerge, at first contemplating the surface appearance, then diving into the unseen depths as the body learns a kind of intuitive faith in the benignness of the scheme. Repeated plunges into the unseen purify the body of its unnecessary attachments, and it appreciates a great freedom. While immersed in these depths of *nadabrahman*, the Absolute of Sound, the cosmic musician opts either to remerge with the universal or to serenade fellow beings in their manifested divine sport. Such are the descending and ascending dialectics of Elemental harmony.

Throughout the ancient world people recognized this scheme of the five Elements, four to summarize the visible world and a fifth, or quintessence, for the underlying ground. The symbolic connection between these Elements and the various layers within the psyche was an important part of the quest for understanding, providing a stable perspective from

which to view the disorienting flux of life.

The modern world has forsaken this structural model to its great detriment. The new norm is to propound an absence of orientation as the only possibility, and to scorn those who see order in chaos. While this view has some benefit in freeing the mind of rigid beliefs, it is also at the root of the disintegration taking place today on a number of levels. It reminds one of the image of the lake in the *I Ching*. A lake must have some sort of boundary or containment, lest all the water run out across the land and evaporate, leaving nothing. Some sort of structure is very important for our thoughts to have any meaning. When music has no formal orientation it becomes enervating and dull, tending toward mere noise.

I have a vivid memory of my high school History teacher ridiculing the ancient Greeks for their belief that the world consisted of only four elements, while we have found 92 naturally occurring elements and have managed to create some 16 others through the nuclear bombardment of atoms. His look of patronizing disgust as he said this was finely honed, and still remains fresh in my mind after twenty years. It was so convincing that his statement was not questioned by any student, even though he missed the point so thoroughly that an appropriate analogy has yet to be invented. It was a very long time indeed before the scintillating symbolic beauty of a proper notion of the Elemental structure of things crept back into my mind. It is clear to me now that my teacher's arrogance and disdain for differing viewpoints are both the fruits of his way of thinking and the perfect buttress for a terrified soul in a world it does not understand at all.

Actually, there was intelligent thought prior to the twentieth century, and the ancients of many countries were on to something with their scheme of five universal Elements. They were thinking in terms of general principles rather than attempting to divide the world into the greatest number of separate bits. With 92 elements now in existence, and more on the drawing board, a unitive outlook is extremely difficult. How does one meditate on the universality of molybdenum or ytterbium? 'Tis a hafnium-baked notion at best.

The Elements the seers spoke of were to be found in and throughout all of nature. Even the synergic centers of our bodies bear witness to this pattern. The Earth and Water centers, *mulādhāra* and *svadhiṣṭhāna*, are located near the sites where solid and liquid wastes pass from the body. The Fire center, *manipura*, is near the point where food is consumed in the digestive fires, and it is no coincidence that when we mull over and absorb a new idea it is also called digestion. *Anāhata*, the Air center, is in the region where air passes into and out of the body. Energy, or *prāṇa*, derived from the air is considered to be a spiritualizing life force. The Etheric center, *viśuddha*, is found at the organ of voice production, lending support to the age-old tradition of the creative power of the Word.

Above these five body centers are two more, symbolized by the sun and moon, representing the blazing effulgence of pure Being and its cooler reflection as consciousness. Thus the sun center is above the top of the head, while the moon center, *ajñā*, is at the focal point of awareness between the eyes.

Because of the disorientation caused by the modern nonview of the world, a great deal of effort must be spent to repress this ecstatic structure of electro-spiritual energy within. It can be very unsettling to experience something whose existence is strongly denied. Fortunately or unfortunately, the world abounds in ways to avoid the discomfort of an integrated personality.

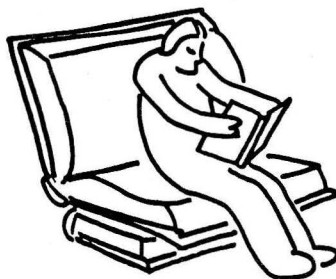
However hard we try, our own existence cannot be negated. So the sun center shines on regardless of personal vicissitudes. But below this are many possibilities for dimming the lights within our bodies. Drugs and the brainwashing of television can do much to sedate the center of consciousness to a manageable level. These act at the source level, having an effect throughout the system. For the specific lower centers there are also localized forms of suppression. Ugly and unkind words have an invisible yet powerful effect on the throat center, choking off the love that naturally flows out from it, while idle chatter dissipates its accumulated energy. Smoking and breathing polluted air greatly reduce the *prāṇa* entering the body through the *anāhata*. Heavy or poisonous foods keep the visceral area too busy to radiate, making our thought processes sluggish and sluglike. Sexual activity serves to drain off emotional energy that would otherwise become quite intense in the *svadhiṣṭhāna*. Sex is perennially popular, perhaps because it is so centrally located. Finally, physical activity is readily avoided simply by "sitting on one's ass," damming up the *mulādhāra*.

Why is it that we are often more comfortable spending our energy rather than saving it? Is inner bliss unacceptable in our modern world? Must we remain in closed rooms, while beyond their confines heavenly bodies gleam and meteors streak across the sky?

The mindless junk music blasting down village streets or filling our cars and houses is, as always, an accurate reflection of our state of mind. It serves to distract us from inward meditations and harmonious energy retention. While the great music of the ages helps us to refocus on our true selves, the everyday variety helps reinforce the deepening disorientation that is the legacy of our ungrounded skepticism in the Age of Reason. Musicians and seekers of all types will benefit greatly from an open-minded study of the elements and structure that make up our inner and outer worlds. ♦

Book Review

Steve Bryson



Book of the Hopi by Frank Waters, Penguin Books, 1977.

Book of the Hopi, written by Frank Waters with drawings and source materials recorded by Oswald White Bear Fredericks, first appeared in print in 1963. I came across it sometime in the seventies and again just a month ago when a friend and I were down in Hopi country, soaking up the vastness of that sky-dominated landscape and the stillness of the desert. Pondering the 1000 year old ruins of Pueblo Bonito in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, and the mystery surrounding the people who built and then abandoned them, I recalled having read that the Hopi claimed these people as their ancestors. They were referred to as Anasazi, meaning "ancient ones," by the Navaho people who came upon the ruins of their cities long afterwards, and the name has persisted to this day. However, after finding a copy of *Book of the Hopi* at the Visitor's Center there and reading it, it appears indisputable that the Anasazi were in fact the various Hopi clans who, on their migrations throughout North, Central and South America, had stopped to build cities to inhabit for only a few generations before picking up and moving on. These cities would have been successively established, abandoned, re-inhabited and built upon as the separate clans moved through the area.

Archaeologists say that the Anasazi abandoned their cities here and elsewhere due to a changing climate which led to drought conditions. The Hopi maintain that, drought or no, the reason

for abandoning these villages was to continue the migrations ordained by the Creator for all the Hopi clans, and that the petroglyphs and pictographs associated with these ruins clearly show this.

Book of the Hopi is a fascinating document not only for its record of these migrations, by which the present day Hopi claim guardianship of the land, but also for its depiction of a people whose every activity is saturated with a sense of the sacred and who must ironically live in the midst of a larger society whose dominant concerns are largely profane by contrast. The book is actually a presentation by thirty Hopi elders of the sacred traditions of their people including their creation story, myths and legends, histories of the clans and their migrations, rituals, esoterics and prophecies, and encounters with the White man.

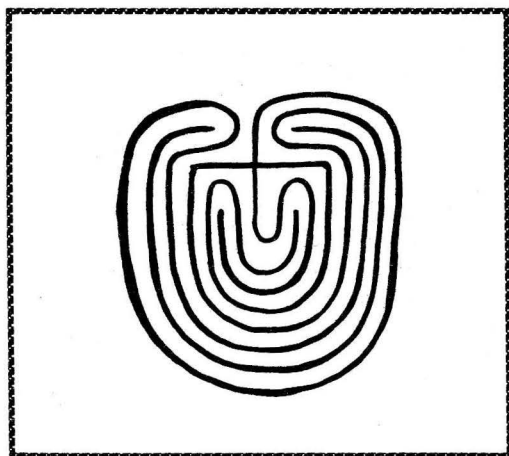
The Hopi's first encounter with the White man is particularly poignant when one considers that the Hopi had been anticipating his arrival for centuries. According to their prophecies their white brother, *Pahana*, would come to them and supplement their wisdom with his knowledge, to create, along with the remaining Yellow and Black races of man, a more complete and harmonious world order based on universal brotherhood. The Hopi had specific dates and places where the first encounter with *Pahana* would occur depending on whether he were on time (1519 A.D. when Cortez was welcomed into the Aztec court of Montezuma) or, as it turned out, approximately 20 years late. In 1540 Pedro de Tovar

along with some soldiers and a Franciscan Friar were sent North by Coronado to continue the Spanish conquest of the New World. They arrived at night at the mesa upon which the Hopi village of Awatovi lay and were met the next morning by an expectant and ceremonious group of Hopi representatives. The Spaniards, wasting no time, charged this greeting committee with spear and lance, forcing them back up the mesa. Even so, the Chief of the Bear Clan hoped that when later he held out his hand, palm upturned, to de Tovar, the Spaniard would offer his own hand palm down to complete the hand clasp of friendship indicating that he was in fact the long awaited White Brother. When de Tovar, misinterpreting the gesture, instead had an assistant drop a trinket into the Chief's hand, the Hopi realized that their White Brother had forgotten his part of the timeless agreement between their two peoples. Nevertheless the Hopi (which means peace) remained hospitable and, except for one violent episode, over the centuries suffered quietly the encroachments and indignities forced upon them by the settlers, prospectors, missionaries and governments of the burgeoning White society. Waters has included quite a few primary source materials in this section and it is fascinating, if not

heart-rending, to read the actual words of laws enacted, letters of protest sent, massacres planned, reports by governors and commissioners, and of bounties placed on "Indians and coyotes."

The larger White societies, first of the Spaniards, then the Mexicans, and then the Americans, with their materialistic concerns for land and gold and their over-sentimentalized approaches to the spirit could not begin to understand the peaceful, non-materialistic culture of the Hopi. These were and are a people whose high spiritual values are immediately evident in their choice of the arid upland desert country of northeastern Arizona as their permanent home. They settled here to minimize their sense of physical comfort and security so that their relationship to and reliance upon the Creator would remain strong. They were not forced to live here on a reservation as is the fate of many of the surviving tribes of Native Americans. In fact Oraibi, the Hopi capital, is the oldest, continuously inhabited settlement in North America.

Another point of Hopi spirituality which is quite surprising and of particular interest is their perception and understanding of the subtle resonating centers in the human body known as *chakras* in the Hindu and Tibetan traditions. As in



Hopi Mother Earth Symbol: the symbol of the Emergence.



Manas-Chakra, 8-fold stages of the mind, India.

Eastern mysticism, and others as well, the uppermost chakra at the top of the head is considered to be of the highest order, the point where consciousness enters and leaves the body. The Hopi call this center the "door to the Creator" and, through spiritual disciplines, attempt to "open" it and keep it opened so that the will of the Creator can be known and carried out. In descending order of sublimity and function are; the center in the brain (felt between the brows), the center in the throat, the one in the heart, and that of the *solar plexus* (the "throne of the Creator") which correspond exactly with those enumerated in the *chakra* system. However, the lower two *chakras* of Eastern mysticism, which are sometimes classed as a single center, corresponding to the organs of generation and elimination are not included in the Hopi series. These 5-7 centers which are seen to be homomorphically present in the body of the Earth or Cosmos in both traditions are important to the Hopi in matters both of spiritual development and medical treatment. The traditional medicine man can perceive the state or functioning of these centers in his patients, either with his hands or by looking through a particular crystal, and so diagnose imbalances in the functioning of the organism.

As a further sidelight to the unity of the World's esoteric traditions, Waters points out that the Hopi symbol for the theme of emergence is essentially the same as the labyrinth motif found on coins from Minoan Crete of the second millenium B.C. In addition, a friend has pointed out that the Hopi symbol is also almost identical to the symbol found on an 18th century manuscript from Rajasthan, India which represents the eightfold stages of the mind. Overall it is the symbol of the birth and subsequent wanderings of the soul in this or the afterlife in the soul's quest for fulfillment. As such it contains the four-quartered plan of creation, the structure of the cosmos. This quaternary pattern is primary in the structure of the psyche, as Jung has elaborated in his studies of the mandala

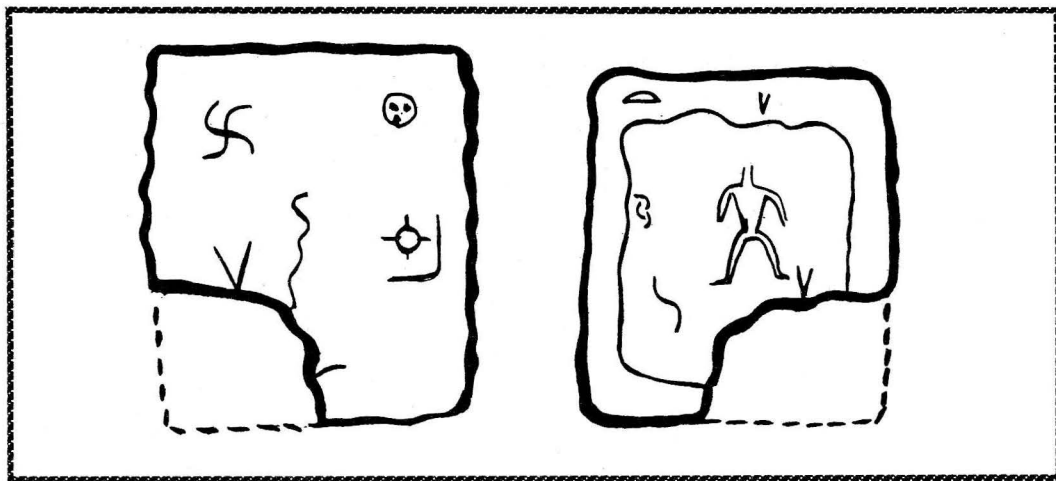
form, and for the Hopi all ceremonies, rituals and legends revolve around this archetype.

Another Hopi parallel to the Hindu tradition and the Judeo-Christian tradition as well is the concept of a succession of worlds and/or world orders. For the Hopi there have been three previous worlds which were created and destroyed. Each world was destroyed by the Creator as a result of the increasing evil doings of humanity. This, of course, is the theme of Noah and the Flood of Genesis, and, in fact, the previous third Hopi world was destroyed by a flood. Also like the Noah story, only those Hopi who had remained pure and kept the door to the Creator open were forewarned and instructed where to go to survive the impending destruction. After each destruction a new world is created into which the surviving Hopi emerge, and in which it is more difficult to survive and remain true to the Creator's will. This is like the series of four *yugas* in the Hindu tradition which are successive ages of increasing disharmony or falling away from divine law. According to this tradition we are presently in the fourth or *Kali Yuga* which is the last and most discordant age before the world is destroyed and another *kalpa* (series of four *yugas*) begins. The Hopi speak of a total of nine worlds which are to be created and destroyed but it is not clear whether the process is repeated cyclically as with the *yugas*. At any rate, the theme of increasing resistance to the will of the Creator and the accompanying development or unfolding of consciousness in overcoming such resistance is the underlying theme in all three traditions.

Lastly, the bulk of this book is devoted to the rich legacy of stories the Hopi possess in the form of legends and mystery plays. Every action, dance, ceremony and day to day activity seem to have a story connected to them. Each story refers back to events in mythic time; the time of creation, the time of emergence into the fourth world, and of the great clan migrations throughout the continent. These sto-

ries are links in the unbroken chain of Hopi tradition and provide the strong sense of tribal identity that has so far kept the Hopi functioning as an independent nation in the face of great adversity. The stories also offer tantalizing clues to the anthropologists concerning the mystery of the Anasazi and the origins of the Hopi. Did they migrate across the pre-historic, Bering Straits land bridge as is commonly believed, or did they arrive by boat on the western shores of Central America as their own history relates? Some of their stories and ritual formulae include detailed references to the ocean and the objects and wildlife to be found at the seashore. They also contain numerous references to places, flora and fauna in Central and South America. Were the Mayan, Aztec and Toltec civilizations the flowering of Hopi clans who settled down to build cities rather than follow the prescribed migrations as the Hopi maintain? The Hopi claim a knowledge of their pictographs and of the sacred form and function of their architecture. Where do the Hopi come from original-

ly? Does their esoteric knowledge derive from a high civilization in the East or perhaps from one of the legendary, antediluvian civilizations. or was it developed autonomously? And what are we to make of the kachinas, those spirit beings "from the stars" who came down to live among the Hopi and instruct them in the natural and metaphysical sciences? The recent revelations of the Hopi sacred, oral tradition which this book represents pose many such intriguing questions, not the least of which concerns the future of the Hopi and the fourth world which we all inhabit. According to Hopi prophecy, the appearance in the sky of a "gourd of ashes" signals the coming destruction of the world unless steps are taken to promote peace and understanding between the nations. This gourd of ashes is taken to refer to the above ground testing of the atom bomb which took place in New Mexico in the 1940's. Apparently it is still not too late for the lost White Brother to make his appearance and supply the missing, broken corner to one of the sacred stone tablets of the Hopi. ♦



The first sacred tablet - given to the Fire Clan.

Photo and Illustration Credits

Inside Front Cover: Computer-generated design by Darlene Dehlin

4: Photograph by Guru Nitya

5: Photographs by Fred Simpson

14: Statue of Tara, the consort of the Boddhisattva of Infinite Compassion, Nepal, 13th century.

15-17: Calligraphy by Suellen Larkin

18-26: Graphics by Bob Lucas

34: Photograph of Krishna and maidens by Peter Oppenheimer

37: Photograph by Peter Oppenheimer

38: Graphic by Bob Lucas

44: Photograph by Fred Simpson



**Guru Puja at Island Gurukula Āranya
June 28, 1987**

East-West University and Narayana Gurukula Publications

By Nataraja Guru

An Integrated Science of the Absolute (Volumes I, II, III)
Towards a One World Economics
Dialectical Methodology
Wisdom's Frame of Reference
World Education Manifesto
Anthology of the Poems of Narayana Guru
The Philosophy of a Guru
Vedanta Revalued and Restated

By Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

Vināyakaṣṭakam
Love and Devotion
The Bhagavad Gita (Commentary)
Neither This Nor That But...Aum
The Haunting Echoes of Spring
Īśa Upaniṣad (Translation and Commentary)
Śree Narayana Guru
Daiva Daśakam (Translation and Commentary)
Bhakti
God: Reality or Illusion?
Beyond Cause and Effect
Prāṇayāma
Meditations on the Way
Psychology: An Eastern Perspective
Arivu - Epistemology of Gnosis (Translation and Commentary)

Other

Dhyāna Manjūṣā
Nataraja Guru's 90th Birthday Souvenir
East-West University Yearbooks - 1978 and 1981
Functional Democracy - Muni Narayana Prasad
The Philosophy of Śrī Narayana Guru - Dr. S. Omana
A World Academy of Wonder - J.L. Ascharyacharya
The Blessing of Being Not Educated - Peter Oppenheimer
Gestures in Silence - Deborah Buchanan
What Narayana Guru is Not - Nancy Yeilding

Publications Available From

Narayana Gurukula
Srinivasapuram P.O.
Varkala, Kerala
695145 India

Island Gurukula Āraṇya
8311 Quail Hill Road
Bainbridge Island, WA
98110 USA

