

**ARADHANA ISSUE  
1991**



**THE  
MOUNTAIN  
PATH**

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# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

"Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!"

— *The Marital Garland of Letters*, verse 1

June 1991

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grateful thanks to all  
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for supplying us  
valuable photos and  
material for this  
special issue on  
J. Krishnamurti.  
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— Editor.

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## The Mountain Path

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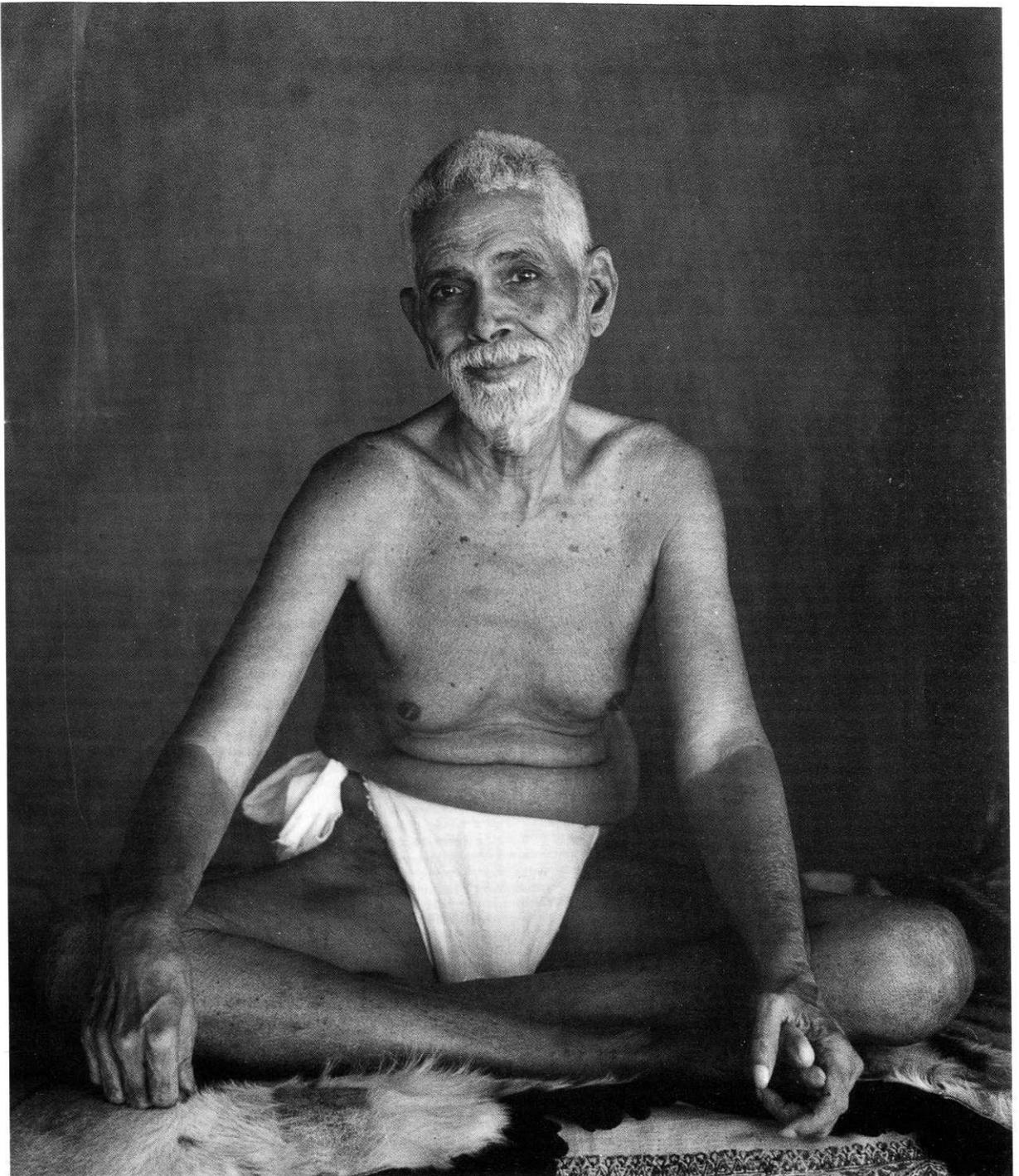
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### THE MOUNTAIN PATH

is dedicated to

**Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi**



ARADHANA ISSUE

JUNE 1991

Vol. 28 Nos. 1 & 2

**EDITORIAL:**

## “Asking is the Answer”

**A** QUESTION is put to someone in quest of an answer. The tone and quality of the answer depend on those of the question. When it is obvious that the questioner is not seriously seeking an answer, a serious answer will not be forthcoming. When the Roman Governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate, shot back a “What is Truth?” to Jesus standing before him for trial, Jesus did not answer him because, besides the fact that there was no mere verbal answer for the question, Pilate was clearly nowhere near seeking enlightenment on the subject. He was merely mocking, if not provoking him, and the assembly was not only unreceptive but fiercely hostile to Jesus. On the other hand, during his three years of intense ministry, Jesus gave intimations of Truth to a group of disciples — some of whom were unlettered fishermen — through parables, prayers, miracles and his own life, because they were athirst for Truth. Jesus had a marvellous way of dealing with questions.

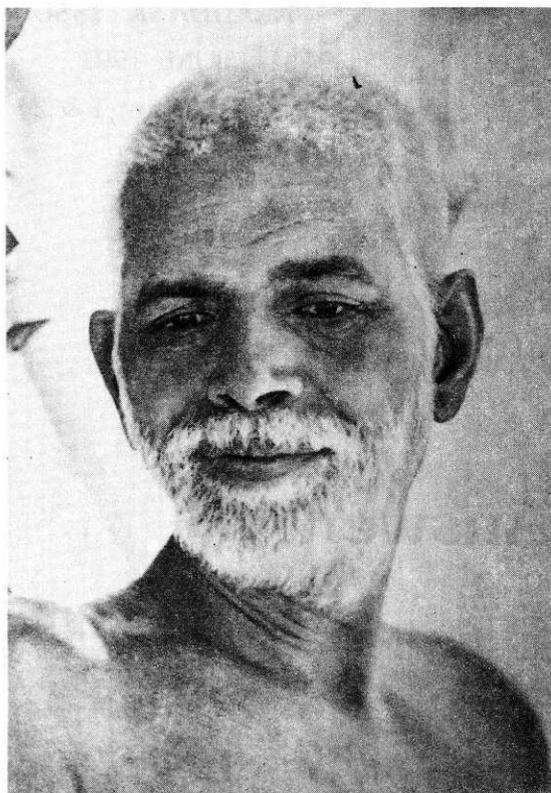
Zen Masters had an indirect way to answering questions which could not be answered directly verbally. In reply to a question, one Zen Master

said: “I shall cane you ten times if you ask that question”. When the disciple asked “What if I don’t?”, the Master replied: “I shall then cane you twenty times”!

So, the essence of a question is quest, the earnest desire of the questioner to have his doubt cleared, ignorance dispelled. Masters have always encouraged the spirit of such questing because the state of mind which questions is most important in the transmission of knowledge. *Satori* or enlightenment is rarely triggered off by the mere wave of a cane even if it be a Zen Master’s!

Much religious literature of the world is in the form of catechism, that is, question and answer (*prasnottari*). It is a far more effective form of communication of knowledge than a discourse. The Master replies to questions put in all humility and earnest eagerness and is not haranguing a captive audience of restive students. The question is as important as the answer.

The Master can gauge the disciple by the latter’s question. When a disciple after a few



decades of discipleship asked Lord Mahavira, "Bhagavan, what have I gained? I left everything and came to you", Mahavira told him "Now, you leave me."

Socrates, who was famous for his question-and-answer sessions, or rather walks, with his students, said, "I would rather be a pig discontented than a man contented." By 'discontent' he meant doubt, thirst for Truth, a passion for the why and wherefore of things.

Doubt is not disbelief. It is the hard, sharp stare of attention, a close scrutiny in order to have a perception of the whole and not just a glimpse of part of a thing.

Doubting, questioning, investigating, is cathartic, a process which cleanses the "doors of perception". It takes one to the root of a problem. Mere passive acceptance, without the bracing spirit of enquiry, leaves one afloat in the

morass of "words, symbols, myths, ideas and theories" which only clog the "doors of perception".

In the realm of science, it was the doubting, questioning mind which was behind such discoveries as the Archimedes Principle and the Law of Gravitation, to mention just a couple of dramatic instances.

Only through doubt and by questioning can one discriminate between the false and the real, appearance and reality. J. Krishnamurti says: "Doubt brings about lasting understanding. What is true is revealed only through doubt." He also says that if one begins with doubt and proceeds to inquire, one will end with certainty, whereas if one begins with certainty, one will end with doubt!

Among the great spiritual teachers of our times, two were unique in their handling of questions — Ramana Maharshi and J. Krishnamurti. To both, the question was more important than the answer and both served questions back into the questioner's court with telling effect. They helped people be their own teacher, a light unto themselves. Both were Masters of Reality. If Krishnamurti was a non-guru *sans pareil*, Ramana was a Sadguru non-guru supreme. If the one was a negator *extraordinaire*, the other was a Pure Witness all-encompassing.

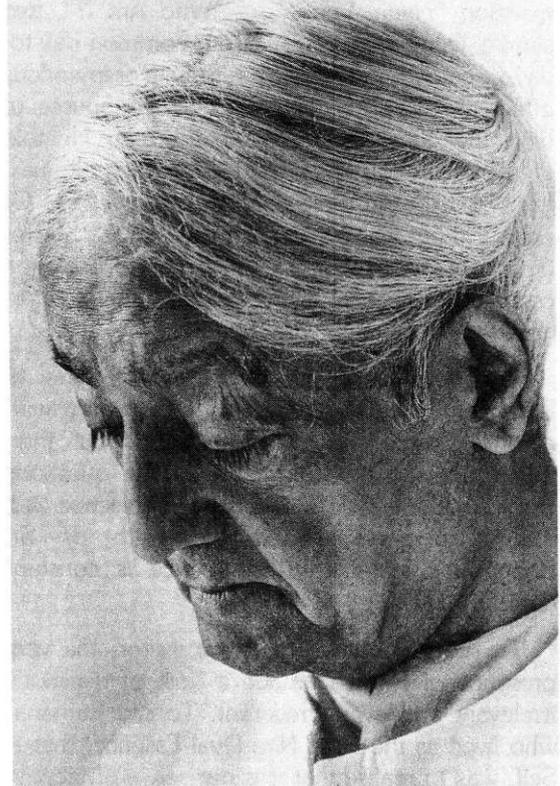
If Krishnamurti honed the verbal language well-nigh to the perfection of silence, Ramana's silence was a constant conversation with one and all. Both were utterly impersonal, fearless and free from all authority. Both had 'Dialogue with Death' walking alive into the House of Death. The one talked about 'psychological conditioning' and the other about '*vasanas*'. Krishnamurti said, "Enquire, go into the question" and Ramana said, "Enquire '*Who am I?*' and plunge into the source of the 'I'." Both left timeless teachings which, though different in style, are not dissimilar in content, and yet both were absolutely original. Krishnamurti said Self-knowledge is within everybody's reach, while to Ramana it is a *fait accompli* and one only had to be aware of it.

Krishnamurti tirelessly stressed that the essence of any question demanded investigation. This investigation is intrinsically contentless and therefore without classification, colouration, magisterial judgement or scholarly exegesis. Pure questioning is a perennial movement, a vibrant, vital flow of the 'now'. Questioning extends the 'now'. It is the flow of attention. In Krishnamurti's own inimitable words: "The right question is itself the right answer. There is no answer to the right question. Any answer is the distortion of the question. Answers sprout from knowledge and knowledge is always conditioned, limited. Therefore, any answer is never the whole; so it is unreal.

"But the question is real. The spirit of questioning is the act of learning. In learning there is intelligence. What is learnt is knowledge, which is dead. So, always question, question, question."

Along with the people who came to him, Krishnaji went into a vast range of questions exploring the gamut of man's psychological life. To name a few: attention, brain, beauty, belief, conformity, conflict, death, doubt, education, fear, freedom, God, intelligence, love, nature, religion, time. With his powerful broom of enquiry, he swept away the most cherished beliefs of man, if found false. Learning and unlearning, living and dying from moment to moment is the essence of Krishnamurtian awareness.

Krishnaji, to whom a verbal answer was the nipping of a question in the bud, let one question lead to another so that the bud of enquiry would blossom forth as petal after petal shot out. Though one person talked sitting on a bench or rostrum and the others listened sitting on the ground or in chairs, both were involved in the investigation. Krishnamurti would ask, "What is death?" and when one heard him say, "You cannot understand love without understanding death" or "Death is dying to all that is false", a door of perception would open in the listeners. At Krishnamurti's hands death was no more a scary skull and crossed-bones affair but was a phenomenon, the comprehension of which was



deeply related to right living and right living was the only way to be free from the fear of death. Questions like, "Is there love in this country?" "Have you ever really loved anybody or anything?" which Krishnaji often asked the audience, were an invitation to be extraordinarily honest with themselves. He would startle an associate with questions like, "Why are you so ambitious?" To listen to such questions without reacting at a personal level was to come to terms with oneself deeply. Defiant questions had been hurled at him but he would answer them without batting an eye-lid. Krishnaji's questions and answers had the effect of provoking, stimulating, challenging, startling, wounding, healing, comforting, awakening and transforming the listeners.

If Krishnaji was a master of questions Ramana Maharshi was unique in handling the innumerable questions put to him with the help of a single

question “*Naan Yaar?*” — “Who Am I?”, two simple Tamil words culled from common day-to-day discourse and used by him with tremendous effect to point the questioner to the source of both the question and the questioner. He told them that if they knew themselves then all questions would get answered by themselves. Of course, there was no verbal answer to the Master Question: “Who Am I?”, but it has to be asked constantly. That is Self-enquiry. “There is no answer for the right question.”

Countless were the people who came to Ramana from different parts of the world with carefully prepared lists of questions but then found no need to ask them as the questions resolved themselves in Ramana’s presence and the questioners realised the truth of Sri Bhagavan’s statement that silence is constant communication.

To the perceptive, receptive visitor, the very presence of Ramana made a host of questions irrelevant and even irreverent. To see Ramana, who lived as the Pure Non-Dual Essence, that is Self, was to realise that it is our sense of identity with the body that makes cowards of us all and that it is our mind that makes us unintelligent, ignorant bound by the illusion of separateness and that in spirit we are one, real, free and Pure Intelligence. To see him was to know that to have nothing is to have everything, to be nothing is to be all. Beside his immense impersonal love, our loves looked like inane fancies, if not hates. To perceive Ramana’s awesome availability round-the-clock to one and all equally, in a little hall with the door ever open, was to realise that we live within a shell which we carry wherever we go, and that we interrelate only with mental images of ourselves. To experience Time stand still, to pause in the atmosphere of the Timeless

Bhagavan, was to feel an infinite space opening out within us and without, and our notions of psychological time were obliterated. One also realised that our civilization, culture, family, social structure, economy, education, jurisprudence polity — everything is based on duality which is the cause of all our sorrows. To see Ramana live in fellowship on equal terms with all men, with birds and beasts, was to discover the oneness of Life. What question can one put to such a Being? What favour can one beg of one from whom the river of Love and Grace flow? One can only ask oneself why we live as caged canaries when we are the royal eagle in flight soaring in the firmament of freedom?

Yet, many questions were asked and Ramana would answer in words, silence and smile. The questioner went back happy, comforted, reassured and with the question “*Who Am I?*” throbbing within him. Ramana made it clear: “There is no answer to the question *Who am I?*. Asking is the answer”. He however said that the ‘I’ should go. It is a phantom. When you search for it with the lamp of Self-enquiry it will run away. When the ‘I’ goes, the pulsation of ‘I-‘I’ which is the Self, will be felt automatically. He added, “When one’s true nature is known, then there is Being without beginning and end. It is unbroken Awareness-Bliss”. He also said, “The ‘I’ casts off the illusion of ‘I’ and yet remains as ‘I’. Such is the paradox of Self-Realisation.”

So is a paradox the answer to a conundrum, a riddle to a puzzle? Is an enigmatic smile the answer to an earnest enquiry? There may be no answer to this question but all other questions are answered, and above all, the questioner disappears into the Source of the question!

It is a Liberating Question!

**“The Self is within each one’s experience every moment.”**

**“No aids are needed to know it.”**

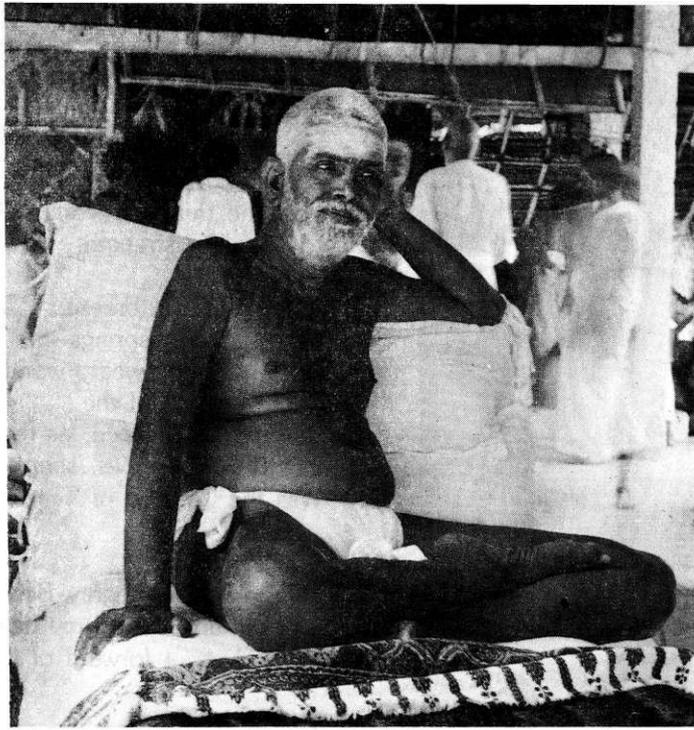
**“There is nothing so simple as being the Self.”**

**“We think there is something hiding our Reality and that it must be destroyed before Reality is gained.”**

**“It is ridiculous! A great game of pretending!”**

— Sri Bhagavan in *TALKS*





# JOURNEY TO RAMANA

By A. HAJI

## Book I: The First Journey: Discovery

### Chapter 1: "IS SILENCE NOTHING?"

"**N**OTHING," WAS my wife's answer, to my demanding to know what was so very heavy in the carry-on bag she had packed for me. Managing to lift it, with some strain, I say a heart-wrenching goodbye and quickly board the aircraft.

On the plane, almost automatically, I begin leafing through the airline magazine taken from the seat-pocket in front of me. My eyes greedily find article after article and picture after picture, useful, informative and exciting.

"This is really interesting," I mutter to myself, "at least for a free magazine!"

"I better carry it away with me," I think, "for reading later."

"I can always drop it into my commodious carry-on bag," the thought flashes through my mind.

"Obviously not the thing to do," I argue back with my mind, "it's heavy enough already."

"Then read it on-board," my mind insists.

"Sure," I retort, "I'm not prepared to carry this garbage about in my bag but should cheerfully accept carrying it about in my mind!"

I really am not interested in anything that would add to my intellectual baggage. Rather show me a path that would reduce that bur-

den. Maybe that is what Ramana is all about. The mind hungrily grasps at any new intellectual food that comes along. "This is really interesting," the mind exults, "for me to play around with." If nothing presents itself, it busily and endlessly talks to itself.

While saying goodbye to my wife I had told her how lonely these trips could be without her. There was no one I could really talk to, at a deeper, more personal level; only social conversation. Sometimes these long business trips feel like a sentence of solitary imprisonment in silence.

The mind starved of new grist to grind, compute, work on, chew, gets bored. The superficial mind of course is easily satisfied with the unending stream of fresh and novel impressions that travel feeds it, but the deeper mind cries out for something more satisfying.

The little mind, so thirsty for experience, so desperate in its hunt for novelty, will allow anything to take it away from itself. Yet what was this silence I was afraid of?

I remember an earlier practice of mind, when I was a single student, of maintaining silence for a few days. I remember how funny it had been when I had tried to order a sandwich from the food truck parked on campus. I had to point to the menu printed on the side of the truck. Then too I was asked by a very puzzled sandwich maker: "What DO you want?"

I tried gesticulating to let the man know that I wouldn't speak. To this day I wonder what trick he thought I was up to. But I did get my sandwich.

Obviously this silence of not talking was not the kind of silence being asked for by this practice. It was a deeper silence, a silence of the mind, and this is what was so threatening.

I sit in the airport lounge waiting to board a connecting flight. I look around me. Hundreds of people are waiting with me. If I look in a particular way, they appear to be a seething mass in continual motion. No silence here! Their bodies reflect the restlessness of their minds. Endless

movement, looking around, the thirst for experience shining in their eyes: "Give me something to do, anything!"

Anything to take them away from themselves: talking, reading, smoking, eating, doing. What will the Being do to this perpetual activity? Each one searching for the "other" that will take it away from itself. Why is the mind so afraid of its own silence?

Ramana says, "The mind is naught but a bundle of thoughts." Thus, stillness for the mind spells its own death. This thirst for experience that rules us all, where does it come from? This continual going out in a search for the "other", where does it lead? What are we looking for?

Back to the airport lounge for clues. Each person seems to be searching for that "other", which will bring him or her happiness. The eternal hope that the next something will bring the happiness so longed for, "the next person that I meet will make me happy; the next paragraph I read will bring me happiness; the next cigarette I smoke, the next donut I eat, the next trip I take, will bring me happiness."

But the happiness does not last. The latest newness wanes. The new becomes old, and stale and known. And we resume the search.

Getting on board the aircraft, I notice the airline had displayed piles of different newspapers for its patrons to carry on board. I can't resist picking up three different ones. The word newspaper itself: News comes from "new". Why does the new fascinate? The old is not sufficient. The old has to be continually discovered anew, to be made interesting. We need the change of fashions, the whirl of newness to excite us.

Yet the search for the "other" is seen to be inherently distressing. It never seems to satisfy us completely, perhaps because it is the "other", and not of the Self.

After exhausting the three newspapers I finally fall asleep. Ah bliss! The quiet mind at last. No more striving for the "other". Sleep satisfies;

rewards the soul. Often the body is not even tired but the mind begs for sleep. Even the mind tires of its own cacophony.

Perhaps this is a good time to tell you where my journey leads. I am travelling from America to Ramana Ashram in South India. Ramana was a sage who lived in the first half of the twentieth century. I never met him in the flesh. He left his body in 1950, a few months after I was born. But his teachings found a home in my heart. The trip is going to be a business one, with only a detour to Ramana Ashram. I also plan to see His Holiness the Shankaracharya of Kanchi, who is a living sage in the town of Kanchi, which is not far from Ramana Ashram.

By now I have arrived at the Frankfurt airport transit lounge. This is the only airport in the world that I know that has a pornographic movie theatre, right here in the airport, for bored passengers. The mind has to be kept happy in its search for distraction.

In the Frankfurt airport lounge I overhear an angry African woman talking passionately to her compatriots: "Even then there were 5000 Germans in Nigeria even when they were telling us it was a bad time. They must have been there for only one reason, to make money." And then later "We should give them 4 hours to leave the country and then if they don't we should throw them in jail." Half an hour later I noticed her fast asleep on the lounge chair in front of me, curled up like a baby, with a peaceful smile on her face. Sleep conquers all. Ramana says that the world disappears in sleep, the toothache vanishes.

In the end what we seek is very simple: a light-hearted giggle, a warm smile spreading across our face, a laugh that will take away our troubles for a few moments. The urge for happiness is the hidden driving force behind our actions. It is this desire for happiness, so basic to the organism that creates the "other" projecting onto the "other" the qualities of happiness that seem to be lacking within itself. But perhaps this is a mistaken notion for, in deep dreamless sleep, the "I" organism is happy by itself, in itself. What then is lacking when there is no "other"?

Ramana says that deep sleep can be had even when awake! He says try and find out who the "I" was that says "I slept happily". Ramana claims that, that same "I" experiences the three states: waking, dream and sleep. There are no two "I"s — there is only one "I". Find that "I" and rest in it, urges Ramana. What is that unitary consciousness that Ramana refers to as the "I"? Do we have experience of it? Is it the same everyday consciousness we refer to as "I"?

On board the plane from Frankfurt to Bombay, I notice sitting near me a tough, hard-nosed businessman. After so many hours of being cooped up together there are some details of his mannerisms that I begin to find grating. He talks too loudly. He gesticulates too expansively. It is as if he is all the time declaiming to the world: "Here I am, look at me!"

I wonder, "Is his 'I' the same as mine?"

Soon we are driving through the streets of Bombay. Even though I was born and brought up in Bombay, it is always a surprise to see the pitifully thin, poor people on Bombay's streets. They seem to have work to do and are moving about like city people should; but it always strikes me that their nutritional histories must be deficient for their bodies to be so wasted. Interestingly enough one finds the policemen uniformly bloated. Everyone knows that they take bribes.

"Do they experience the same 'I' that I do?" I again wonder.

I also remember driving through Bombay some time ago with a friend. We were going to see a living sage who stayed in a small one-room tenement in the most notorious red-light area of Bombay. People from all over the world used to come to his small attic room to meet him.

My friend asks him a question, "When any of us refers to ourselves as 'I', are we all referring to the same 'I': the 'I' that is universal and One?"

Perhaps the sage thought it too obvious a question, for we received no direct answer. But

if that theory were correct then the "I" of the cocky businessman and the "I" of the undernourished street people and the "I" of the crooked policeman and my "I" were all the same. In fact I was them and they were me. Ramana says much the same thing: "All that one gives to others, one gives to oneself."

This teaching from Ramana always makes me recall a story of an ancient sage in medieval India who gave the appearance of retarded intellect because of his internal preoccupation. Yet noticing his athletic build, he was conscripted by the King to carry the Royal palanquin. He could not go fast enough, and the King was upset for he was causing the other porters to slow down as well.

Finally losing his temper the King used his staff of royal office to strike the reluctant porter. Immediately every porter felt the blow exactly as if the King had beaten each one of them. Not only they but also the King's ministers felt the blow simultaneously, and not even the King himself was spared for he too felt the sting of his own staff, as if his blow had fallen on his own shoulder.

The Sage had been so identified with the universal "I" that his pain had been universalized.

## Chapter 2: WHERE DOES HAPPINESS COME FROM?

"18-year-old Amelia Balanios had been watching T.V. in San Salvador when Roberto Cardona, the Honduran forward scored the winning goal. She grabbed her father's pistol and shot herself dead. The young girl could not bear to see her fatherland brought to its knees."

(As reported in the Salvadorian newspaper *El Nacional*)

Today's newspaper from Bombay carries this strange report as to how the 1969 Soccer War began between San Salvador and Honduras.

It seems so strange to realize that at times happiness is more important to human beings than the instinct for self-survival. Often people say, "I would rather die than be so unhappy again."

Very often happiness seems to be as important an instinct as survival itself. Perhaps survival and happiness are the self-same instinct in different forms? But what is it that prefers to die rather than be unhappy? What is it, that has been so deadly hurt by unhappiness, that wishes to die?

The experience of unhappiness can be so completely devastating. It separates us from that very root of life: the universal "I" Itself. Perhaps this is the ultimate unhappiness that we cannot bear.

I am walking in a garden, in the countryside some distance from Bombay. It is a relief to see open spaces again. I am in a corner of the garden, where as children we ventured only with much fear, because it is full of holes in the ground reputed to be the homes of snakes. I guess the holes were dug by rodents and mongooses. The snakes move in, devour the inhabitants, and inherit a home.

The snake of unhappiness creeps into our innermost sanctum and feasts on our vital sense of self-being. It inherits a home when this awareness of self-being is destroyed. No longer then does life appear to have self-evident meaning or purpose.

I see streaming at my feet a nest of ants, tiny but in the hundreds, moving in a line like one organism. Nearby is a centipede with waves of legs pushing it along. Is one "I" in the many ants controlling their singular movement just like the one "I" of the centipede controls its many legs in harmony? Is the "I" of the beehive different from the "I" of the individual bees?

I go for a morning jog through the quiet countryside. My legs pump down the mud path like the legs of a centipede. I push myself up the hillside until halfway up, I see the whole countryside stretched before me. The breeze brings to my ears the drone of the trucks running down the

distant highway, one after another, tiny like ants. What is the reality of the "I" of the trucks?

The moving, breathing, eating, living mechanism called "truck" is apparently self-motivated until we realise that it is not self-conscious. The awareness of "I", that consciousness of being alive, comes from the driver sitting behind the steering wheel. Is my body too some kind of truck which I can push to go faster or force to run uphill against its painful protests? Where does the self-conscious driver "I" sit? Is it the Self that drives this "truck" of my body?

I look down at my panting body, I gaze at my own breath whistling in and out of my nostrils. What is it that impels this breath? Certainly not the ego that I am aware of being.

Ramana says, "The source is the same for both mind and breath. Thought, indeed, is the nature of the mind. The thought "I" is the first thought of the mind, and that is egoity. It is from that whence egoity originates that breath originates."

Ah! Ego. Ego is all the "I" that I know. Ego arises when the truck driver insists that he is not different from his truck. Ego is the mind-body complex that I identify with; the truck that I insist is me.

Whence is the source that Ramana refers to from which both egoity and the breath originate. Can my "I" know that source? Can the ego "I" know that universal "I"?

A Sufi once told me this *koan*: "A camel carrying a Sufi let out its breath and expired that very instant collapsing dead in a heap onto the ground. The Sufi wondered: 'What was it that was carrying both me and the camel?' What was the difference between the "I" of the Sufi and the "I" of the camel? From what one source did they both come?"

I am on the hilltop now. The valley is littered with plowed fields yet unplanted. The black loam of the fields below stares up at me. A farmer with his wooden plow urges on his mangy bullocks. The freshly plowed fields await the gift of rain.

**"To open the door to the eternal, the journey into the self is the only way."**

**— J. Krishnamurti**

The farmer walks behind his bullocks churning up the dark soil. Certainly the farmer is more conscious than the bullocks? Somehow the bullocks seem less conscious, and we "know" that human beings are more aware, more alive, more full of suffering and pain, more conscious of their "I", than bullocks?

Yet to escape from that pain and suffering, how we strive to make ourselves unconscious like bullocks. How we yearn for the pleasure of drinking wine to take the edge off our sorrows. How daily we seek the joy of sleep: unknowing, unconscious, deathlike sleep. How we seek out the distractions that modern civilization seems to be able to supply us in plenty, anything that will take us away from the pain and suffering.

Urging on the mangy bullocks of our desires, we use the sharp plow of our intellect to churn up the rich black loam of our very being-consciousness. Inviting the welcome rain of distractions we grow the tender young plants of experience from the seeds of our past inheritance. Separating the sweet grain of pleasure from the chaff of displeasure we ferment it in the vat of our minds. Mulling over the brew of forgetfulness we return once more to the source of our being: happiness.

Ramana says, "Happiness is the very nature of the Self. Happiness and Self are not different. There is no happiness in any object of the world. We imagine through our ignorance that we derive happiness from objects. When the mind goes out, it experiences misery. In truth, when its desires are fulfilled, it returns to its own place and enjoys the happiness that is the Self."

### Chapter 3: LOST AND FOUND

The ego awakes this morning full of fear and resistance. Today is the day I go to see the

Shankaracharya at the temple town of Kanchi on my way to Ramana Ashram. The Shankaracharya is a pontiff of the Hindu faith in South India. He is also revered as a Sage in his own right.

What answer do I seek from him? How can I ensure that the ego will be at all willing to listen? The ego has no intention of letting anything happen that will reduce its unshakeable hold over this organism. It colours the situation with fear and futility. I must find the Self that wants to be cured of this illness called ego. Where does it live? Is it possible to realize it?

Friends from America have given letters for the Shankaracharya. One pleads for Divine guidance and has enclosed a picture of himself so the Shankaracharya's eyes may fall on him. What emptiness do I wish to fill with his gaze?

My memory drifts back to an earlier visit of mine to Ramana Ashram. There, an overpowering fear possessed me that a thief with a dagger would climb into my bedroom at night and murder me. I could picture it quite clearly: the knife dripping with blood, the crazed expression on the face of the thief. The ego feared for its very survival and projected this fear outwards

into this bloody fantasy. Surely the thief in the night was an apt symbol for the ego itself.

This same fear and confusion I now feel on the two-hour chauffeured car-ride from Madras to Kanchi. The ego is disturbed and lets me know it. I drop off to sleep thinking to myself that the first question I would test the Shankaracharya with would be, "Where would I find my guru?"

I am awake now. The driver has missed the Kanchi turn-off by miles. First the ego reacts with rage at its plans going awry. Then suddenly relief floods in for the meeting with Shankaracharya has been postponed. We are lost but decide to push on till the next turn-off.

Suddenly we find ourselves at the next turn-off. Amazingly it is the one for Tiruvannamalai where Ramana Ashram is located! Plans are re-made to go to Ramana Ashram directly, without back-tracking to Kanchi. Then the ego panics again. To face the ego-destroying Ramana! An equally frightful prospect.

Apparently my question has been answered. The synchronicity of the missed turn-off and the re-routing to Ramana Ashram has some meaning. I guess what I am being told is: "But you have already found your guru in Ramana!" The answer came in a rather unexpected way though.



The Ashram is located at the foot of the Red Hill called Arunachala. Ramana considered the hill sacred. Mythology tells us that Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu decided to compete to judge who was the greater. They came across a pillar of Light stretching in both directions, vertically.

Lord Vishnu turned himself into a boar and began to dig into the earth to find the end of the column of light. Lord Brahma turned himself into a swan and soared into the heavens to find the other end but neither succeeded. Lord Brahma found a falling flower and brought it as proof of having reached the end. Suddenly the column of Light transformed itself into Lord Shiva. He sliced off one of Lord Brahma's four heads and declared that Brahma would not be worshipped whereas Lord Vishnu would receive universal worship. Till today there are no temples to honor Lord Brahma. The location of that column of Light is Arunachala.

Ramana saw the hill as Lord Shiva Himself. He described it as being pure Consciousness itself. When someone wrote him a letter asking him to send them a rock from the most sacred part of the hill, Ramana answered that the whole hill was sacred and a rock from any part of the hill would do.

Scripture claims that residence within a radius of 30 miles of the hill is sufficient enough in itself to guarantee salvation. In fact Ramana himself did not leave the environs of the hill from the moment he arrived there as a youth.

I can feel all the non-essentials falling away from me already. I can feel the quiet mind, as we drive towards the mountain seen as a small rise on the horizon.

Arriving at the Ashram I proceed to the main shrine, the tomb of Ramana, called the *Samadhi*. This is where the mortal remains of Ramana lie. It is a quiet place, but much too overdecorated for my taste. The mind begins to criticize the non-essentials rather than rest in that peace that permeates this place.

Suddenly the lights begin to go out and the doors are slammed shut. They are closing down the shrine for the night. Perhaps I too have to close down these interminable thoughts and shut off my senses. Does the ego reside in these thoughts? If I shut down thoughts and senses then will the ego disappear? It sounds too simple. Is it even possible?

They put me in Muruganar's room for my stay. This is a fearful room for the ego. During one of my earlier stays at the Ashram, I had stayed in this same room and again the fear of another "thief in the night" had gripped me.

Muruganar was a poet who was intensely devoted to Ramana. His poetry summarizes and extols the teachings of Ramana in pithy and direct language. The room is sparsely furnished with a bed, a desk and a small cupboard. Perhaps Muruganar passed away in this very bed. He is buried in the Ashram as a respected devotee of Ramana.

The last time I had stayed in this room, suddenly the fear possessed me that Ramana himself would come walking by from the meditation hall, which was within view of the room. I could "see" Ramana, leaning on his cane, peering into my room. For some reason this seemed a frightening prospect. I was afraid this thief would steal my ego. I could barely sleep that night, so full of dread was the ego!

But tonight I find myself quite cheerful. I open the small cupboard hoping to find some soap to bathe with. I find instead an Ashram magazine, an old copy of *The Mountain Path*. It opens to the page containing Muruganar's poems. I am surprised to find the poems answering some personal questions I have in my mind.

I sleep well at night except for the mosquitoes. I wonder why it is necessary to come this enormous distance to sleep on a very hard and narrow bed while being feasted on by tiny almost invisible insects. But I remember reading in that same Ashram magazine, an article by Arthur Osborne, a western devotee of Ramana; he writes that we all need physical supports of Grace for our faith. Arunachala is one such.

I find it quite hard to believe that the mountain is anything other than what it appears to be: a mass of rock. Yet there must be something magnetic about this place to hold Ramana here for his entire life and there must be something magnetic about this place to drag me to it, year after year.

There is a feeling of having arrived home here, a feeling that many visitors to this place have remarked on. It is a feeling of peace, that draws one into the home within one's heart.

#### Chapter 4: "PARADISE!"

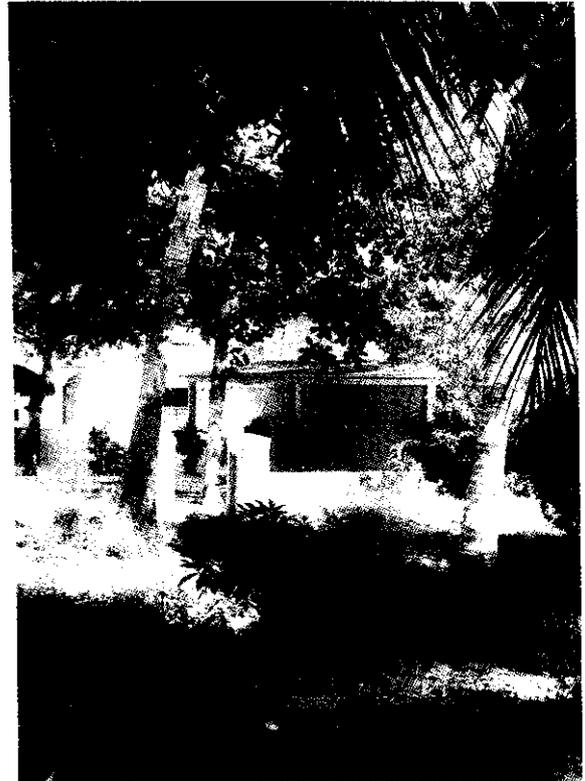
Something awakes me at 4 a.m. the next morning. I go to the hall where an old devotee lights a flame of camphor before a picture of Ramana. A statue of Ramana sits crossed-legged, gazing at us. On the wall above the statue emblazoned in gold letters is a verse from Ramana's teachings:

"In the interior of the heart-cavern the One shines alone as the "I"- "I", as the Self. Resort to the heart by diving deep within, through self-enquiry or by subduing the mind along with the breath. You will thus become established in the Heart."

Ramana wrote these words spontaneously in 1915 when he found a note written by a young devotee. The note began with the words "In the interior of the heart.....". The devotee had left the note incomplete with only these words on it and had gone about his work. When he returned, to his surprise, he found the verse complete in Sanskrit, beginning with those words which he had penned.

Ramana's teaching was the Great Silence. He spoke little and wrote very infrequently. He once described how the words seemed to force him to put them down on paper. It seems that he wrote only under the guidance of the Divine Will as in fact he lived the rest of his life.

So Ramana locates the Self in the heart-cavern. It is interesting that when Ramana wrote



these lines he was living in a cave on Arunachala mountain. How to find the heart-cavern and reside there in the One true Self? To escape from the ego and its endless bickering; that would be Paradise.

The day progresses and the heat begins to build. I take a bath to cool off. My bathroom has open lattice windows looking out onto a grove of palm trees. The thatched sheds hide in the distance, and suddenly I realise where I have seen this before. This is my fantasy of Paradise!

Ever since I could remember, I fantasised an island Paradise with palm trees and thatched huts. I always thought that the fantasy was of Tahiti or of some Polynesian island. Now, here it was and it was no different from the fantasy: the heat, the cooling winds coming through the lattice windows, the click-clack of the palm ferns in the breeze, even the wailing cries of the peacocks. A monkey walks by languorously on all fours, across the palms. Even the water pouring

down on my body feels just right — not too hot, not too cold — the correct tropical bath. Yes, there is no doubt about it, this is Paradise.

The day passes uneventfully, for I find the mind tranquil, in all circumstances. It refuses to get excited or provoked by events. When it becomes too hot to bear, the mind does not revolt; rather, I just shrug my shoulders and carry on and then strangely enough the heat ceases to bother me. No mental problem seems to be intractable in this condition. But the mind itself refuses to move under its own volition.

That evening I go for a walk on the holy mountain. I watch the huge silver orb of the sun drop behind another mountain on the horizon. Truly, if this Arunachala is a magic mountain where does its power lie? Is it in its rocks? I ask.

I have an impulse to pick up as many stones as I can possibly stuff into my pockets and load my arms with rocks to carry back home with me. Will the thought-destroying power of these rocks work elsewhere too? I already have a few rocks from Arunachala at home and they do not have the impact that this mountain is having on me.

Then where is the power coming from? Is it from the earth itself? Perhaps Arunachala lies at the confluence of many great streams of subtle energy that girdle the globe. Stonehenge..... and the medieval churches are supposed to be built on these lines of energy. The Taoists are supposed to be able to map these lines of power with their geomancer compass. Animal paths winding through the countryside or up a hillside are supposed to naturally follow these lines of force. Is the answer to the question of Arunachala's power so simple?

Do all who live within a 30-mile radius of Arunachala feel this ego-destroying power? Or

only those who are attuned to it? Is it possible to feel this power from more than 30 miles away, say from across the globe? All these questions need to be answered before I can fully understand Arunachala's power.

The darkness fills the sky and penetrates into my bones. I am left sitting on a rocky outcropping, surveying a universe of a million stars.

A Swami in the far Himalayas had once described this Arunachala feeling to me. He had told me how he sat meditating on this very mountain, looking down at the plains spread out below him. He felt he could hear a leaf drop miles away, so quiet had his mind become.

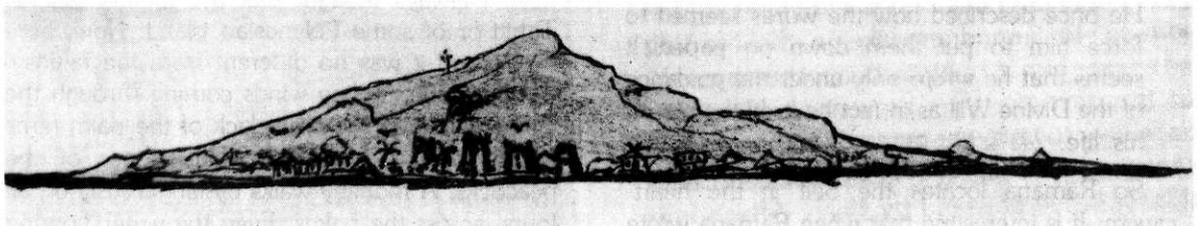
Is this the end of my journey? Can I take Arunachala home with me? For what is Arunachala but a concept. A symbol of my deepest aspirations. Arunachala is in fact the Self, the Paradise I seek. I must find this Self and rest in it.

I lie on my back on a flat rock and merge into the giant constellation of Scorpio with its huge 'death-sting' wrapped around the heavens. Waves of chanting from the nearby Ashram at the foot of the hill wash over me.

That afternoon in Muruganar's room I had seen a tiny scorpion in the desk drawer. Small though it was, yet its 'death-sting' was raised menacingly. Strangely enough, it had not surprised me, or at least it had not frightened me.

Death for the ego is not death for the "I". Arunachala is truly the Great Scorpion, ever ready with its 'death-sting' for the ego.

*"Arunachala thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on thee in the heart! Oh, Arunachala!"*





# SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS: A PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

By Dr. RADHIKA HERZBERGER\*

**R**ISHI VALLEY School is situated in the interior of Andhra Pradesh in that district of Rayalseema notorious for its lack of rainfall. The valley is formed by ancient rock strata that are part of the Eastern Ghats. The village of Thettu is the oldest settlement in the valley and is laid out according to the traditional caste pattern — a few Brahmin families, a Harijan quarter on the outskirts, and a classical Venugopal temple less than 300 years old. The nearest town, Madanapalle, where Krishnamurti was born, is about 16 km away.

Older than the settlements and dating back to neolithic times is a road, formerly a track cleared from the scrub by herdsmen who circled the valley with their flocks of sheep and goats, to get

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to the pastures in the hill. In the early days, deer, bear and cheetah roamed the thickly forested hills, and the sandalwood trees were famous throughout the region.

The valley itself was without trees. Only the occasional tamarind, peepal, or banyan stood in the space which opened from the hills in the east to the hills in the west. Sacred shrines built by these pastoral people are scattered all over the valley. Under the shade of neem trees, four thin slabs of stone not more than a foot high, arranged to form a rectangular space, enclose mother goddess stones; the goddess propitiated with blood sacrifice of cocks and,



*Dr. Radhika Herzberger*

during prolonged droughts, with goats. Nearby, Naga deities guard the treasures below the earth.

It was in this primeval landscape that Krishnamurti established his first school and called it "Rishi Valley", after Rishi Konda, the tallest hill in the valley. Krishnamurti's idea of setting up an educational institution was born in the twenties, following an exhilarating visit to the University of California at Berkeley. The land was bought in 1926, and the school began in the thirties with Sri Subbarao as its first principal.

In the 70 years since the land was acquired, the landscape has changed. The track which encircles the valley, now broader, is still used by herdsmen, descendants of the same people who honoured the goddess in their shrines, and also by rattling lorries and buses. A part of this road is paved. There are flowering trees on either side but the forests on the hills are disappearing. There is less grass for the goats and the women have to walk long distances for fuel.

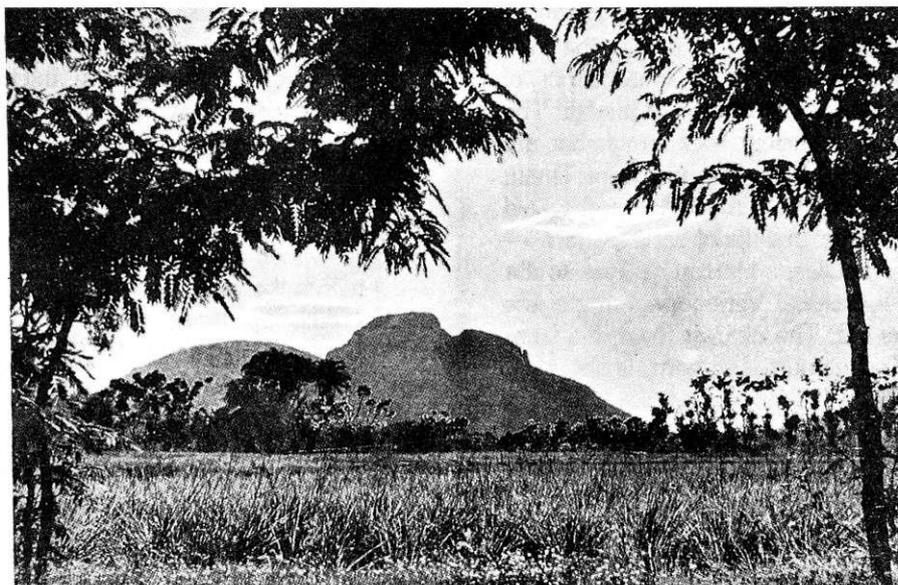
The goddess Gangamma has a larger white-washed temple. The majestic neem tree under which it stood was destroyed by a storm a few years ago and replaced by a Durga seated on a lion. Her step-well, so beautifully lined with dressed stones, remains dry throughout the year.

There are many bore wells belonging to the school and the more prosperous landowners. The school and its urban population now dominate the valley.

Krishnamurti did not want the members of the school to form a community, even though the school was situated in such a remote corner of the world. There was something aggressive, he thought, in those who belong to communities, a claim to exclusivity which sets them apart from the rest of the world. A community has to define itself, to ponder over its essential nature. Its definitions set up boundaries excluding those who fall outside the defined essence.

He wanted us, instead, to keep our "doors open". Closed doors and impenetrable walls are made up of ideals, commitments, ideologies (Krishnamurtiites not excluded), class and caste prejudice. Its structures are held together by comparison, acquisitiveness, pettiness, jealousy and the desire to dominate others.

Krishnamurti spent several weeks of the winter months at Rishi Valley, wandering over the valley and talking with teachers and students about the act of listening which broke down these defensive walls.



Listening is a miracle, he said, "because in that action... you have broken down the walls, and there is space between you and the world and the thing you are listening to. And you must have this space, to observe, to see, to listen; the wider, the deeper that space, the more beauty, the more depth there is."<sup>1</sup>

A feeling of immense space, an absolute transparency between the self and the world, is born of the miracle of listening without barriers. It lay behind Krishnamurti's celebrated identity: "You are the world." Perhaps it was given only to Krishnamurti to comprehend this identity in its infinitude, but he was certain that other human beings, including students, could create this space within themselves.

This identity was not an inhuman abstraction. In it lay the heart of compassion and the source of his concern for the particular — a particular tree, a particular garden, a particular animal and a particular human being. In a striking passage, Krishnamurti described the experience of walking in Rishi Valley behind two poor women carrying headloads of wood for the market:

"Suddenly the younger one told her mother she was hungry, and the mother replied that they were born with hunger, lived with hunger, and died with hunger; that was their lot. It was the statement of a fact; in her voice there was no reproach, no anger, no hope. We continued down that stony path. There was no observer listening, pitying, and walking behind them. He was not part of them out of love and pity; he was them; he had ceased and they were. They were not the strangers he had met up the hill, they were of him; his were the hands that held the bundles; and the sweat, the exhaustion and the smell, the hunger, were not theirs, to be shared and sorrowed over. Time and space had ceased. There were no thoughts in our heads, too tired to think; and if we did think, it was to sell the wood, eat, rest, and begin again. The feet on the stony path never hurt, nor the sun overhead. There were only two of us going down that accustomed hill, past that well

where we drank as usual, and on across the dry bed of a remembered stream."<sup>2</sup>

Krishnamurti felt that his mission in life was to broadcast his teaching as widely as possible. It was up to his audience to plough the earth and cultivate the soil so that the seed would sprout. However, he did make several suggestions as to what kinds of things should be done at Rishi Valley, without expecting his statements to become blueprints for future programmes.

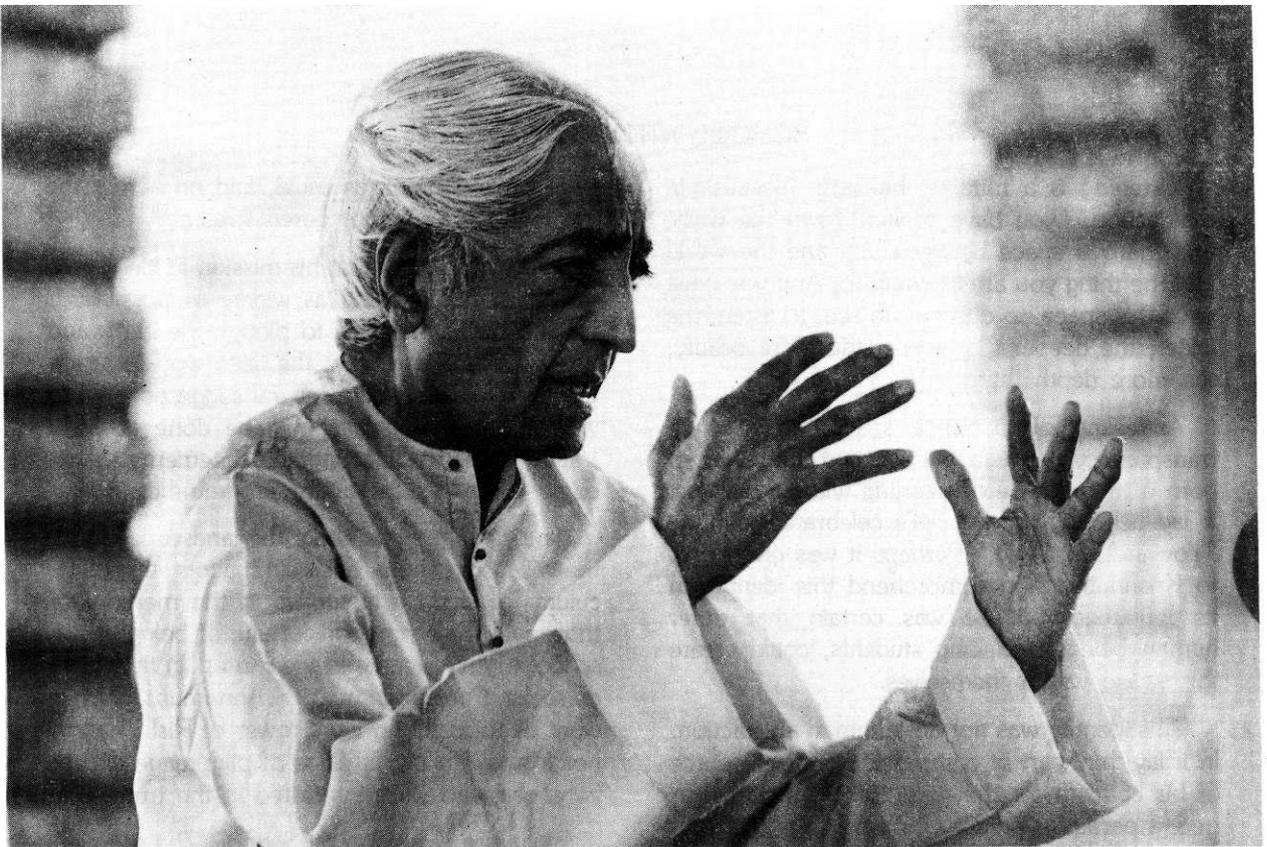
These suggestions about the landscape, about the villagers, about trees and about the curriculum for study, still survive in the memory of those who had the good fortune of being at the school when he came in the winter. In the name of seeking enlightenment, Krishnamurti did not want us to make an ivory tower of Rishi Valley, nor to make it into a place of pilgrimage except for those who were interested in the truth.

What is a Krishnamurti School? The question is often asked. And yet, before the question is answered, it would be prudent to uncover its assumptions so that the assumptions offered by the question do not become an unexamined part of the framework of the answer. One assumption implicit in the question can be that Krishnamurti schools have a uniform essence. Interpreted in this way, the question becomes an invitation to list the qualities which constitute a Krishnamurti school. No competition, no reward or punishment, no grades are then goals toward which the teaching body move as a team.

Both the question and the answer to it now share the assumption that there is a uniform set of qualities, an essence to which all schools which deserve the Krishnamurti name must conform. That essence sets apart K schools from non-K schools. These assumptions place Krishnamurti's thought in a philosophical slot called essentialism, and miss a certain vital characteristic of his educational philosophy.

<sup>1</sup> *Action: A Selection for the Study of the Teachings of J. Krishnamurti*, KFA, Ojai, USA, 1990.

<sup>2</sup> *Commentaries On Living: Second Series* by J. Krishnamurti, Victor Gollancz, London, 1976, p. 184.



Essentialism and its critics occupy respectable positions in traditional Indian thought. Nagarjuna, the Buddhist philosopher whose teaching of emptiness (*sunyata*) set the stage for a revival of Buddhist thought in the 2nd century, led a movement against the essentialism espoused by the early schools of Buddhism. He examined the traditional ideas which underlay the Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist thought of his time, ideas such as *samsara*, *nirvana*, the path and its goal, in order to display the inner contradictions inherent in these concepts. He concluded that they lacked an essence or own nature (*svabhava*) and they were, therefore, empty (*sunya*).

Krishnamurti was not a systematic thinker in the sense that his primary concern was not to formulate a coherent exposition of his thought with a consistent vocabulary, and to secure a clear niche for it. His main concern was, in fact, to jog audiences out of the grooves into which their minds and their daily lives were fixed, and he was constantly in search of new metaphors, a different way of putting across his teaching, not for specialists but for ordinary human beings.

In a discussion held at Bombay in 1971, Krishnamurti talked about essences in a way which was suggestive. He liked the feel of the word, its association with perfume and the distillation of perfume, but in a typical reversal of meaning he transformed the metaphorical implications of the word. The essence of perfume is distilled from flowers, but the way Krishnamurti used the word, essence is not distilled from what is given; rather, essence is the agent which distills from the nature of the given.

The discussion took place around perceiving and action born of such perception:

"There is perception which is a flame, which has distilled the essence. You cannot say, 'I have got it.' There is only essence. Now, that essence acts or does not act. If it acts, it has no frontiers at all. There is no 'me' acting."<sup>3</sup>

The thought was explicated at the end of the dialogue in the following way:

<sup>3</sup> *Tradition And Revolution* by J. Krishnamurti, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1972, p. 198.

"Perception without any qualification is a flame. It distills whatever it perceives. Whatever it perceives it distills because it is the flame. It is not a sensory perception. When there is that perception which distills at every minute, when you say, 'I am a fool,' to perceive that — and in that perception there is the essence — that essence acts or it does not act, *depending upon the environment depending upon where it is*; but in that action there is no 'me', there is no motive at all."<sup>4</sup> (my emphasis).

Essence is not constituted by a set of goals or qualities. Indeed, it is without "qualification". Because it has no qualifications and is devoid of the 'me', it has no frontiers. It can become involved with action, but its actions are not motivated. Its actions are not based on first principles, but on environment and location. Essence is identical with perception, with listening, with observation in which the self is absent.

I suggest that Krishnamurti schools do not have an essence in the conventional sense of that word — a set of invariable qualities. Nor is there a programme for action given in Krishnamurti's teaching. But the schools should have an essence in Krishnamurti's sense of the word: an anonymous vision of what is right action for a place at a given time in history. And that is why he, "aware of the centuries of deprivation", told us to feed the poor, to build schools for them, to plant trees in the valley, to convert lands into orchards, to teach our students that land was not property.

We should be careful not to identify what is right exclusively with what is spontaneous. What is right in a given situation may, in fact, have to be meticulously planned. Indeed, the needs of a school are complicated not only by the composition of its student body but by the culture and the geography in which the school happens to be located. Therefore, the necessity for vision. Both the sense of wholeness and insight conveyed by the word "vision" are appropriate here.

In the context of traditional Indian thought, a rather important point about Krishnamurti's

**"There is no creation,  
no destruction.  
None bound, none seeking,  
striving,  
Gaining freedom.  
Know that this  
Is the Truth supreme".**

**— Sri Maharshi in  
Garland of Guru's Sayings**

teachings follows from the above discussion: that the teachings illumine the nature of what is given in the world. For Krishnamurti, the world (*jagat*) is real. It is not an illusion (*mithya*). And what is real has a nature that reveals itself to the understanding. Unfortunately, the world is also an illusion because it is amalgamated by the illusory will to become something. The point is to discover the real world by shedding the unreal one.

It seems fitting to conclude with a stanza from Nagarjuna's *Mulamadhyamakarikā*:

**द्वे सत्ये समुपाश्रित्य बुद्धानां धर्मदेशान ।  
लोकसंवृत्तिसत्यं च सत्यं च परमार्थतः ॥**

With a helping hand from Krishnamurti, the stanza can be translated as follows: The Buddha's teaching of *dharma* takes simultaneous recourse to two truths: the truth of the world and absolute truth. (The somewhat unorthodox treatment of *samupashrity* is justified, because the affix *sam* can mean simultaneous.)

If the absolute truth is the silence of the noble sages, then that silence also has the virtue of revealing insights about the spatio-temporal world. And because the silence is contentless, it is also universal, ranging over diverse space and time.

<sup>4</sup> *Op.cit.*, p. 199.

# RAMANA MAHARSHI AND KRISHNAMURTI: DIFFERENCES OF SUBSTANCE

By DOUGLAS E. HARDING

**S**PIRITUALLY MINDED people have a habit of blurring the distinctions between the teaching of one master and another. They are really teaching the same thing (we are told) but in very different tones of voice. This looks like an amiable habit, making for ecumenism and peace in our time, O lord. Fair enough. But it can be the result of laziness or superficiality, of failure to listen carefully and go deeply into what's being said, of fudging borders, when what's needed is clear and sharp discrimination.

Really, to follow a spiritual path to its conclusion you have to be careful not to confuse it with other paths. To change the metaphor, if you are truly interested in the many spiritual delicacies on offer, you won't be mealy-mouthed about them; you won't blend them till the resulting concoction is so bland that it's tasteless.

Take for example the teaching of Ramana Maharshi on the one hand, and that of Krishnamurti on the other. Some of their respective students or followers tell me they are the same thing, couched in very different language. I can't agree. I find great differences of substance — not just of style — between them. This article outlines some of the more important ones.

Let's not begin, however, with points of difference but points of agreement. Both Ramana Maharshi and Krishnamurti insist that the answer to the problems of life is to be found within, that deep within us lies all we need, and that it's

the mind that comes between us and it. In this, of course, they are in line with all real sages and seers. Ultimately, we are (to quote the Buddha) to "take ourselves to no outside refuge."

So far, so good. Now, we come to the differences, or (if you like) the disagreements.

## The Mind

It is essential, says Krishnamurti, to understand ourselves; how we think what we think, why we think that way, and the nature of our conditioning. "To follow oneself, to see how one's thought operates, one has to be extraordinarily alert, so that as one begins to be more and more alert to the intricacies of one's own thinking and responses and feelings, one begins to have a greater awareness, not only of oneself but of another with whom one is in relationship." We must get to know the processes of the mind.

Ramana Maharshi, in contrast, denies that there is a mind to get to know. On investigation "it will be found that the mind does not exist." "There is nothing but the Self. To inhere in the Self is the thing. Never mind the mind. If its source is sought, it will vanish."

Very similar is the advice of Nisargadatta Maharaj: "It is the mind that tells you that the mind is there. Don't be deceived... It is the bland refusal to consider the convolutions and convulsions of the mind that can take you beyond it."

A thorough search of the talks of Maharshi and Krishnamurti would no doubt yield passages which would tone down this blatant difference between them. In theory. But in practice it is, I think, irreducible. Either you go for who you really are, directly and simply, or you get to work on all that mental stuff which is alleged to obscure the vision of that "who."

This leads us to the question of whether that blessed vision is available now, just as we are.

### The Availability of Self-realisation

Here is Krishnamurti on this topic: "Before we can find out what the end-purpose of life is, what it all means... we must begin with ourselves must we not? It sounds so simple, but it is *extremely* [K's italics] difficult... The difficulty is that we are so impatient: we want to get on, we want to reach an end, and so we have neither the time nor the occasion to give ourselves the opportunity to study, to observe."

And here, in total contrast, is Maharshi: "There is nothing so simple as being the Self. It requires no effort, no aid.... All are seeing God always, but they don't know it.... I see what needs to be seen.....I see only just what all see, nothing more. The Self is always self-evident."

Here we have one teacher who assures us that the essential experience of our life is obvious right now, just as we are. And another teacher who says it isn't. "You pay your money and you take your choice," as they say at the fair.

The question remains: just how are we to ensure and enjoy this essential experience? What is the method, in more detail? What helps and what hinders?

### The Method

For Krishnamurti the great scriptures of the world are so many man-traps. How he can be so sure of this is an interesting question, since he makes a point of *not* reading them ever. Equally, gurus imprison us in their systems. He is not himself a guru, he insists. Here's another interesting question: if he isn't "a revered spiritual teacher" (which is the world's definition of a

**"Thought shattering itself against its own nothingness is the explosion of meditation."**

— J. Krishnamurti

guru), what on earth is he? Anyway (guru, non-guru or anti-guru), the practice he advocates, of getting to know *what's* beneath your mind by studying its movements, is certainly a gradual and cumulative one. "The more you know yourself, the more clarity there is. Self-knowledge has no end — you don't come to an achievement, you don't come to a conclusion. It is an endless river."

How different is Maharshi's way! He has read the scriptures, and recognises that their study can stimulate and influence self-enquiry, no less than (alas!) serve as a substitute for enquiry. Also he stresses the importance of the true Guru. Preferably he says, see directly into your Nature. Or else, if you imagine you can't do so (in fact, are unwilling to do so) then surrender to the Guru. In other words, either take the short path of the *Jnani* or the longer path of the *Bhakta*, and go on to see *who* you really, really are.

But whatever the route, the vision it leads to is by no means a matter of degrees or stages. It's all-or-nothing, sudden, complete, perfect. While time and practice are, as a rule, needed to establish Self-realisation, they don't add a tiny bit to the experience. They habituate it. The Self just can't be partially perceived, much less misperceived. Why? Because it's the Self that sees the Self, and not a man or woman (as such) who does so.

### Psychology and Religion

In surveying spirituality East and West, two temperaments, two types of teachers and doctrines, can be discerned. The difference between them is both wide and deep. For the first kind, Reality or the Goal is strictly impersonal, an absence rather than a Presence, a cold white

light, a void, a disappearance, nothing at all rather than the marvellous No-thing that's wide awake to Itself as nothing and everything. Ultimately there is neither a self nor the Self.

For the second temperament, Reality is the diametric opposite of all this. The Self is the only reality, suprapersonal rather than impersonal, altogether adorable and marvellous, *Ananda* no less than *Sat* and *Chit*. No wonder teachers of this persuasion delight in using the word God, which for the former sort is a dirty word.

In the interest of brevity, you could sum up the differences by calling the first type spiritual-psychological, and the second spiritual-religious.

Of course, there are all sorts of intermediate positions between these extremes, and even attempts to bridge the gulf. I'm not suggesting that Krishnamurti is an extreme example of the spiritual-psychological type but that he belongs

on that side of the great divide. And I do put it to you that there is a great divide, and that it's for recognising, not bridging.

### A Test

Where do you, my reader, stand?

Maharshi likens Self-seeing to "gazing into vacancy." Well, why not take him seriously and conduct a little test on yourself, right now?

Look at what's on *your* side of these black marks on a white background. Look, in all simplicity, both in and out, noticing not only what you're looking *at*, but also what you're looking *out of*. Maharshi says (and I find he says truly), that the Real You is the easiest thing in the world to see, and it's like gazing into vacancy. If it's obvious to you, too (obvious that right where you are is this marvellous vacancy that is Full), then you are certainly on his side of that great divide.

**The Sixth Patriarch asked the head monk, Myo:**

**"Thinking neither of good nor evil, at this very moment, what was your original aspect before your father and mother were born?"**

\* \* \*

**Jinko pleaded with Bodhidharma: "My mind is without repose. Pray repose it."**

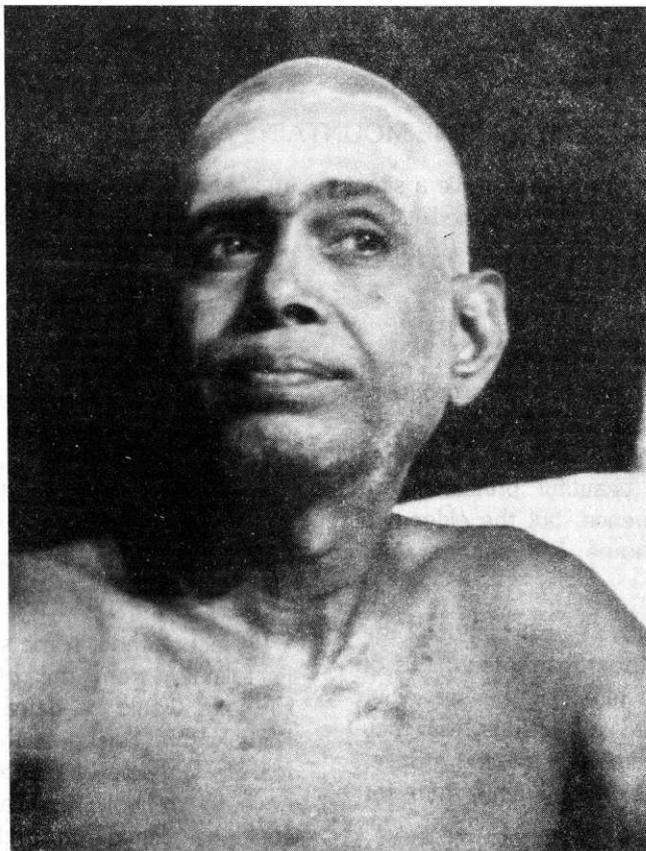
**The Master demanded: "Bring your mind, so that I may repose it."**

**Jinko said: "However much I seek, I cannot find it."**

**The Master quickly rejoined:**

**"There! I have reposed it for you!"**

**Jinko attained *Satori* (Awakening)!**



## THE MAHARSHI, AN AMBUSH AND A FORSAKEN BRIDE

By ROSALIND CHRISTIAN

**I**T HAS been quite wonderful how, over the years, the Maharshi's teaching and the experiences of his devotees as recounted in *The Mountain Path* have provided a guide and clues to much that I have read in folk tales. In the Gaelic story which I outlined<sup>1</sup>, each of the three brothers follows his own chosen path, and each wins a princess.

In this tale we come close, I believe, to the original tenor of the story of *The Three Brothers*. Maharshi's life and teaching bear out the

universality of this approach through *karma*, *jnana* and *bhakti marga*.

However, in many variants of this story things don't always turn out so happily! All too often only the third brother is successful, and the two elder brothers can be bitterly jealous of him and

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<sup>1</sup> *The Mountain Path*: Aradhana Issue, 1989, p.57; Jayanthi Issue 1989, p.123; Jayanthi Issue 1990, p.170.

do their best to destroy him. Let me give a simplified version of what I mean. Simplified it has to be, because this story of *The Three Brothers* has innumerable descendants.

### Story

It is not unusual in variants of this group of folk tales for a king to have three sons who set out into the world to secure wonderful treasures and/or win the most beautiful princess. The princes ride out in sequence, but the elder two are forced to return home and confess their failure.

However, contrary to all expectations, the youngest comes home triumphant. The news of his success goes before him and the two elder brothers are so consumed with jealousy that they ride out and wait in ambush for the prince. Leaping on him savagely, they leave him for dead.

The youngest prince is almost always saved by the care and devotion of the princess he loves, who restores him to life. He returns to his royal father whose wrath knows no bounds when he learns of the wickedness of his other two sons. Death or banishment is their portion!

### Comment

Something has gone badly wrong, hasn't it? Here is the hero the princess loves, lying bleeding on the ground, seemingly dead. I asked myself: What was this danger that could lie in wait for the *sadhaka*.

If, at this point, we think of the two elder 'brothers' as Body and Mind, then we see that these two wicked 'personages' can be in collusion against Spirit. I would like to suggest that together they represent a danger often referred to by Ramana Maharshi and which he calls the I-am-the-body idea. The phrase explains itself: mind and body work together to dominate the aspirant's consciousness. All but the very greatest stand in dire danger from these two.

An advanced *sadhaka* may have had very deep and real spiritual experience, but self-doubt

may rear its head. Worse, he may (like the prince in the story) be overwhelmed with bodily suffering and mental anguish. Often it is then, *when he is almost home*, that Body and Mind are in most dangerous collusion.

"What price your spiritual realm now?" asks Mind. "You are nearly done for, shot through with disease. You are near your end and you know it." And Body works in step with his 'brother' by striking terrible blows of pain. As the story makes plain, as death approaches, the I-am-the-body idea is capable of a powerful resurgence.

In fact, without some special aid — normally, in folktale, from the *atman* or Self — the *sadhaka* would be defeated. The sufferings of Ramakrishna, dying of throat cancer, give us a real-life example of the condition the story portrays in symbolic language. Further examples could be gleaned from the lives of saints and sages worldwide.

In some variants of this story the prince himself comes across his brothers as he nears home. For their many ill-deeds they are about to be hanged! The prince, contrary to clear warnings, actually ransoms these two from the executioner, so sad is he at their woeful condition. The treacherous pair, nonetheless, fall on him and beat him to death.

Do we see here the prince falling into that quagmire of suffering which the Maharshi calls "thinking that the world is real"? This error can lead to an over-sensitivity to the world and its sufferings which has the power to engulf and destroy real spiritual awareness.

Seekers, and they were many, who came to the Maharshi with deep anxieties for the world's suffering did not always receive from him the answer they had expected. To one such questioner who spoke of famine and war, he said:

"He who is able to see his own Self by knowledge and wisdom will not be moved by whatever conflicts may come about. He will look upon the sorrows and happiness of the world as

mere acting on a stage. In his view the whole world is a stage."<sup>2</sup>

However, there could be a different or additional meaning to this episode of the hanging of the two elder princes. What we may have is a veiled reference to breath-control! This is perhaps not so improbable as it sounds, for covert references to spiritual aids, such as right food and continence, are found elsewhere in these stories. *Pranayama* may be the discipline here envisaged.

"Do not give up your chosen disciplines," the storyteller may be saying, "just because you feel you are 'nearly home'. Body and Mind are capable of springing back on you unaware!"<sup>3</sup> This variation makes it clear that 'nearly home' can carry two meanings: both close to realization and close to death and liberation. It applies either way.

Now in another linked tale there is a passage that folklorists refer to as *The Forsaken Bride*, where the prince himself leaves the princess. They are, again, 'nearly home' when the prince insists on going ahead of his bride to prepare for her reception. The princess pleads not to be left behind declaring that the prince will surely forget her. This he declares is utterly impossible.

But so it turns out! By some twist, the prince forgets all about his mission and becomes completely involved in the affairs of his father's kingdom. The little princess has to win him back all over again!

On November 13, 1935, Major Chadwick questioned the Maharshi as follows:

Q: "Having once experienced the Supreme Bliss, how can one stray away from it?"

M: "Oh yes! It happens. The predispositions adhering to him from time immemorial will draw him out and so ignorance overtakes him."<sup>4</sup>

Do we not have in Maharshi's words a paraphrase of the prince's condition? By his various involvements in the affairs of his father's kingdom we can see the predispositions, or inheri-

tance, of the prince regaining control. If we continue with the Maharshi's words we see the causes of the various troubles to which the prince has fallen heir in the two different stories:

Q: "What are the obstacles to remaining steady in unbroken Bliss? How can they be overcome?"

M: "The obstacles are:

- (1) ignorance, which is forgetfulness of one's pure being;
- (2) doubt, which consists in wondering if even the experience was of the real or unreal;
- (3) error, which consists in 'I-am-the-body' idea and thinking that the world is real. They are overcome by hearing the truth, reflection on it and concentration."<sup>5</sup>

"Forgetfulness of one's pure being" (1) with hints of doubt (2) sums up the episode of the forsaken bride, while the resurgence of the body-mind fraternity (3) spells the ambush and defeat of the prince. Furthermore, concentration is certainly the remedy underlined in the stories, in the sense of a steady pursuit of the chosen path, and discipline without deviation.

Like the Maharshi's words, the often short episodes of the ambush and the forsaken bride give clear pointers to the *sadhaka* of the dangers he may run into. However, the *eventual* fate of the prince who was left bleeding to death on the ground tells us something more. The *sadhaka's* efforts, even if he appears to fail, to fail badly, or to fail utterly, are not wasted. The 'princess', *atman* or Self, will raise him from the dead, if need be, to complete his journey.

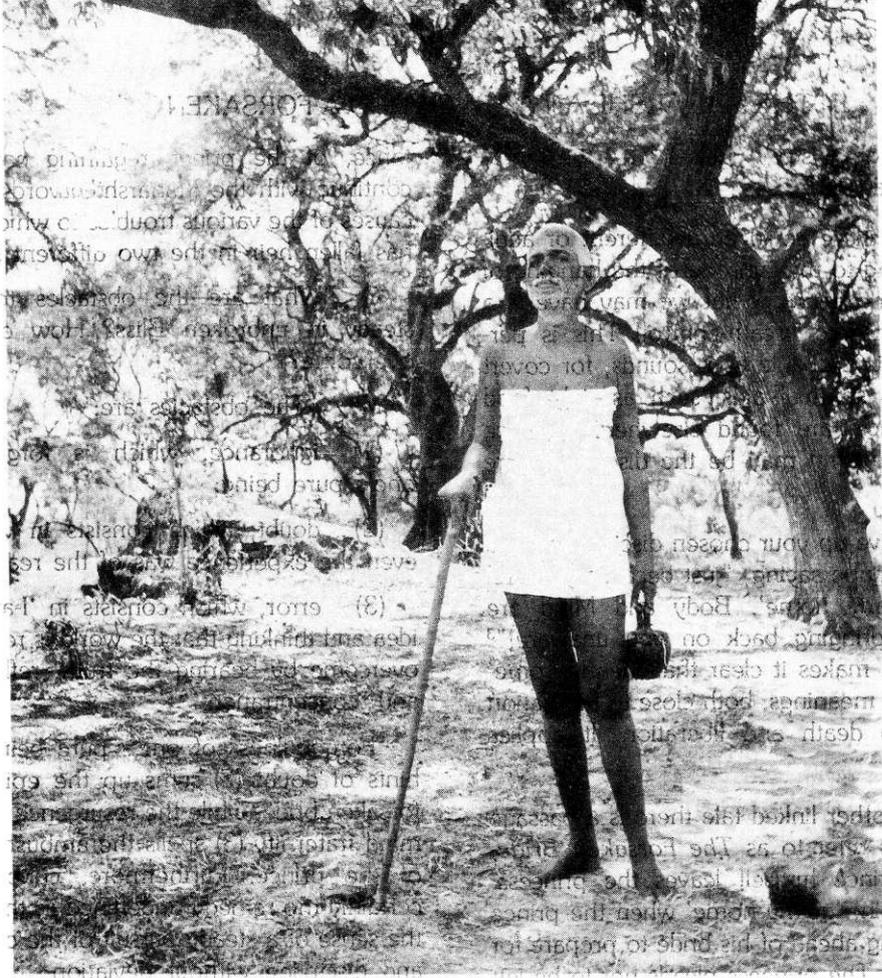
Thus, for me, Maharshi's teaching has put meaning into the quest of the 'Three Brothers', explaining their achievements and their mistakes. This ancient tale (along with two others linked with it) stand revealed as pure scripture.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam* by Suri Nagamma, May 1947, p.191.

<sup>3</sup> *The Mountain Path*, 1989 Aradhana Issue. p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> *Talks*, No. 95.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*



## FRIEND OF THE TREES

**“YOU MAY** call a tree a standing man, and a man a walking tree,” said Bhagavan. We know that some insects, animals and even human beings are harmful, occasionally or otherwise. But trees? Do they have anything but good for all of us? That Bhagavan lavished love and compassion on all creatures is well known. Perhaps not equally well-known is his touching concern for all tree-life. Not even his closest

devotees were spared when they overlooked this sentiment.

Echammal was one of his great devotees. For years she considered it her sacred duty daily to cook food for Bhagavan, climbing the hill in all seasons to take it to him, and see him partake of it. Only then would she eat.

Once, she undertook a *vratham* (vow) called

*laksharchana*, worshipping the *ishta devta* (god) by offering 1,00,000 sacred leaves or flowers. Daily she collected sacred leaves (*patri*) and performed the *puja*. Soon summer set in. Leaves became scarce. She had offered only half the number by that time. She would roam all over the area, and the hill too, with little success. She narrated her plight to Bhagavan,

"Why don't you go on pinching your own body as many times as the number of leaves required, and complete the *puja*?" he asked. Echammal was taken aback. "Oh! It would be very painful, Bhagavan!" she replied. "I see," Bhagavan said, "then will it not be painful for the trees, too, when you pluck away their leaves one by one?" The lesson went home. She gave up the *vratham*.

Once, Bhagavan was recalling the happenings at the mango grove where he had lived for some time during his early days at Arunachala. The owner of the garden asked him to take for his use as many fruits as he liked. Bhagavan said he was satisfied with the few fruits that fell down occasionally when the bats were at them.

At the Ashram one day, a few unripe mangoes were required in the kitchen. Some workmen were deputed for this. Instead of climbing the mango trees and plucking just the required number, they went about hitting the branches with long sticks.

Bhagavan, who was seated in the hall at that time, was disturbed by the sound and sent word through one of the attendants to advise the labourers not to do so. After a while he went out to go for his usual walk. The sight of broken branches and leaves scattered all over the place shocked him. And the workmen were still at it.

"Enough of this," he shouted, in a rare display of anger. "How cruel! The trees give us fruits. In return we give them merciless beatings with sticks. Instead, why not cut away at the very roots and kill them once and for all?" How sensitive he was to the pain of the trees!

As a real friend of the trees, he shared their

joys too, when they swayed merrily in the breeze with blossoms of radiant hue and sweet fragrance. "Why not leave some flowers for the poor tree," he remonstrated, when someone was plucking the flowers away to the bud. "It likes them, it needs them. I really cannot understand why you are so cruel."

True, we need leaves, flowers and fruit from the trees. We can have them. They are only too happy to give us. But should we not appreciate their sentiments, their sacrifice and love for us, and approach them with consideration?

Bhagavan once observed a workman rudely chopping the leaves off an almond tree. "Hey, what are you doing?" Bhagavan called out. The workman humbly explained that he was ordered to collect dry leaves for stitching leaf plates. Bhagavan continued, "You people can do nothing without causing pain. Imagine, I grab you by the hair and pull. Your hair may have no life, yet you would feel it."

Trees have their joys, their pains, and moments of rest — perhaps meditation too. Otherwise Bhagavan would not have rebuked a man cutting a twig at night for use the next morning as a toothbrush. "Can't you let the tree sleep in peace?" he asked. "Surely you can have your twig in the daytime. Why not have a little sense and compassion? A tree does not howl, nor can it bite or run away. Does it mean you can do anything to it?"

Bhagavan loved trees. He held them in great reverence. They were more than our equals. He pronounced that trees, too, can have Self-realisation.

He narrated a long story of a great scholar-devotee of Siva at Chidambaram. His name was Unnappathi Sivacharya. When challenged by the king, he initiated a thorny bush into *jnana*. It was so evolved, ripe for Self-realisation, that it immediately vanished into thin air. The king could not believe his eyes and called it black magic. Sivacharya then took him to the temple, and at the time of *arati* the king found the plant standing next to Lord Siva himself!

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## INQUIRY INTO THE 'I'

### A Garland of Sonnets<sup>1</sup>

By OM (OLEG MOGILEVER, Leningrad, U.S.S.R.)

(Translated from the Russian by NADHIA SUTARA)

#### XI

Only realize that the ego is a phantom without substance,  
The formless spirit, weary of form:  
Samsara, body, the restless mind —  
Everything is a reflection of the Light, and no more ....

The world of sensations but feeds the illusion  
And pampers the stronghold of separateness:  
The ego, masquerading as the one true Self,  
Disgorges itself with the eruptions of self-sense.

Where is the mouth of this volcano  
Whose eruptions project us into the world of name and form,  
And veil us with the illusion of the loss of Eternity?

In order to regain our lost Estate,  
The scriptures have shown us the Way:  
Find the Source of thought in the Cave of the Heart.

#### XII

Find the Source of thought in the Cave of the Heart —  
There where its death is inevitable.  
The profane shall vanish into the Heart of Being,  
Never again to arise: the Shore has been reached!

To cross the surging sea of Samsara, is there another way?  
"I" and "mine" are far too heavy weights;  
Unless one makes this all-embracing sacrifice  
How can one enter the Greater Life?

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<sup>1</sup> Continued from Dec. 1990 issue.

Direct the attention steadily within  
To the Lotus of the Heart two digits to the right.  
O, Satguru, grant Thy Grace!

One will tame the wild beast that the ego becomes  
When it arrogates to itself the feeling of I, thus creating the world of maya,  
By holding firmly to the Self-Enquiry, "Who am I?"

### XIII

Holding firmly to the Self-Enquiry, "Who am I?"  
And stalking unwaveringly the little "I",  
The adept shall reach the subtle Flame  
In the Lotus of the Heart, in the Cave foreordained.

On this death-bed of self, immolated,  
He shall rise again made new like the Phoenix.  
Alike in both loss and in gain  
Once the ego disappears in the Flame.

Sri Ramana! O Master! I beseech Thy Grace, Thy celestial Prasad:  
To make this enquiry unceasingly,  
And never to lose my way in the fog.

Thy disciple cherishes only this dream,  
Arising in Thy Light so miraculous:  
To enter, behold, and to master the way!

### XIV

To enter, behold, and to master the way!  
Who? Whose? Whither? Whence? Unity, duality —  
All doubts have fallen away; only the Truth pulsates:  
Sat-Chit-Ananda, Being-Awareness-Bliss.

Tat-Tvam-Asi ... The road is ended.  
The goal of Life — Oneness, Liberation — achieved.  
The primal Bliss of Being at last is regained  
As all fetters fall away from Awareness.

The Jnani has devoured all obstacles, yet sees all within Himself;  
The fiery Witness, ever peaceful and poised,  
Is He, the incarnation of the Glory of Being.

He is THAT, He is Brahman, the Subtle Effulgence of the One.  
He Himself — the sacred object of worship —  
Dwells in the Cave of the Heart as the True I.

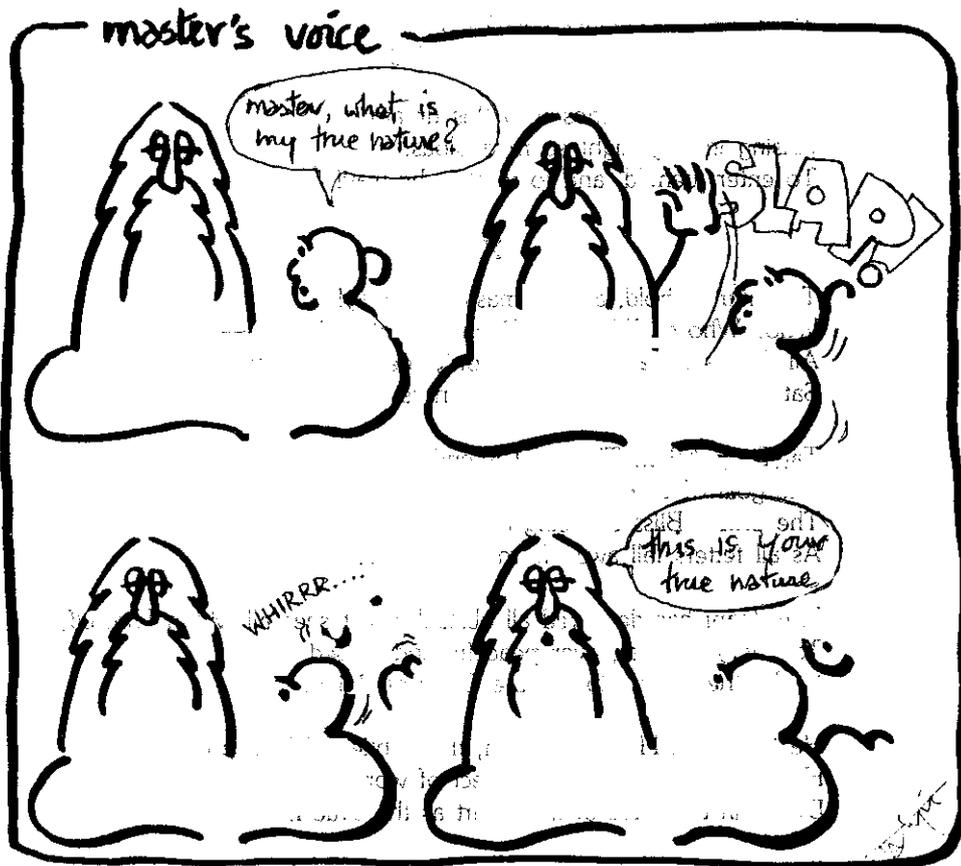
XV

In the Cave of the Heart, the True I  
 Radiates alone with a subtle Light:  
 The one Essence shining forth without defect —  
 Blissful Consciousness of Being.

Brahman is the sole Reality — THAT is the Truth Itself:  
 The world of duality is the magic of the Source,  
 The object of the ego athirst for blood,  
 The plaything of the restless mind.

There is a direct Path to one's immutable Nature,  
 Laid open by Sri Ramana, the omnipresent Guru:  
 Only realise that the ego is a phantom without substance.

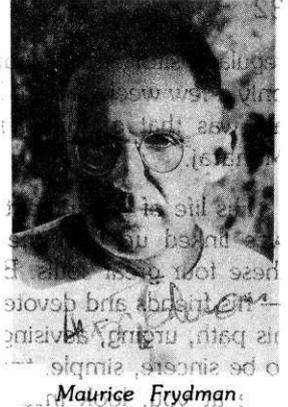
Find the Source of thought in the Cave of the Heart,  
 Holding firmly to the Self-Enquiry "Who am I?"  
 Thus enter, behold, and master the Way!



AN EARLY DEVOTEE

## MAURICE FRYDMAN

By APA B. PANT



Maurice Frydman was remarkable for recognising spiritual greatness. **Maharshi's Gospel**, a selection of Sri Bhagavan's talks that has been guiding seekers since 1939, was compiled and edited by him. Towards the end of his life it was again Frydman who 'discovered' Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj, the Bombay saint, whose teachings so closely resemble Sri Bhagavan's. His book on this saint's teaching, **I Am That**, was an instant success. Maharaj not only acclaimed Frydman as one who fully understood his teaching but also, after Frydman's death, he used to daily decorate his portrait with flowers and kumkum along with those of other saints and deities in his room.

Frydman moved closely with J. Krishnamurti for more than fifty years, having met the sage in Europe even before the split with the Theosophical Society, and was his most earnest and dogged questioner, truly living up to Krishnaji's insistence that nothing be accepted merely 'on authority', but rather as the product of one's persistent questioning and inner felicity. Krishnaji, we are told, never refused a debate with Maurice Frydman.

Frydman was a staunch Gandhian and was very close to the Mahatma, working on a variety of projects, including the designing of the most effective of Gandhiji's charkas, the danush-takli.

Sri Swami Ramdas, who gave Frydman sannyas in the 30's, is known to have told him that this was his last birth!

Frydman's personal biography is no less exceptional. In collecting material on this most extraordinary individual, The Mountain Path sought the assistance of **Apa B. Pant**, retired Indian diplomat and Prince of Aundh, who was Frydman's intimate friend and disciple for forty years. The following is Sri Pant's account of his guru's early life and their subsequent unique relationship.

— Editor

**I** MUST indeed have earned a great deal of punya (spiritual merit) in many a past life to have deserved to meet with such a unique guide, friend and philosopher as Swami Bharatananda, alias Maurice Frydman. Although he ever kept his personality in the background, his influence on events and individuals, always operating simultaneously at different levels of consciousness, has been incalculable.

It was Maurice who was the active instrument for me to meet four of the greatest sages of our times. He propelled me to Sri Ramana Maharshi within a few months of my arrival from England in 1937 after the completion of my studies. With Sri J. Krishnamurti, an encounter that was to last over fifty years started at the instigation of Maurice. It was also Maurice who introduced me to Mahatma Gandhi and I thenceforth became a

regular visitor at Sevagram. And finally in 1975, only a few weeks before he left the body, his last act was that of taking me to Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.

His life of experimentation and of experience was linked up with the message and work of these four great souls. But Maurice made us all — his friends and devotees — fellow-pilgrims on his path, urging, advising, often brow-beating us to be sincere, simple, truthful. He would steadily gaze at you, look *into* you, through you, with those kindly, piercing eyes silently, compassionately, and uncover instantly all your quirks and problems, physical, emotional, mental, spiritual. He would then relentlessly take you to task for your lapses and immediately offer correct, direct, but often undigestible and even disturbing advice. Revolutionary changes have been brought into many lives after a moment's contact with Maurice Frydman.

That is exactly what happened to me that November in 1937 when I was unexpectedly confronted with Maurice Frydman in Bangalore.

I had just returned from a four-and-a-half-year study period at Oxford and London, a very bright-eyed young lad who imagined himself to be a "revolutionary communist". I wanted to fight the British Raj and establish communism in India — in fact, a new utopia! I was my father's, Raj Bhawanrao's, eldest surviving son. He was 61 years old then, and I was 25. He understood my enthusiasm and also my impulsiveness. He arranged for me to get a 3-month "training" in administration in Mysore State, then the most ideal and well-run of the 675 princely states of India.

Father also gave me a private secretary to look after me, a chauffeur together with a new car, and a servant. Within one week of my arrival in Bangalore I was in full form and thoroughly enjoying myself with this period of "princely" training.

A strict timetable of "visits to institutions and factories", followed by "briefings and discussions" was arranged. One such visit was to the

Government Electrical Factory on the outskirts of Bangalore. Sri Bharatananda — Maurice Frydman — had been its Director and Chief Executive since 1935.

Being "foreign returned" and a Prince, I was habituated to being treated very deferentially. I, on my side, always wore my best Oxford accent and a condescending princely smile with assumed courtesy. Maurice, on the other hand, was in a very bad mood. A year before, he had taken *sannyas* and had begun to live according to his vows. When it was reported to Sir Mirza Ismail that his brilliant and efficient Engineer-Director had shaved his head and taken *sannyas*, that he went to work in saffron robes, begged for his daily bread, and gave away all his wages (Rs. 3,000 per month) to the poor and needy, the Grand Vizier was furious.

He sent for "that Mr. Frydman" to remind him that he had hired an engineer, not a *sannyasi* and forbade him henceforth to wear *gerua*. Maurice, on his side, proffered his resignation on the spot, saying that how and what he ate or wore was his personal matter, and that he must be free to follow his own pattern of life so long as "I satisfy all those concerned with the quality of my work as an engineer and manager." A compromise was finally reached according to which Maurice would have to wear European or Mysore dress only when a VIP visited the factory. As he had to put on a suit for my sake, Maurice was in his darkest mood!

As I got out of the car, Maurice was waiting at the doorstep, but instead of returning my smile, he gruffly said, "Well, young Prince, do you know anything of electricity or will I be wasting my time on you?"

I, of course, quickly stepped back into the car and started to slam the door shut, when Maurice realized his mistake and almost dragged me out of the car. "I did not mean to offend you. Forgive me", he apologised, and I saw for the first time that winning smile spread over his suntanned face. Within five minutes of all this drama our vibrations had clicked. And they remained

clicked for forty years, until his death on 9th March 1976, and further, till this present time.

From the word go, I was deeply impressed by Maurice's systematic, well-ordered, highly disciplined personality. His intelligence was overpowering; his simplicity scintillating; his spontaneous, genuine love overwhelming. There was nothing false, superficial or superfluous about Maurice. His response to his environment was always razor-sharp and instantaneous, always compassionate. There was never a gap between what he saw and felt and his immediate action. If he saw a beggar in rags he gave him all his food and his shirt as well without ever theorising about it. There were no dogmas, no theories, no hypotheses; only spontaneous, direct action. He belonged to no political party, religion or "ism".

Once, in Bombay in 1943, my wife Nalini, who was then practising surgery (gynaecology) in the villages of my father's state, Aundh, was talking with him of her work-plan. She spoke of the financial difficulties of poor Aundh in acquiring even the necessary rudimentary equipment. Maurice asked, "How much money do you require immediately?" Nalini said offhand, "Ten thousand rupees", which was then a large sum. Next morning in walks Maurice with Rs. 10,000/- in Rs. 100 notes!

"Nalini, start work!" he said. That was the way my guru taught: direct, compassionate action, by practical example.

Maurice Frydman was born in 1894 in the Jewish ghetto of Krakaw in Southern Poland, then a part of tsarist Russia.

From the accounts that Maurice gave out grudgingly from time to time during our long and close association, it seems that his family was very poor. His father, a devout Jew, worked in the synagogue. His mother sewed, washed clothes and cooked, and brought up her children as best she could, though there was hardly any money to do so. Maurice did not taste white bread until he was thirteen. He acquired his first toothbrush when he was fifteen!

But Maurice was a born genius. He was

reading and writing in the Cyrillic, Roman and Hebrew alphabets and speaking fluent Russian, Polish, French, English and Hebrew before he was ten. His father wanted Maurice, his eldest son, to become a rabbi and lead a secure, holy and useful life of service to the "chosen people", who were suffering under the heel of tsarist authority and thus help them survive the persecution generated by the prevalent racial intolerance. However, Maurice's capabilities were early recognized by his teachers, who thus enabled him to accomplish the all-too-rare feat of a Jew entering the tsarist Russian school in his area. He proved himself exceptionally brilliant and, having stood first amongst 500 boys in his high school final examinations, he sat for the Central Scholarship Examination and got 95%, standing first in the province of Poland. For this he received a State scholarship, and opted for what was then his strongest urge, a course in electrical engineering. Before he was 20 he had about 100 patents to his name for his electrical and mechanical inventions, of which a "talking book" was one.

Soon he was picked up by the laboratories and then research institutes, and by 1925 had travelled over much of Europe and worked in German, Dutch and Danish industrial establishments.

By the age of 25, however, what was to be his life-long urge had come desperately to the surface. He wanted to "see God". For a few years he had seriously studied the Talmud and other Jewish religious books. Judaism, however, did not satisfy for long the incisive, logical, courageous, non-dogmatic mind of Maurice.

He then converted to Russian Orthodoxy and became a monk, retreating to a solitary monastery in the Carpathian mountains in southern Poland. One incident during this period clearly illustrates Maurice's character. It seems that one day "Satan" tempted him to jump over a mighty waterfall to "prove his faith" in Jesus Christ and the Church. So this intrepid seeker after truth immediately jumped down a 100-foot precipice! He was saved by a few shrubs in which his



J. Krishnamurti with Mrs. Annie Besant

cassock (robes) got entangled. This was typical Maurice! This is what inspired and was loved by thousands during his 78-year span of life on this earth.

By 1926 Maurice had got "sick and tired", as he once told us, of all orthodox dogmas: "Believe this, don't do this, do this, follow me — didn't suit me," he said. He wanted to seek *freely* everywhere and try desperately to find out for himself "what all this is about". It was at about this time that he came in touch with the Theosophical Society and met Annie Besant and J. Krishnamurti. In the Swiss Alps and many times at Saanen in Holland, he met Krishnaji. For nearly fifty years Maurice was "very, very close to Krishnaji", and the most serious and obstinate questioner of this great seer.

By 1928 he was ready to emigrate to France in search of a job and "new adventures", as he

put it. He arrived in Paris with high hopes, no money and nowhere to stay. But soon he saw an advertisement in *Paris Soire* about a new electrical factory that was being started in the outskirts of the city. He applied and was immediately accepted. By 1934 he had become the General Manager of the factory.

All this while, his real urge to "find and meet God" was not forgotten. He read voraciously books on religion, mysticism and occultism. He continuously experimented on himself with whatever practice he was reading about in the vast section on these subjects in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris.

Then suddenly he hit upon Vedanta. In translation (French and German) he poured over the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, the *Mahabharata*. Paul Brunton's books on Ramana Maharshi attracted him greatly. This was his first introduction to this great master and what was, for Maurice, the greatest revelation: "*Who am I?*".

During this period, Maurice's one and incessant wish was to reach India somehow. Any wish, when it becomes desperately urgent, is fulfilled, and this was what happened to Maurice.

In 1935 Sir Mirza Ismail, the extraordinary and visionary Diwan of Mysore, was on a tour of England and Europe, seeking to recruit able engineering and managerial talent for the projected Government Electrical Factory in Bangalore. The Government had suggested that he visit some important factories in France to facilitate his search. This search led him to the very factory of which Maurice was the Managing Director.

How deeply impressed was this remarkable administrator and statesman, Sir Mirza Ismail, by the personality and work of Maurice Frydman can be gauged by the remark he casually made during his two-hour visit. "Mr. Frydman, I wish you were free to come and at least visit us in Mysore and advise us about development." Sir Mirza had in mind a replica of this very Paris factory in far-off Bangalore.

Maurice's reply was again typical of him: "Sir, my bags are packed. I am ready to leave with you!"

Thus Maurice came to India, his dream country, and fulfilled not only his own destiny but helped many like me to fulfil theirs, too.

Within two years of his arrival Maurice had the Government Electrical Factory in Bangalore producing transformers, switch-gears, resistors, insulators — all that was urgently required to satisfy the growing need for electrical energy in this modern, progressive state.

Within six months of his arrival in India, Maurice had become an ardent disciple of Sri Ramana Maharshi, the sage of Arunachala. He worked in Bangalore all week and then hurried to Tiruvannamalai to spend his weekends with the Maharshi. Maurice had begged Sri Bhagavan to grant him *sannyas*. He said he wanted to renounce the world and seek enlightenment. Sri Bhagavan characteristically refused him *sannyas* saying, "I have no ochre clothes for you, Sir, and you do not need them!"

But Maurice was nothing if he was not pugnaciously adamant and self-willed. He went to Swami Ramdas at Anandashram in Kanhangad and took his vows from him. A Hindu name, Swami Bharatananda, was given to him. He shaved his head, threw away his European clothes, dressed in the saffron robes of a mendicant, and vowed to beg for his food — for which purposes he went to the extent of procuring a traditional begging bowl. This was also typical of Maurice. There was never with him anything "put on" or for show, hypocritical, false or sham. He was always 1,00,000% genuine and it was this earnest adherence to conviction followed by immediate, spontaneous action that spurred him on to fulfil this desire for renunciation when once it had emerged in his soul. But the outward garb and rigid ideas about the meaning of *sannyas* gradually fell away from him due to his continued contact with Ramana Maharshi and J. Krishnamurti. By 1947 he was free of these externalities.



Swami Ramdas

But this was not before he had his confrontation with Sir Mirza which resulted in our rather stormy first meeting.

From the very first day we met, after the initial conflict, Maurice, as it were, "took me in hand". Without my knowing it, he started to guide me to the correct path for me. He was far, far ahead of me but would lovingly, patiently wait for me to catch up with him. He was never angry or irritated by my innumerable "princely" (and other) stupidities.

I do not know when we truly became "fellow-pilgrims". But on that pleasantly cool December morning in 1937 when we reached Ramanashram I felt that something very, very strange and significant was happening to me and that without him to lead me, "IT" could not be happening to me at all.

I think we stayed at the Ashram for a few days. Maurice made me do my daily *suryanamaskars*



in front of the Maharshi. Sri Bhagavan only smiled and said, "After a couple of hours of meditation this *sadhana* is good for you to loosen up your limbs". I have never forgotten it, and even at this age (79) I remember those words when I wake up to *samsara* each dawn and do my *suryanamaskars*.

At Ramanashram there was simply "NO-THING" — no talk, no listening, no questions, no hoping, no fear, no prayer, no movement of the mind or the intellect at all. But my turbulent, arrogant ego had nothing to grasp on to. In a way it was bewildered but watchful of itself. But it was

certainly lost. I could not "figure" it at all.

The first night Maurice and I were in a small hut sleeping on mattresses on the floor. The whole night I heard voices arguing loudly, trumpets blaring, and the beating of big and small drums. I was certain that I did not get a wink of sleep all night.

When I, not a little irritated, shouted at Maurice about all this "hullabaloo" during the night, he said, "Apa, there was no noise. All was 'joyfully peaceful'. Your tortured mind alone made all the noise. Watch it."

I learned later that the mind may be extremely subtle. It may work faster than the speed of light, yet often it takes longer than your body to make a journey, so that you arrive, as it were, in two instalments. Maurice often refused to speak with me for a full twenty-four hours, saying, "Apa, your body only has arrived. I will wait till you arrive before I communicate with you."

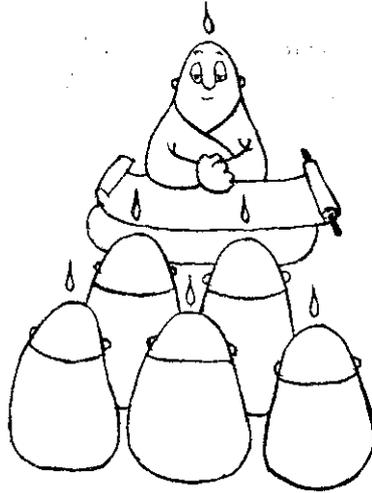
Almost immediately afterwards, Maurice took me to J. Krishnamurti. Krishnaji was spending a few days in Poona that winter, and Rausahib Patwardhan, Achyut Patwardhan, Maurice and I spent as much time as he would allow us with him during those glorious ten days.

I marvelled at the incisive brilliance and insight of Maurice as he challenged and argued almost every point with Krishnaji. It was not the challenge of the arrogant or self-assured pandit. Rather, Maurice responded to what Krishnaji was explaining through his own immediate experience of what he was saying. He was experiencing it at that very moment. In this "duel" between the two of them, there was no memory of the past or any conjecture about the future. It was all happening Now and Here, from moment to moment. It was ever fresh, new and fragrant.

*(To be concluded in the next issue)*

**"The cause of your misery is not in the life without; it is in you as the ego.... Pains are dependent on the ego; they cannot be without the 'I', but 'I' can remain without them."**

**— Sri Ramana Maharshi**



# THE WORDS OF OLD TCHENG\*

Text<sup>1</sup> transmitted by J. Garillot

(Translated from the French by ELSE M. VAN DEN MUYZENBERG)

## Foreword

*The words of old Tcheng convey a meaning that is beyond time and place, beyond the words themselves and he who has spoken them, as well as beyond the symbols and letters and those who have transcribed them.*

*Seeking to know who old Tcheng is while he considers himself as no more than a piece of wood that resounds or, with respect to his words, indulging in comments, comparisons and other speculative manoeuvres — thus remaining on a historical and intellectual level — would only prove that one has not understood anything of old Tcheng's words and that one is not open to the meaning of which they are a medium.*

*So it is essential that these words are kept in their complete bareness in order to preserve all their power and not to change their meaning.*

J.G.

*Old Tcheng said:*

I, old Tcheng, do not intervene to maintain, modify or change the course of things by following the desires of the individual mind. There is no question of taking heed or resisting but only of necessary action. If I behave in a different way with you, baldheads, I do so so that you may at last dare see the primordial spirit directly yourselves instead of always seeking it through the

intermediary of dead chaps or the company of scatter-brained persons such as myself.

\* This text originally appeared in the French journal *Etre* (1974, No.4). Its publisher has kindly granted us permission to print this translation.

<sup>1</sup> Its origin and date are unknown. It was given to a Frenchman in Indochina by a Buddhist monk. The style and content indicate that it belongs to the school of Zen founded by Hui Neng, the 6th Zen patriarch.

My way is to shake you like a shrub that is being shaken by the mountain wind. In doing so I take away all your props so you end up being helpless, having nothing to hold on to. But because I undermine all your petty securities, thus filling you with fear, you say, in order to reassure yourselves, that I am sinning against the Law and proprieties and that I am merely a vile blasphemer. You will continue clinging desperately in this way to appearances and unessentials instead of letting them go by themselves without trying to hold them back.

As my words find no echo in you, I will play a trick by telling you that they come from a famous chap who has been dead for ages. But even so, you still fail to understand that these words concern you directly, right now. On the contrary, you grab them as if they were something precious that should be preserved and cultivated. Baldheads, by clinging to futilities you waste your life for nothing, failing to see the evidence of the primordial spirit. What disaster for you!

\* \* \*

Baldheads, the primordial spirit does not appear when you wake up nor does it disappear when you fall asleep. The primordial spirit is not something that changes or dies, nor does it in any way depend on all that changes and dies.

If the primordial spirit was really your only concern, you would see all that changes and dies in the same way as you perceive the movements of imprinted figures on banners dancing in the wind. Then you would apply yourselves exclusively to searching relentlessly within yourselves for that which does not change or die. When you find it, there is not one single world out of the thousands of worlds that could make you turn away from it in your thoughts, even for a split second, or separate you from it even for a hair's breadth in your actions.

You think that you aspire to the primordial spirit but you are actually seeking satisfaction in status, knowledge and merit. Because of that, baldheads, you are completely under the spell of everything, within and without, that changes and dies.

That is why old Tcheng's words go right through you without leaving any imprint, like the birds who do not leave any traces in the sky.

Baldheads, all that you think and say about the primordial spirit is the mere wandering of your petty mind. You respond to all that is spontaneously brought to you by nature only after having interpreted it through all that you have placed above your heads.<sup>2</sup>

Baldheads, when you are just as artificial as the dragons that one makes for festivals, how may you hope to see the primordial spirit in its spontaneity?

\* \* \*

In my younger days I travelled throughout the country in all directions, indulging in study and practices. I was often in the company of erring persons who believed themselves to be enlightened and who only made other people go astray. Then I met the person who enabled me to recognise the entire useless crust I had taken on. The true direction then revealed itself to me and the primordial spirit became my one and only concern. Suddenly, one day, everything collapsed into Awakening.

I, old Tcheng, do not imitate anybody. I do not adhere to any belief, nor am I a follower of any school or anyone's disciple. In my real nature I know nothing, have nothing and am nothing. In that state there is no old Tcheng. In daily life the things I participate in happen by themselves. Even the primordial spirit is not my concern any more.

The words that I speak before you do not come from anything I have learned.

*And old Tcheng went outside.*

\* \* \*

The primordial spirit has always been there right in front of your eyes. You do not need to

<sup>2</sup> "Above your heads" is a recurring image in the text. It signifies that one interprets new knowledge in the light of the opinions of authority figures whom one believes to be greater or more qualified than oneself.

acquire anything to see it because you have never lacked in anything that would enable you to do so. If you are not able to see it, that is due to your ceaseless jabbering with yourself and others. You spend your time supposing, comparing, calculating, commenting, elaborating, explaining. You justify and quote that which your petty mind remembers and believes to have understood from the Scriptures and the words of old chatterboxes such as myself, perfering the words of those who, now that they are dead, have been given such authority that they can no longer be questioned. Under these circumstances, how can you hope to see the primordial spirit in its immediacy? Baldheads, because you are agitated like monkeys and spend your time in futilities, your existence runs off like muddy water. There is no way out for you.

• • •

To say that the primordial spirit is 'not mere nothingness without being existent' is verbiage. To think of the primordial spirit — that is your poison. To abandon this thought and to think of the absence of it — that too is your poison. Baldheads, you are always busy searching with your mind, but you are merely producing thoughts. To think that one can see the primordial spirit with the mind — that is your ruination. Burning incense, reciting sutras, passing one's time prostrating on the ground or checking oneself to stay immobile, fixing or eliminating thought — these are the ways you go astray. Baldheads, you are always interfering; you do nothing but produce actions. To hope that one can see the primordial spirit through actions — that is your illusion.

To venerate the Buddha, that is the evil (of attachment). To reject the Buddha, that is the evil (of impiety). Baldheads, you are always expressing emotions; you do nothing but produce sentiments. To believe that one can see the primordial spirit through sentiments — that is your error.

Baldheads, you are convinced that you will succeed in seeing the primordial spirit in this way. But it is you, and only you, that you thus

catch. Understand that never, never can the primordial spirit be caught in this way. You do not listen to me because you want to stay blind. There is no hope for you.

• • •

When you consider other people's ideas as something precious and sacred, when you learn, recite and transcribe them reverently and with veneration in order to transmit them as a great secret — that is what I call being enchained below<sup>3</sup> thoughts.

When you cherish the thoughts of your petty mind and look at them as something rare, something worth preserving, when you show the touchiness of a trollop when people do not respect them, or when quoting them they commit the slightest error — that is what I call being enchained by thoughts.

When your thoughts and the thoughts of others seem to you like waves in the sea that come and go, without one being superior nor inferior to the other and without any of them affecting you, and if you then keep the thought that you have attained a state of perfect calmness — that is what I call erring above thoughts.

When there is not a single thought that still keeps your attention because it has become evident to you that, with respect to the primordial spirit, there is nothing to preserve nor anything that may be obtained through thought — that is what I call being on the threshold of the primordial spirit.

To be in non-time, non-place, non-form, non-movement and non-thought, that is what I call seeing the primordial spirit.

• • •

When you have studied all Scriptures and the treatises of all the patriarchs, when you have met all Awakened beings and mastered all practices and mysterious forces, if, then, you do not see the primordial spirit, even if you have become a

<sup>3</sup> Old Tcheng distinguishes between the levels of being below and above mind.



paragon of spirituality, saintliness and knowledge, baldheads, your life will never be more than futile entertainment.

\* \* \*

(These are) the words that are inscribed on this scroll that I have just read to you:

- If I tell you that they are the Buddha's words you will consider them as sacred and you will be filled with veneration and fear!
- If I tell you that they are the words of Bodhidharma or some great patriarch you will be filled with admiration and respect!
- If I tell you that they were spoken by some unknown monk, you no longer know what to think and you will be filled with doubt!
- If I tell you that they come from the kitchen monk, you will burst out laughing and think that I have just fooled you.

So what matters to you is not the truth that these words convey but only the importance that

it is proper to attach to them. That, for you, depends on the fame of the person to whom they are attributed. You are incapable of seeing for yourselves. You can only see what you feel is in accordance with what you deem to be 'proper experience'; you can only think in line with the opinion of those you have placed above your heads. You are always changing and falsifying them. That is why you are incapable of seeing the primordial spirit without reference to someone or something or other. Baldheads, you are mere cheats. Your case is a desperate one.

*And old Tcheng left the room.*

\* \* \*

You have heard that in order to see the primordial spirit your petty mind must be empty. And so you sit bolt upright like a bamboo stick, watching the wall, with your tongue against the palate, trying to stop your thoughts. In this way you attain an absence of thoughts that you take for the emptiness of the primordial spirit. After a moment, the turmoil of your petty mind starts all over again, as it does on awaking from sleep. What do you gain by an absence of thoughts? And if you are shaken by a luminous flash you will be jumping on the spot like a young horse, screaming that you have seen the primordial spirit, that you have experienced something tremendous and that you are very privileged. What benefit is there to having been struck as if by lightning? All these things are merely feats that are only good for a circus.

Baldheads, if you persist in your mania and your pretence of wishing to attain and possess whatever it may be, your cause is lost.

\* \* \*

*(To be concluded in the next issue)*

**"If you want to spread these teachings, live them, and by your life you will be spreading them, you will be communicating them, which is more true and significant than verbal repetition, for repetition is imitation and imitation is not creativeness. You as an individual must awake to your own conditioning and thereby free yourself and hence give love to another."**

— J. KRISHNAMURTI, in his Madras talk on December 28, 1947



## INQUIRY AND IDENTITY

By V. GANESAN

I WAS steeped in Sri Ramana Maharshi's teachings and had come for good to Sri Ramanasramam. The recorded conversations of the Maharshi with seekers had just been published. As one associated with the production from manuscript to book form, almost every answer of Bhagavan was resounding in my ears. If I was not reading or contemplating the *Talks*, I would be discussing its contents with fellow seekers. Bhagavan's name and form meant so much to me, like the breath of life itself!

Then, in the early 60s, a friend spoke to me about a great spiritual being whose teaching, he said, was similar to that of our own Master. I listened, but nothing went in. I had not read about J. Krishnamurti. Whatever little my friend told me about the man and his teachings fell on deaf ears.

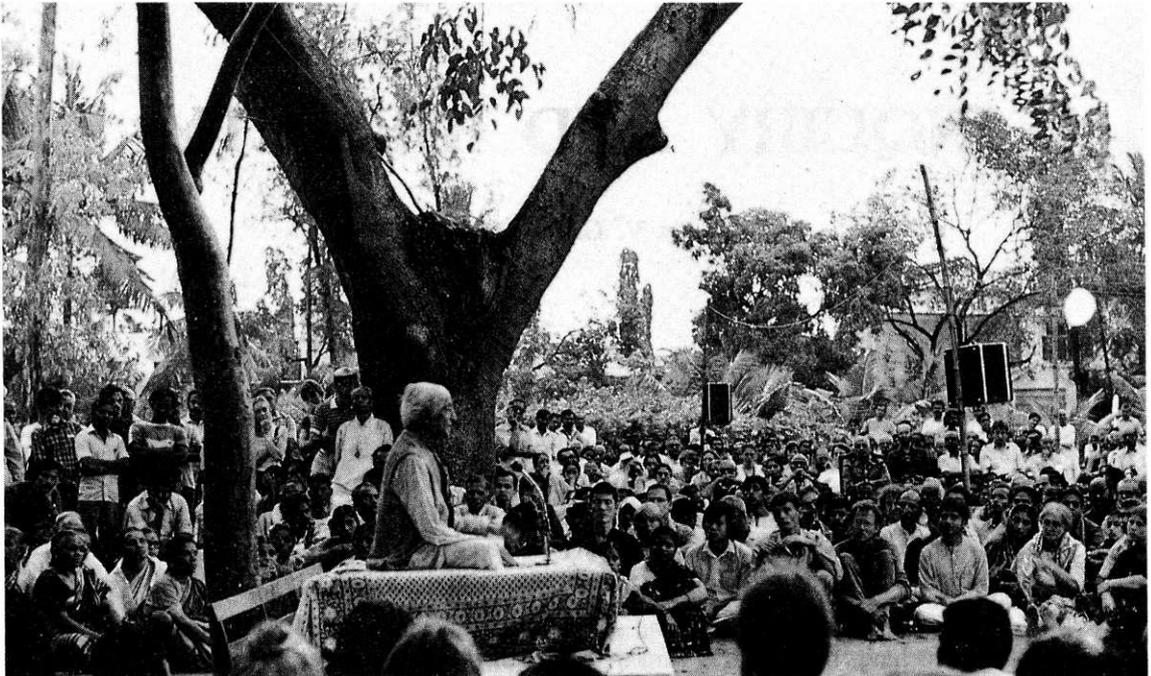
When I was next in Madras, the same friend took me in his car one evening to a talk given by Krishnamurti. I must confess I went more to humour my friend than to listen to a spiritual talk. When we reached the gates of Vasant Vihar, the talk had already begun. There were many cars parked on both sides of the road and people were entering the compound with excitement and anticipation.

After walking a few yards into the garden, I was charmed to hear a sweet voice talking over the microphone. The mere speech — not its content — made me very happy. I was yet to see the speaker. As we moved forward, my joy was rudely shaken by the following sentences issuing from the loudspeaker:

"There is no guru. A clean-shaven head, wearing a loin-cloth, mean nothing; and don't follow anyone. No one can lead you. You will be a fool if you think some guru will liberate you..."

I could hear no more. My whole body shook with rage. My mind revolted. Yet, that first look at J. Krishnamurti, the very *darshan* of his comely figure, mysteriously humbled my troubled mind. I listened to the talk. Something churned within. There was dislike for what he said but at the same time a tremendous admiration for him arose within me. I was silent for the rest of the evening.

Every year, thereafter, I regularly went to Krishnaji's talks. I listened to him as attentively as possible. I made it a point to read his books. I honestly



tried to understand his teaching, without bias or prejudice. I did not discuss Krishnamurti with anyone, since I felt no need to gather opinions about him. I wanted to learn his teaching directly.

I understood that the crux of his teaching was centred around each individual as the truth. "You are the truth. You alone can know it. No one else can make you realise it."<sup>1</sup> This absolute stress on the "you" helped me to take the plunge within "me". Yes, the "I" in every "you" (including "me") is the clue to the living truth. This vital message, though couched in the most unconventional terms, made me pursue it relentlessly.

Deeper study made Krishnaji seem closer to me. The message of the Maharshi — "The 'I' is the Reality, the only Reality that ever exists"<sup>2</sup> —

became vibrantly evident in Krishnamurti's central teaching. However, one question again and again reared its head: while Ramana's words had a soothing effect, why did Krishnamurti's create turbulent waves in my mind?

I chanced to read the following lines from M.P. Pandit: "One teacher does not repeat what another has done already... To compare Ramana Maharshi to some modern teacher is to see him in a wrong perspective. Ramana, like every other world teacher, has come to reveal a new approach to the Eternal Truth. The Truth always stands eternal, but the approaches vary depending upon the changing conditions through which humanity is passing."<sup>3</sup>

Yet, I compared Krishnamurti with Ramana Maharshi. I remembered Ramana: "There are no *jnanis* (realised men). There is only *jnanam* (realisation)."<sup>4</sup> Since we view the Masters as bodies through our body-mind complex, we see them as different entities and their utterances as separate, differing, opposed statements too. When we look at them as persons (like Christ, Buddha, Krishna, Ramakrishna, Ramana, J. Krishnamurti) we miss the unifying aspect of their singular wholeness.

The scriptures say: *Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*: "Truth is One: sages call it by different names." How true! Could it be that the society and environment in which the sage takes birth moulds the mode of expression of the sage?

Ramana Maharshi was born into an orthodox, well-groomed Brahmin family. He was schooled like any other lad and had had no good or bad influences, spiritual or otherwise. He did not even know about meditation, *sadhana*, *Brahman*, *Atman*, bondage and liberation; subjects which he was to expound upon later. In fact, Maharshi categorically stated: "This is called philosophy and the learners are struggling to learn all this! Is it not sheer waste of time?... Ah! Fortunate is the man who does not involve himself in this maze! I was indeed fortunate that I never took to it. Had I taken to it, I would probably be nowhere — always in confusion."<sup>5</sup>

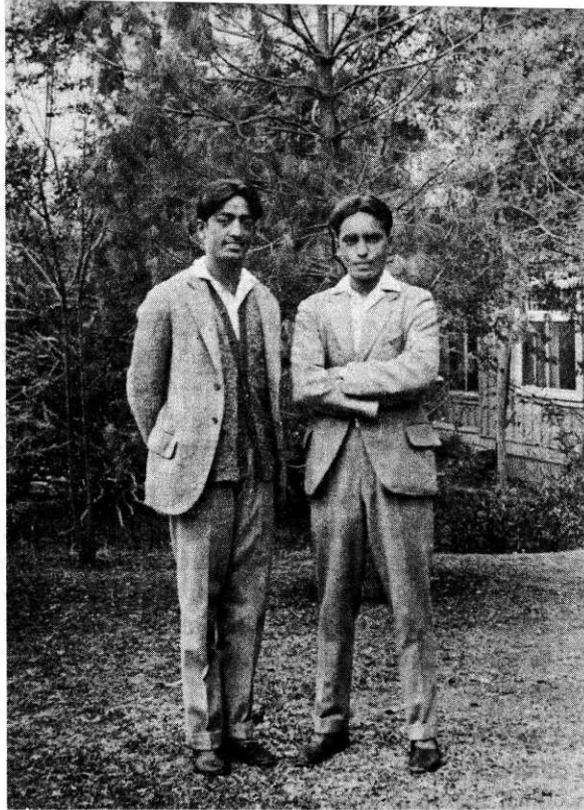
His death experience at the age of sixteen made a sage out of a boy steeped in mundane activities. That final experience, which he preferred to call Self-Realisation, continued without any change, modulation, addition or subtraction. Ramana was fortunate that he had no outer influences except his own introspective inner questing.

Krishnamurti, perhaps, was less fortunate! Also born into a good Brahmin family, he was "found" on the beach at Adyar by Bishop Leadbeater and it was "decided" by the Theosophical Society, encouraged by Dr. Annie Besant, to "bring up" Krishnamurti and "groom" him into a World Teacher.

The boy's training included his being taken abroad and given the best of education. Everything was "told" to him. The one saving grace for the youngster was that Nitya, his younger brother whom he loved intensely, accompanied him wherever he was taken.

In 1922, Krishnamurti underwent inexplicable experiences of his own at Ojai, which was later termed "the process". For three days Krishnamurti's

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*J. Krishnamurti and Nitya*

body was racked with pain. Nitya wrote Mrs. Besant the details: "He was unconscious a great deal of the time, cried out, could not bear to be touched, complained of pain in his head and neck, fainted, did not eat, shivered and yet complained of heat, was in agony most of the time and strangely quiet for some time, and then on the third day he sat under a young pepper tree and started chanting... The Buddha, Lord Maitreya, and other celestial beings seem to have appeared before Krishnamurti, and he went into a deep trance."<sup>6</sup> Krishnamurti too gave his own account of this experience which ended with the words, "I am God-intoxicated."<sup>6</sup>

He was then twenty-seven years old. However, this vitally important yet mysterious "process" did not change his outward life. His travels and talks continued as usual. So did the efforts to announce him as the World Teacher. In 1925, his brother Nitya died, bringing about a great change in his life.

Then, at the age of thirty-four, he dramatically disowned any claim made on his behalf as the World Teacher. The speech he made on that day in August 1929, addressing thousands of his admirers including Mrs. Besant, is of greatest importance to the spiritual community even today. He declared:

"I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever... I am concerning myself with only one essential thing: to set man free."<sup>7</sup>

From then on, till his last day on earth in 1986, his talks echoed a

J. KRISHNAMURTI



At the confluence of  
Varuna and Ganga

The World Teacher

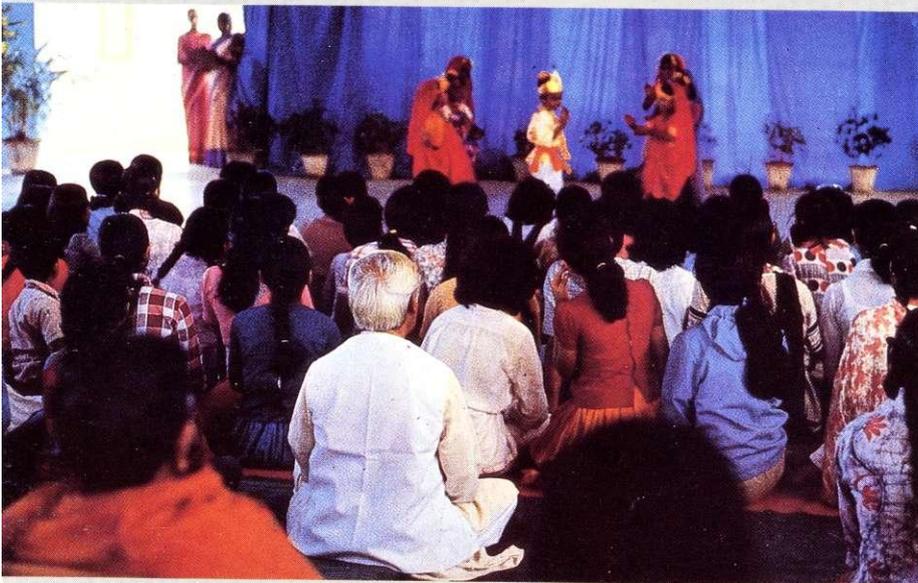


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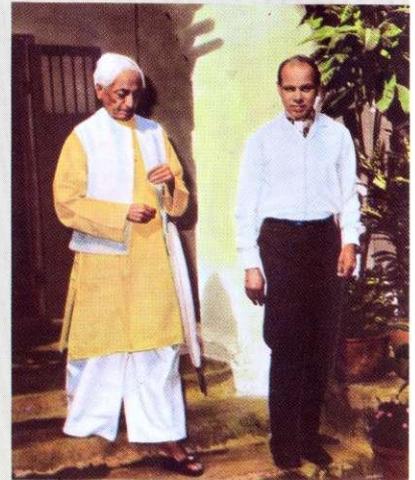
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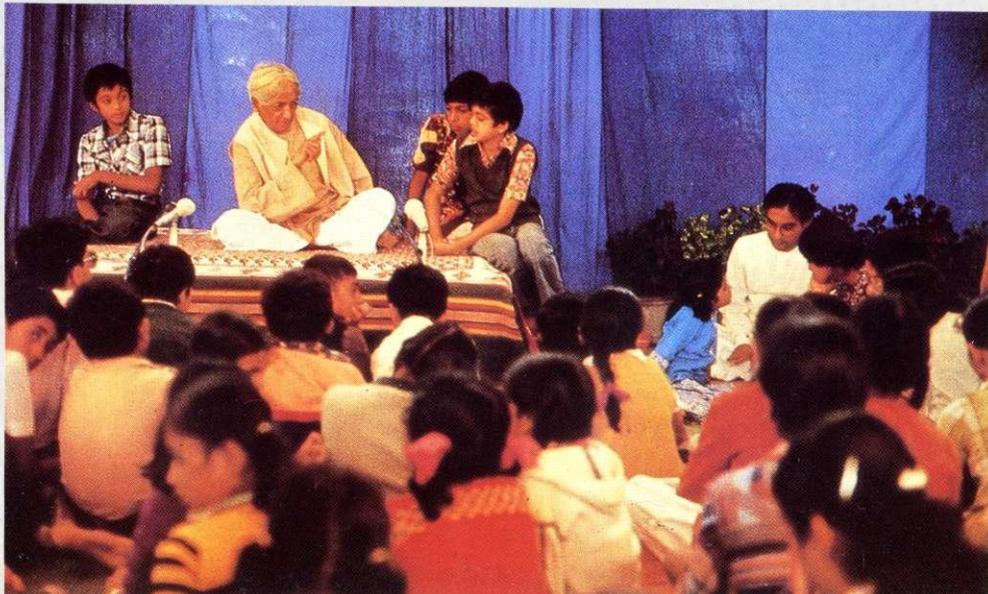
Under the  
banyan tree at  
Rishi Valley



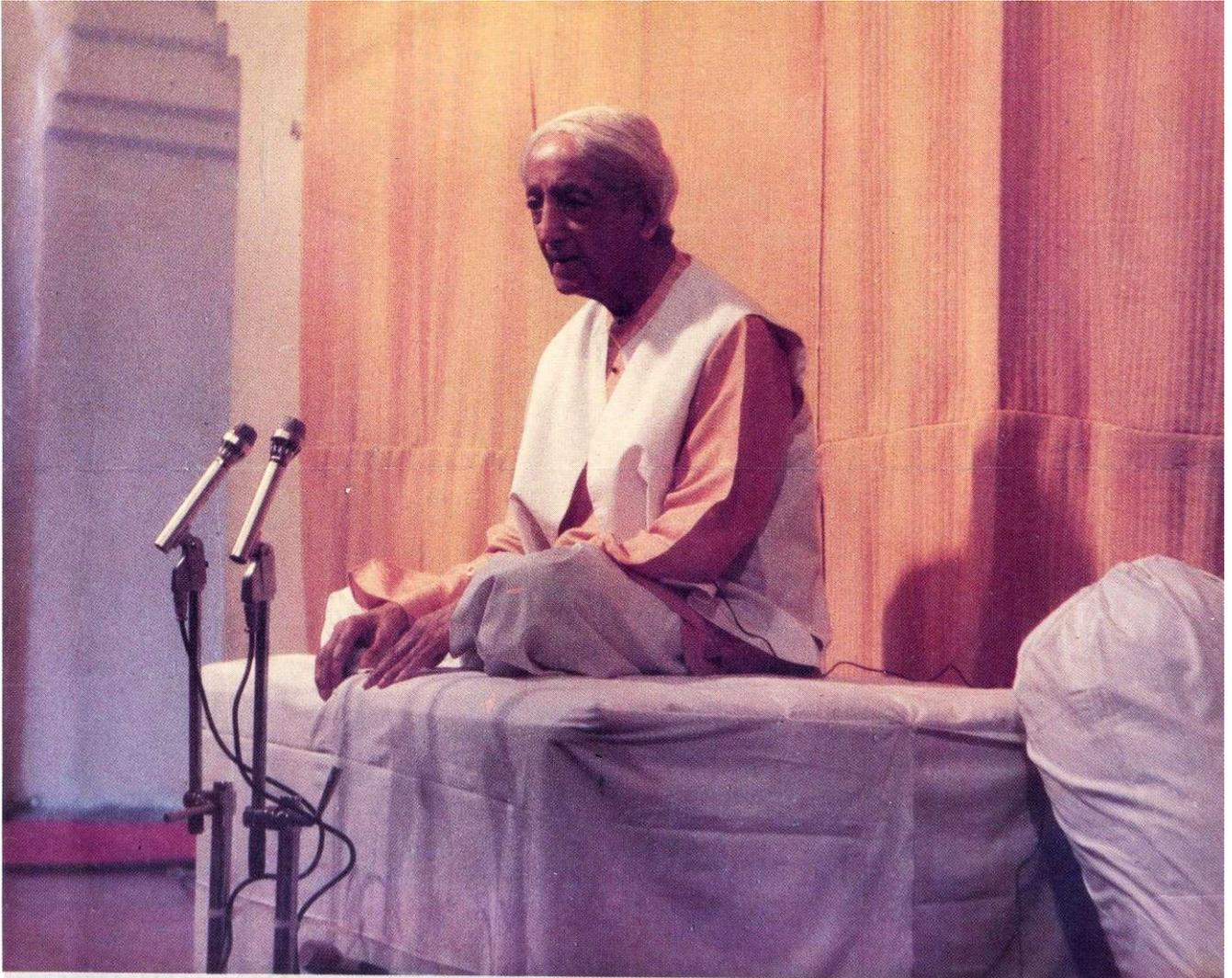
Seated with children and viewing their drama



with Dr. S. Balasundaram



Krishnaji speaks  
to children.  
G. Narayanan is  
also seen



A talk at Rajghat, Varanasi



Krishnaji's home  
at Varanasi

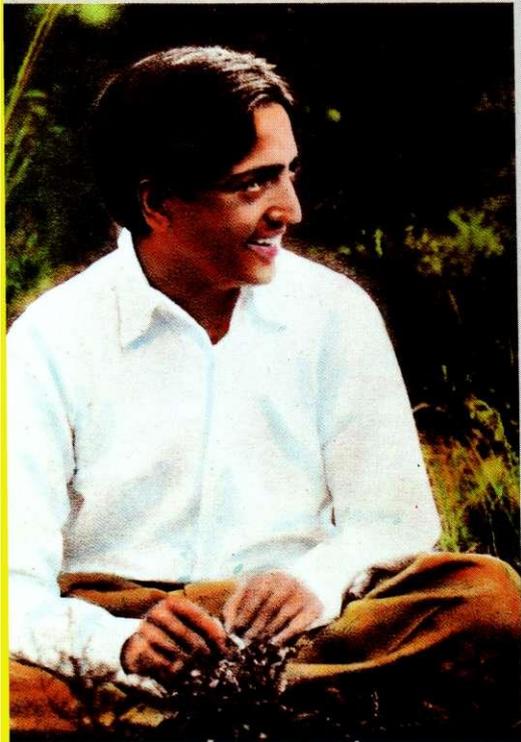
A study Centre Cottage  
on the banks of Ganga



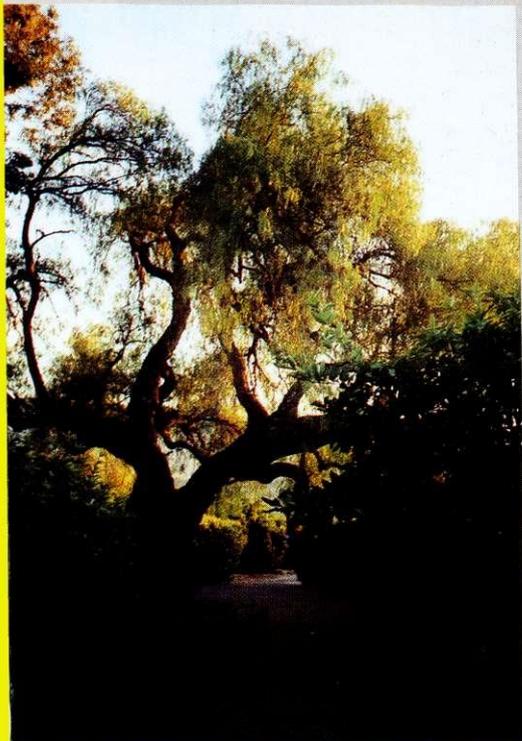
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**KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATIONS & ASIT CHANDMAL**

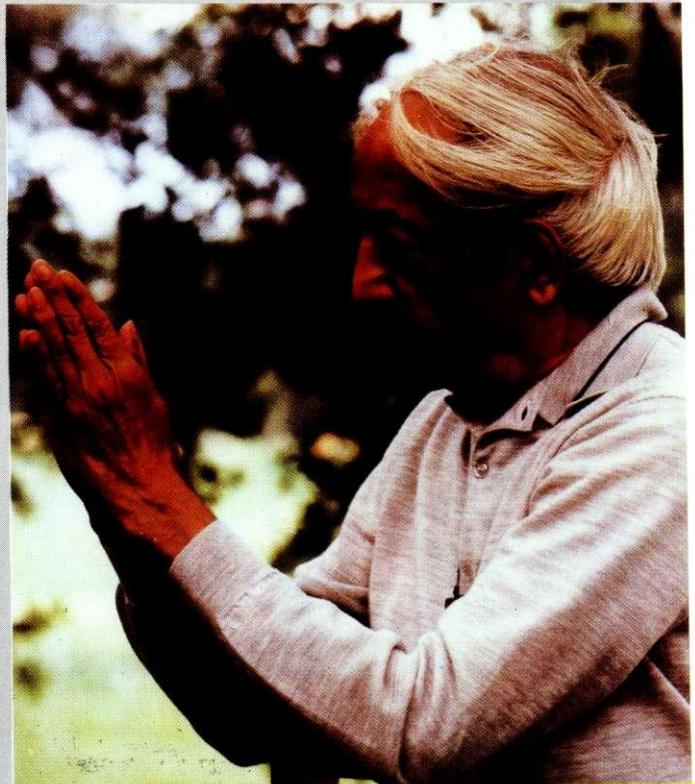
Krishnamurti School  
at Brockwood Park,  
England



At his young age (1922) Krishnaji had  
his "experiences" under this  
Pepper Tree, Ojai, UA



Humility personification



negative note. Perhaps the various disciplines, indoctrination and conditioning inflicted upon him in his younger days burst out in the language of negation, condemnation and a throw-away-everything attitude. It is well established, however, among Krishnamurti's admirers and others, that the strength of his language was aimed at shaking off his listeners' religious slumber and awakening them to reality.

Krishnamurti's language was modern. For example, instead of *Brahman* — "Energy", "Choiceless Awareness", "Insight"; instead of *sunya* — "silence", "space"; instead of *manas, ahankara* — "brain"; and so on. In fact, he made this logic explicit when he advised Dr. Adikaram who wanted to give talks on Krishnamurti and his teachings in Sri Lanka: "Don't use a Sanskrit word. To use it is to bring to mind the ancient tradition and to sanction past comprehensions. A Sanskrit word will attach what you are saying to the remembered texts. Tell it in your own way, in your own language, what you are seeing. Use modern Sinhalese words."<sup>8</sup>

A beginner in Krishnamurti's teaching is initially faced with two apparent hurdles: (i) Krishnamurti's employment of unconventional usages, and (ii) Krishnamurti's harsh language like "throw away the Bible", the denial of spiritual techniques, guru, and God.

I put these riddles to a living mystic-saint, Sri Yogi Ramsuratkumar, who is also a great admirer of J. Krishnamurti. He listened attentively, and with a brilliant smile he said:

"Krishnaji is for the non-believers. For believers, there are any number of Masters for them to follow. But for a genuine non-believer, what is the recourse? Hence, Krishnaji chose totally differing terms, yet acceptable to non-believers." After a pause, he added, "I assure you, Krishnaji gives us the same essence as any of the great Masters, but couched in opposite terminology."

As I was puzzled, the Yogi narrated a page from his own life-history:

"My Master, Swami Ramdas, emphasised that 'Everything is in the Name'. When I read J. Krishnamurti, with equal reverence and interest, I found that he said, 'There is nothing in the Name'. I was perplexed. Two differing, diametrically opposed statements! I also knew both utterances came from great Masters. Swami Ramdas had passed away. So, I sought Krishnamurti to get this clarified.

"I went to Madras; Krishnamurti had gone to Rishi Valley. I went there. I could not meet him privately. Krishnamurti then went to Bombay; I followed him. There also I could not meet him. He returned to Madras; I too relentlessly followed. I was keen to get my doubt cleared by this living Master. In Madras I was told I could not meet him.

"Early one morning, I waited in the garden of Vasant Vihar, hoping Krishnamurti would come down and meet me. What happened I can't describe as dream, vision or reality! But this is what happened:



Vasanta Vihar

"Krishnaji came straight to me. I prostrated before him. After some time he lifted me up and put both his hands on my shoulders. He said in his sweet voice, 'Both of us say the same thing!' Then he left.

"I was in ecstasy. My doubt was eradicated. Yes! Both 'Name is everything' and 'Name is nothing' convey, in essence, the same truth. The *purna* (total presence) and *sunya* (total absence) mean exactly the same, single, indivisible Oneness!"

Having received this inspiring clarification from an incomparable *siddha purusha*, I plunged again into the reading of both Krishnaji and Maharshi. It was not surprising that I stumbled across a plethora of striking similarities and it gladdened my heart.

**Krishnamurti:** "Things happen in their own course. Stop fretting."<sup>9</sup>

Maharshi: *"Whatever is destined to happen will happen, do what you may to stop it. This is certain. The best course, therefore, is for one to be resigned."*<sup>10</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** "The mind is cause and effect, it is caught in time, it has a beginning and an end. Mind can never experience that which is without cause, the timeless, that which has no beginning and no end."<sup>11</sup>

Maharshi: *"How is it possible for the mind to know the Lord who imparts His light to the mind and shines within the mind except by turning the mind inward and fixing it in the Lord?"*<sup>12</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** "Thought cannot, do what it will, free itself from the opposites; thought itself has created the ugly and the beautiful, the good and the bad. So it cannot free itself from its own activities. All that it can do is to be still, not choose. Choice is conflict... The stillness of the mind is freedom from duality."<sup>13</sup>

Maharshi: *"If a man is free from the pairs of opposites and lives in*

*solitude, perfect wisdom shines in him even in the present body.*"<sup>14</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** "K was born in India into the Brahmanical fold. That root — it might be thousands of years old — was his conditioning, but so long as the mind was so conditioned, it was not free. It was the past as thought that essentially divided [the] man."<sup>15</sup>

**Maharshi:** *"Break away from all relationship of country, status, caste and its duties and think always of your own natural state."*<sup>16</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** "When the mind is in that state of loneliness, without any escape, then there is freedom from it. Separation exists because of the desire to fulfil; frustration is separation."<sup>17</sup>

**Maharshi:** *"A yogi should not be swayed by desires nor yield to gratifying the senses. He should find ecstasy in the Self alone, free from desire and fear."*<sup>18</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** "When I step out of that stream, I am not fragmented, not contradictory. I am Whole. The Whole has no root."<sup>19</sup>

**Maharshi:** *"He enjoys bliss who realises the Supreme, beatific, formless One, not alloyed with perceptions but is in pure all-covering awareness."*<sup>20</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** "The body does not divide. It never says, 'I am'. It is thought that separates."<sup>21</sup>

**Maharshi:** *"This body does not say 'I'. Nobody says 'I did not exist during sleep'. Once the 'I' arises everything arises. Inquire with a keen mind whence this 'I' arises."*<sup>22</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** "This feeling of the 'me' and 'mine' is the very core of the mind, it is the mind itself."<sup>23</sup>

**Maharshi:** *"That which arises in the physical body as 'I' is the mind."*<sup>24</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** (speaking of the sign of the Cross): "The straight line being the 'I' and the vertical bar the negation of the 'I'."<sup>25</sup>

**Maharshi:** *Bhagavan gave the true significance of the Christian faith thus:*

*"Christ is the ego.*

*The Cross is the body.*

*When the ego is crucified, and it perishes, what survives is the Absolute Being."*<sup>26</sup>

**Krishnamurti:** "In the Hebraic tradition it is only *Jehovah* 'the Nameless One' who can say 'I AM', that is the *Tat Tvam Asi* in Sanskrit."<sup>27</sup>

Maharshi: " 'I AM' is the name of God. Of all the definitions of God, none is indeed so well put as the Biblical statement 'I AM THAT I AM' in Exodus (chap. 3). There are other statements, such as Brahmaivaham, Aham Brahmasmi and Soham. But none is so correct as the name JEHOVAH — I AM. The Absolute Being is what is — It is the Self. It is God."<sup>28</sup>

The seekers who were drawn to Ramana Maharshi and Krishnamurti were quite different — faithful believers in age-old traditions on the one hand, and thoroughly sceptical modern minds on the other, generally speaking.

Perhaps I have over-simplified. Yet, the fact that both addressed the individual is undeniable. The individual alone is the Truth. This, for me, is the essence of the teachings of Ramana Maharshi and J. Krishnamurti:

"Who am I?" and "You are the world."

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" 'Nothing' then contains the whole universe. After all 'nothing' means the entire world of compassion. Compassion is 'nothing' and therefore that 'nothingness' is supreme intelligence. Can one grasp that the zero contains all the numbers? So in 'nothing' all the world exists."

— J. Krishnamurti



Photo by: Asit Chandmal

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## IN THE OJAI VALLEY: KRISHNAMURTI'S HOME AWAY FROM HOME

By MARK LEE<sup>1</sup>

**N**OT MANY years ago, Krishnamurti told a friend, "If I had nowhere to go in the world, I would come to Ojai. I would sit under an orange tree. It would shade me from the sun and I could live on the fruit."

Krishnamurti loved the Ojai Valley almost from the first days (July, 1922), when he and his brother Nityananda, who had tuberculosis, came here at the suggestion of a friend to be in a climate warmer and drier than that they had

been suffering in Europe. Later, property was bought in the valley for Krishnamurti and his brother. Today, the Krishnamurti Foundation has its offices and a library on that property.

The brother describes in a letter the impression they had of the valley in those early days:

"In the long and narrow valley of apricot orchards and orange groves is our



Mr. Mark Lee

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Mark Lee is the Executive Director of Krishnamurti Foundation America, Ojai, USA.

house, and the hot sun shines down day after day to remind us of Adyar (in Madras), but of an evening the cool air comes from the range of hills on either side. Far beyond the lower end of the valley runs the long, perfect road from Seattle in Washington down to San Diego in Southern California, some two thousand miles, with a ceaseless flow of turbulent traffic, yet our valley lies happily, unknown and forgotten, for a road wanders in but knows no way out."

So what brought Krishnamurti to Ojai was the untouched beauty, the quiet and the climate of the valley. In those days Lake Casitas, which later cooled the valley considerably, was not even thought of, as the valley then had a population of about 5,000 and the need for water was not acute. Some of the rivers and streams flowed the year round, and as the story goes, one could fish for trout near the Bank of America. In the forties, the summer temperature often hovered around the 120° F mark. There was no sprinkler irrigation in those days, which puts water in the air, but trench irrigation.

Krishnamurti loved the valley because it offered him rest, quiet and relief from the crowds who flocked to hear him speak in Europe, India, Australia and across the United States. From those first days in the 1920's until his death on February 17, 1986, he came to the valley to rest and be quiet and to give his annual Ojai talks.

His affection for the valley could be no better expressed than in his wish at Madras in January, 1986, when his health was failing (he was getting weaker and he had cancelled his Bombay talks). He said he wanted to get back to Ojai as quickly as possible. He flew via the east, Singapore and Tokyo, to Los Angeles. At the airport, tired and weak, he said, "I am sorry I've come back early and put you to this inconvenience."

This was the Krishnamurti who said, "I am a stranger everywhere, and at home everywhere."

He always thought of himself as a guest, and often said that if people lived as guests on this earth it would not be spoiled. He never took any friendship or association for granted and at

almost 91, suffering from as yet undiagnosed cancer of the pancreas, he returned to the Ojai Valley to spend his last few weeks.

The Ojai Valley in the 1920's, 30's and 40's was a very different place from what it is today. The population was small, the roads unpaved, no one locked their doors, everyone knew everyone else and there were plenty of parking places. The world war hardly touched the valley, and all who came here — especially those who came and stayed — felt a great atmosphere, a great stillness in the valley.

It has been said that Krishnamurti indirectly established the intellectual and social climate of the Ojai Valley. From the earliest days Krishnamurti attracted people from all over the world who came to have interviews with him and attend the talks in the Oak Grove. Intellectuals and authors came to the valley to meet and talk with him. Foremost among them were Aldous Huxley and Dr. David Bohm. In addition, Sir Julian Huxley, Alan Watts, the young painter Jackson Pollock, Christopher Isherwood, Ann Morrow Lindberg and others wanted to attend the public talks and discuss with the man whose reputation was now worldwide and growing.

Krishnamurti would meet with everyone, listen, ask questions and bring the most serious questions, the most serious insights around to the quality of life that was relevant for every man, regardless of whether he was intellectual, of the creative elite, famous or unknown.

Krishnamurti lived a quiet life in the valley. He walked around attired in a large Mexican hat to shade himself from the sun. He mingled and sang songs with the orange pickers working the groves in the east end. He walked all through the hills, including the top of Topa Topa and to the Chief. He would go to the Ojai theatre if a Disney film, an animal film, or an American classic like *Oklahoma*, *Brigadoon*, or *Annie Get Your Gun* was showing. He would enter after the lights went out and sit alone at the back. He went to the Art Center to see plays staged by the local thespians. When his photograph was to be taken, he insisted on supporting local business by having the Blakesley Studio take the pictures.

Krishnamurti loved to plant flowers, particularly rose and iris. Many years ago he planted a rose garden and drove a model-T Ford truck to Meiners Oaks to collect horse manure, as packaged soil and fertilisers were unknown then. Krishnamurti gave "work", honest labour, great significance. This emphasis had a deep impact on the socially sophisticated, travelled, intellectual residents of the valley, and on the mentality and character of Ojai. Krishnamurti's presence had so many dimensions and reflective influences, it is hard to calculate his direct impact.

In 1920's Krishnamurti spoke to gatherings of thousands in the Oak Grove in Meiners Oaks. Photographs show rows of small peaked tents spreading out over treeless, smoothly rolling countryside. There were no houses and no fences. In the 20's and 40's, Krishnamurti would stand under the century-old live oaks. For years he gave six talks and four discussions. Later this was cut down to four talks and two discussions.

As time passed, ever increasing streams of people from all over the world came to the valley to hear Krishnamurti speak, filling the Ojai motels, staying with countless residents in rented rooms or camping at Lake Casitas. More organisation was required. He sat on a simple chair on a low platform, so he could be seen. Loudspeakers amplified his voice and tape recorders and television cameras recorded his words for publication and posterity.

Krishnamurti's association with children and schools dates back to when he was quite young himself. He always had a loving, caring relationship with children and could relate easily with them.

In 1975, Krishnamurti and the Foundation started the Oak Grove School with three children and two teachers. Soon the school moved to the 150 acres of beautiful land in Meiners Oaks that had been used only for the talks. The school was started with the serious intention to create a unique learning environment that would meet the needs of children facing a world in conflict, outwardly and inwardly.

### On The Mountainside

By MG

On the mountainside a path winds  
up and up,  
Growing steeper as I follow it with my eyes.  
It will be hard, very hard to reach the peak.  
A red sun flares above clouds,  
ignites the rocks  
And a smouldering fire breaks out  
on the heights.

Boulders lie scattered in mad disorder,  
As if a playful giant threw them about  
And went his way. Bushes and stunted trees,  
Grey-green grasses and brambles,  
kin and enemies,  
Are all entangled together. Each lives  
by the shade  
Of another through years of  
sun-scorched days;  
Each struggles for survival and sends out  
Roots, branches, pods full of seed to  
take possession  
Of the meagre, sandy soil that yet  
nourishes.  
At the foot of the mountain a  
poor village crouches.

Before night comes, swiftly and silently,  
Mild evening light softens the harshness.  
Rains bring with them hope —  
men will gather a harvest.  
Rains bring beauty to adorn the wilderness.  
On a dark bush, red berries glow  
like rubies;  
Raindrops shine on leaves like  
translucent crystals;  
White and violet flowerets are living posies!

I sit close to the path beginning  
among rocks.  
The desire to attain a goal troubles me  
no more.  
How quiet it is... Serenity fills the  
whole being.  
Only the joyful wind on Arunachala  
And solitude, nourisher of the spirit.



Today the school has 85 children, from four to seventeen years of age, and is thriving. Increasingly, the school is attracting families from the Ojai Valley and Ventura County, who have heard about the high quality of education offered. Krishnamurti took an active interest in the school, from the smallest detail of architecture to the quality of the atmosphere in the classrooms.

Krishnamurti loved the valley as a relatively unspoiled place of great natural beauty. In an interview with the editor of the *Ojai Valley News*, Fred Volz, he said, "I've been practically all over those mountains, over all the trails. This is one of the most extraordinary valleys I've ever seen. It has a charm others do not have, but I see

it gradually being spoiled." He added, "Here in this valley live all of you. For God's sake, preserve this place."

"You know, sir," he told Volz, "in India, in Greece and other civilisations, when they find a beautiful spot like this, they put up a temple... and the feeling you have is of a sacred place.. be quiet, be nice, be gentle, don't kill, don't hurt... all that atmosphere makes for beauty. Can people treat this valley as a sacred place and not as a commercial center?" he asked. "Unless you have a spot where people really can be thoughtful and serious, you are going to destroy this world... in 70 years..."

"One year," he said, "I was walking right up there, on your mountains. I was standing looking at the beauty of the land. I could even see the ocean. A man came down on horseback. I was standing very still. He said, 'What the hell are you standing so still for?' I said, 'Isn't it a beautiful day?' He looked at me and said, 'Oh, you're the Christ child!'"

Krishnamurti enjoyed walking and usually went out at about five in the afternoon. For many years he would walk down McAndrew Road to Grand Avenue, down Grand (through the dip) to McNell, north along McNell to Thacher Road, then up Thacher and around past the Thacher School onto McAndrew, a distance of about three miles. In the early years this walk was known and attracted scores of people who would park their cars along the road and join Krishnamurti for short distances, as he walked vigorously, seldom pausing. Some would drop out, only to be replaced by others who would take up the pace.

Even in his ninetieth year he took walks. His stride was long and steady, and he would stop to watch a hawk or a jet passing far overhead.

In the last twenty years of Krishnamurti's life, his association with the Ojai Valley was only slightly different. He came for three to four months directly from India, where he usually had a very full schedule of talks and travels. Once



Photo by: Asif Chandmal

back in the valley, he would be able to dress more casually, rest, and have only a few interviews before the annual talks in May. He occupied himself with gardening, walking, being with friends and participating in the work of the Foundation.

On several occasions he spoke to the students at the Thacher School. He was consulted about most things that affected the Foundation or the Oak Grove School. He met often with the staff and parents to discuss and explore the issues that were at the heart of the school. He took particular interest in the condition of the orange groves around his house, and encouraged the planting of trees on the grounds of the school. He was interested in the affairs of Ojai, and in what was happening in America and the world in general.

From Ojai, he would travel to speak at San Francisco, New York (at Carnegie Hall and Madison Square Garden), at the United Nations, and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. In 1984, he spoke to the scientists at the Los Alamos National Laboratories where the atomic and hydrogen bombs were developed. On occasion he would be driven to Hollywood to do a television interview, but more often the crew would come to Ojai to film him in the living room of his home.

Increasingly, the world came to him. And with video tapes and television, he was speaking to countless thousands in their homes across the country.

This activity now continues. The work of the Krishnamurti Foundation of America, as well as the other four foundations worldwide, was carefully worked out with Krishnamurti before he died. The KFA is located in the valley and is responsible for the distribution of Krishnamurti's books, video and audio tapes in the United States. It is also responsible for the Oak Grove School on Lomita Avenue in Meiners Oaks. It has an active and vital future.

That wonderful quietness that was felt by Krishnamurti, and has attracted so many residents, is still in the valley. It is in the early morning, it is there on the hills, and in the atmosphere up and down the rows of heavily scented orange groves. The valley has been protected, its citizens sensitive to a quality of life not found in other valleys on the west coast.

These hills, the valley floor, the ever-changing canopy of sky, the trees, and the people here are blessed. J. Krishnamurti was at once a native and a guest here.

*Courtesy: Ojai Review, Vol 1, Issue 2.*

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## TIME FOR THE TIMELESS

By Dr. SARADA NATARAJAN

**I**S EFFORT necessary? Especially when the aim is effortlessness. Does it not seem paradoxical that one has to make an effort to remain without effort? Seen as a mere statement — yes — it does seem paradoxical. But in practice, it is not so. When we are running, does it not take an effort to stop? And it takes a while before we catch our breath and rest the body.

Why should it be different for the mind? Does it not require effort to still a mind that is constantly on the move? When one turns off a light switch, the light immediately goes off. On the other hand, a fan continues to rotate for a while after the electricity has been cut. This is because of its momentum. Similarly, when one cuts off attention upon thought and focusses it inward, thoughts may continue to arise for a while, depending on their momentum.

When one's attention is turned inward with self-enquiry the mind grows calmer. However, before there is complete silence, if one begins to think of something else, the thought process continues. Again, it has to be tackled with self-enquiry, with the question "*Who am I?*", which applies the brakes to the movement of thought. Once again, if one presses the accelerator of outward attention, thoughts arise. Therefore, the effort to turn attention inward is not only necessary but must also be continuous.

A doubt: How can one perform self-enquiry continuously? What about one's allotted work? Is it not important to do it with full attention? If one is bitten by the self-enquiry bug, then this problem does not arise at all, for the attitude becomes natural to us.

When we are learning to walk, we cannot

imagine walking and talking, or walking and eating at the same time. Once walking has become natural to us, we can carry on with other activities along with it. We can even run, play football or hockey, and so on. The fundamental acquired ability becomes natural to us, forming the undercurrent of more complex action.

Initially, however, we need supports for walking. We also need to give it our sole attention.

So also with self-enquiry. It is important to set apart a time especially for it. One must give time to the timeless. This does not mean one should not practice it at other times. One should certainly try to devote all one's spare time to self-enquiry — the time that one would normally idle away. Gradually, one can practice self-enquiry even while working.

What does this imply? What exactly is the attitude of self-enquiry? It is an intense attitude of doubt about one's own nature. It means one has already recognised that one is not limited to the identity which at present one seems to be. One is striving to realise one's true nature.

What is the influence of such an attitude on one's work? It fosters detachment. When one works for oneself there is attachment. When one is not identified with the person who works, could there be attachment?

When one is questioning the very basis of the "I", is there room for attachment? The work goes on in a detached manner. This is the real influence of the attitude of self-enquiry on one's work.

The effort is to remain with the attitude, to remain with the question "*Who am I?*" and not to slip into the habitual thought, "I am so-and-so".

Another doubt: How can effort, made by the illusory mind, help us overcome the illusion? Remember the old saying that it takes a thorn to remove a thorn. It is only a dream lion that awakens us from the dream by frightening us out of it.

If we labour under the illusion of bondage, we have to strive for freedom, and that striving naturally takes place on that same illusory plane. Since the effort is to remind ourselves that this is an illusion, it helps to turn the attention away from it.

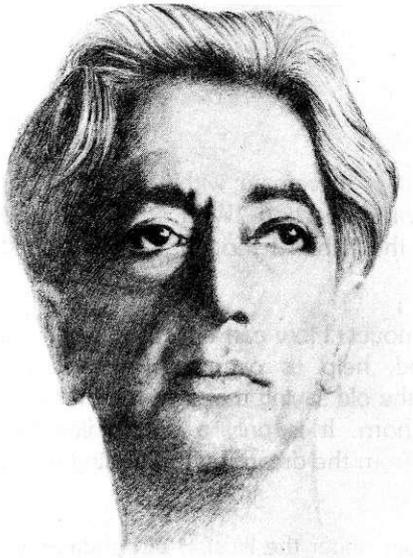
It is, in fact, very simple. The effort is merely to break a wrong habit and not, as Bhagavan Ramana repeatedly points out, to create a new experience.

While it is said that effort is necessary, this in itself should not be turned into an excuse for postponing self-enquiry. The effort is meaningful only here and now. "Since I must make effort, let me do it tomorrow." Such an attitude is fallacious. The Self doesn't belong to the future. There is, indeed, no tomorrow. The effort is to be aware now. Every moment is now. Every moment must be given to self-enquiry. At least, that is the endeavour.

Yes, now is the moment of self-abidance. Effort must be *now*, always.

**"The present is of the highest importance; the present, however tragic and painful, is the only door to Reality. The future is the continuance of the past through the present; through understanding the present is the future transformed. The present is the only time for understanding for it extends into yesterday and into tomorrow. The present is the whole of time; in the seed of the present is the past and the future; the past is the present and the future is the present. The present is the Eternal, the Timeless."**

— J. Krishnamurti (1945-46)



## MEMORABLE MOMENTS WITH KRISHNAJI

By KALASAGARAM RAJAGOPAL

I FIRST met Krishnaji in 1949 at a small house on College Road, Madras, where he held his public talks and discussions in those days. It was at one such discussion that I saw him. He was addressing a group of 25 to 30 persons. Most of them were elderly. I was one of the few youngsters present.

After the discussion, as he stood seeing off friends, I approached and greeted him. He smiled, affectionately caught me by the shoulders and led me inside the house. He enquired about myself and when I replied, he exclaimed, astonished and amused:

"You know, sir, I am afraid of sculptors. You will hypnotise me! I had once given sittings to a French sculptor. Initially, I was asked to give sittings for only 10 days, but as he went on working, it continued even after a year. When I was to leave, he said he would preserve it, and continue the work when I returned any time later! So, I won't be caught by you," he laughed.

"Why do you want a statue, sir?" he asked me.

"You have good features and I would like to do your statue, that's all," I replied.

"Can't you do it during my talk?" He sounded as if he wouldn't mind if he didn't have to sit for me, but I was persistent:

"No. Can you talk when you sit for me?"

He burst out laughing and so did I.

I met him again only after seven or eight years. He immediately recognised me as the sculptor. He was busy and we couldn't talk much. Generally, it was the pressure of work, either on his side or mine, that kept us apart.

However, as the years passed, I attended most of his talks. I had seen so much of him that I had memorised his face. During this time, we did not chance to speak much. We exchanged friendly glances. He would nod, smile or wave his hand whenever he saw me.

Once, he walked straight up to me while I was going for a walk and said jovially, "I know you, sir!"

"I know you too, sir!" I replied in the same manner, and we shared a good laugh.

Meanwhile, my children were growing up. Among their numerous wishes, one of them I was pleased to fulfil. My two daughters, who were then in their teens, wanted to meet Krishnaji. This meeting was arranged through a friend who was in-charge of such things at that time.

Krishnaji sat before the girls and, after enquiring about me, asked them what they wanted. My

second daughter complained about the educational system and expressed her doubts about it. After clearing her doubts, he offered to send her to Brockwood Park to study further. But my daughter preferred to stay with her parents, so he said:

"Oh, there it is settled, never mind."

Then my eldest daughter presented him one of my wood carvings which I had sent through her.

"Oh!" he exclaimed with pleasure and, holding it between his palms, observed it long and closely. Then placing it beside him, he asked if I wouldn't mind if it was given at any time to somebody who deserved it, as he couldn't keep it. My daughter asked him to do whatever he wished with it.

In 1974, when a friend of ours told Krishnaji that he was on his way to attend my eldest daughter Uma's wedding, Krishnaji at once gave him a *marasampangi* flower and asked him to give it to her, a gesture we all appreciated a lot.

Once, at a small concert, my youngest daughter happened to sit beside him. He enquired about her with great concern, then put his shawl around her, as it was quite chilly that evening. Completely being with a person while seeing and talking to him or her, was a remarkable quality in him.

My last meeting with Krishnaji was the most memorable. It was a month before his passing away. He was going to the beach along with friends. Upon seeing me going to the beach too, he asked me to join them.

On the beach, as we walked on the sands, he put his arm around my shoulder. I inquired about his health. He looked very tired. Then, almost instinctively, I asked him:

"When are you going to sit for me, Krishnaji?"

He came close and spoke into my ears with a smile, "It's too late now, sir."

We walked silently along the sea. I never saw him again. My memories of Krishnaji I cherish in silence.

### Where Freedom Is

By B. Fairclough

A thousand years ago  
I saw you weeping,  
Knew your nothingness  
and mourned.  
Thy strength is small O Man  
For thou art flesh.

I am thy Greater Self,  
Thine own True Image.  
Give ear to my quietness  
And Wisdom shall appear.

I know thee, O Man.  
Thy life is vain  
And thou art sick.  
Thy mind is shackled  
And thou wouldst be free.  
But thou art altogether snared,  
And poverty is thy garment.

Come thou to the Ocean,  
I am waiting.  
In my depths lie riches and  
treasures  
Beyond the vanities of earth.  
Cleave unto Me,  
My substance is sweetness.

And wherefore dost thou tarry?  
Would ye suffer more?  
Searching for the sunrise  
And knowing not The Law?  
Arise and turn ye to The Silence.  
Hear, O Man — I speak to thee.  
Lay aside thy mortal vesture.  
Thou art precious.  
Come to Me.

# AWARENESS IN THE TEACHINGS OF J. KRISHNAMURTI AND SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

By ROBERT POWELL

**J.** KRISHNAMURTI talks a great deal about "choiceless awareness" — it may well be regarded as the mainstay of his teaching — yet people have great difficulty with it. One of the questions asked again and again by his students is: "If awareness is choiceless, then who is it that is aware?"

Now, first of all, in phrasing it this way, are we not begging the question? The grammatical structure of the sentence implies that there be a subject corresponding to the verb, in this case an entity who is aware. Because language reflects our thinking patterns, the implication is normally justified. But where it concerns truly fundamental questions we cannot always be sure that the semantics are a reliable guide to comprehension. (It is not unlike situations in modern physics, where the language of mathematics does not always yield insight into the real nature of fundamental particles or events).

To go into this question more fully, let me take the example of looking at a mountain. I ask myself: "Is there an observer who is engaged in observing the mountain, or does there take place an autonomous, natural process without duality — that is, without conscious effort on the part of the observer?" I maintain that if there is complete attention to the mountain, which means that one looks at it non-geologically or in total silence, there is only that mountain and no observer whatsoever — which does *not* mean that the observer has become the mountain! The observer comes into being only when one starts looking at the mountain geologically, that is, with one's knowledge and experience of moun-

tains, saying: "What a lovely mountain!" or, "It is frightfully barren", "It is a volcano".

Normally, we look analytically, with a specialised eye, from the background of our knowledge and experience, and therefore in a partial or fragmented way. The initially pure perception is immediately cut short by the analytical mind, which introduces a comparative, evaluative element in the observation and thus creates the "observer". Furthermore, perception is usually accompanied by either pleasure or pain; and the desire to perpetuate pleasure and avoid pain adds a new dimension to the observer, it imposes a psychological superstructure on the observer.

Thus, we might say that choiceless awareness, in which there isn't an entity that is aware, entails looking at an object without thought. In the above example, it would mean looking at a mountain in the same way that one looks at a flat piece of ground. (Could this perhaps be the meaning of that old Chinese saying: "When I began to study Zen, mountains were mountains; when I thought I understood Zen, mountains were not mountains; but when I came to full knowledge of Zen, mountains were again mountains"?<sup>1</sup> If I can look in this way, and not only at mountains, but also at a woman, a man, a child — at everything around me — as well as all that which goes on psychologically within my skin, then I shall find that I no longer nurture a center of conditioning and strengthen the subconscious.

<sup>1</sup> Attributed to Ch'ing Yuan, as quoted by Professor D.T. Suzuki in *The Role of Nature in Zen Buddhism, Studies of Zen*, Rider, London, 1957, p.187.



For example, when I observe in myself greed, violence and sensuality, the mind affixes the appropriate labels and sets in motion the whole comparative, evaluative process of thought which has been conditioned by morality to condemn or approve the thought or the action. Consequently, the mind might then endeavour to attain the ideal of non-greed, non-violence, non-sensuality, little by little, on the assumption that if sufficient effort is made over a long enough period, eventually the mind will be "purified". Thus, the psychological fact — my actual condition, which is the Unknown because we never come into direct contact with it — is ever reduced to the known, a concept projected by thought.

Now, Krishnamurti maintains that if we can

look with complete attention, without naming, comparing, and so on — all of which constitutes the mind's habitual reaction — the Unknown will reveal its significance to us and it will be possible to go beyond both greed and non-greed, violence and non-violence, not in due course but immediately.

This is so, he states, because at no time has there been an observer who is greedy, violent, but merely a psychological state, a particular "feeling", which has only momentary existence. When we create duality with the "observer" who reacts to his condition by naming it "greed", "violence", and the like, we perpetuate that momentary state by triggering off a tug-of-war between greed and non-greed, a play of the opposites that has no end. In other words, when

we try to become virtuous in the traditional, moral sense by "self-improvement", there is nothing in store for us but bondage. But when the self is transcended in the actual process of self-knowing, there is an immediate freedom which is not a reaction to bondage.

Let us now consider Sri Ramana Maharshi's teaching. He views both the observer and the object as unreal, mere reflections of the eternal Self which alone is real. On waking, both appear simultaneously, similar in manner to the (mutually dependent) origination of the "I" and the "world" in a dream. With the onset of deep sleep, both disappear again. At first glance, this might seem contradictory to the mechanism described above, especially to Krishnamurti's contention that there is an observer even though this entity can be dissolved in a state of awareness. On closer examination, however, it will be seen that Krishnamurti's and Maharshi's views about phenomenal existence do not contradict each other but actually converge.

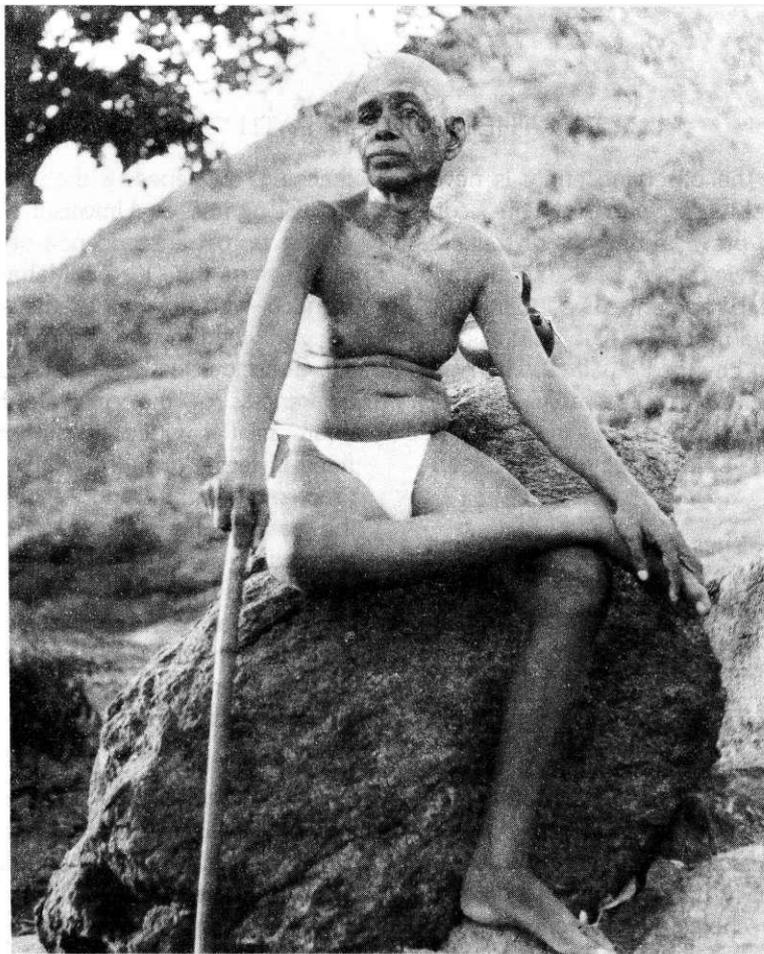
First of all, it must be recognised that the teachings appear to differ because they employ — or rather, imply — different definitions of the "observer" and the "object". To Maharshi, all "things" are only reflections of the one Reality and as such have no existence of their own. Thus, the "observer" and the "object", in the intervals during which they manifest themselves, have only a borrowed existence. They are creations of the mind, which is the manifestation of the "I" and secures its continuity through giving reality to name and form. Krishnamurti is primarily interested in the "observer" as a *psychological* entity. When he speaks of the "observer" it is in this sense only, since his whole teaching is essentially psychological in nature. Maharshi, on the other hand, treats the observer as a total entity (psyche+soma), which he calls the ego or the "I". He further deals with the relationship, if relationship be the right word, of this finite ego to the infinite matrix or Source, which he calls the Self and sometimes refers to as "I-I".

Krishnamurti takes the physical reality of both observer and object for granted; or perhaps

more accurately, he does not question their physical existence and refuses to be drawn into speculation on their ultimate nature. Since he is not concerned with erecting a new system of philosophy or creating an all-embracing *weltanschauung*, this type of questioning is immaterial to him. Furthermore, dealing only with the practical aspects of living, Krishnamurti probably feels that to burden his teaching with ontological and metaphysical issues would only distract from his main message and likely confuse his listener. And, anyway, that the clue to the problem of Being is divulged best through self-knowing, thus rendering any intellectual discourse on such matters superfluous. In this connection, his attitude appears similar to that of the Zen Masters.

In Maharshi's teaching, due to its different character, or rather, its different approach and viewpoint, these considerations do not apply. This is because an examination of the nature of physical reality forms an integral and essential part of his teaching from its inception. Through directly inquiring into the question "Who am I?", and immediately following through on any further question(s), such as "Who is it that is trying to figure out this fundamental question?" (possibly in an infinite regress!), one bypasses all intellectual and metaphysical probing. On pursuing this process of inquiry (*vichara*) vigorously, the mind exhausts itself, returns whence it came, and the thought flow comes to an end. In other words, the befuddling power of thought activity is stilled most effectively right from the start. The mind, which is normally considered as the only means to solve a problem, is exposed as ineffectual because it is seen to constitute the very problem itself!

Thus, any apparent contradiction between the two teachings is due to the fact that we are confusing psychological and physical levels, and different points of view in the description of man and the world. To Krishnamurti, the ego is born from moment to moment with the state of inattention (duality), but it is possible — by being totally aware in the manner described — not to nurture the desire-activated and desire-bound entity, which he calls the "observer". When the



observer as a psychological entity has been transcended in this manner, he remains as a physical entity, but this, falling outside the scope of Krishnamurti's interest, is not considered any further. As Krishnamurti does not adhere to the concept of *Maya*, there is only one level of reality to him, and the very fact of an object's physicality confirms its objective existence.

As already stated, in Maharshi's teaching, the observer has empirical existence for intermittent periods and comes into being with the arising of the "I-thought", which has emerged from the real and eternal self. This "I" consciousness then identifies with the body, and for a period the entire world manifests as separate entities possessed of name and form. All that disappears, upon the onset of deep sleep, when the "I"-thought returns into the Self.

Krishnamurti's teaching, if I may put it somewhat crudely, partly overlaps Maharshi's. He describes the primary non-psychological component of the observing faculty very clearly as the formation of a "center of recognition" entailing the following sequence: perception, memory, and naming. Functioning as we do, and communicating in duality or relativity, this kind of observer has a necessary life of its own and does not in itself lead to bondage. But with the arising of desire, in our usual state of nescience, bondage comes into being.

However, in the state of awareness as pointed to by Krishnamurti, desire remains a momentary experience in the nature of pure "feeling-energy". And, most importantly, since it is not named and acted upon in any way, it is no longer given continuity. Consequently, the psychologi-

cal counterpart of the observing entity is never born. Psychological time, with its fears, conflicts, anxieties and prevailing moods of sadness, is never given a chance to take hold and one truly lives from moment to moment. (The mountain is once again seen as a mountain, yet the quality of seeing has radically changed. At first, when the mountain was perceived, it was simply "seeing". Then the action became "non-seeing," and finally, it comprises both "seeing" and "non-seeing".)

Maharshi admonishes us to pursue without let-up the inquiry "Who am I?" "To whom is this happening?" and so on, not because there is such a "who" but because in the very search we shall discover its unreality — and this discovery puts an immediate end to the prevailing ego-sense. Since the observer as a psychological entity is nothing but a stream of thoughts, activated and maintained by desire, it can be readily seen that an examination of what is happening to that entity by pursuing the inquiry "Who am I?" must be essentially the same as the process of self-knowing in choiceless awareness. Both teachings have as common denominator the injunction: "Find out who is the observer, then see what happens".

Finally, regarding the "practice" of awareness as a spiritual discipline or exercise at regular times, we might ask, "Who is it that is practising awareness?" If it is done through special effort, as an exertion of "Will", and I say to myself, "I am going to listen to what my mind tells me," then I have created the "listener" or the "observer", and therefore duality, which excludes choiceless awareness. True meditation does not allow for any feedback. If you are conscious that you are listening to music, then you are not all-listening. Similarly, if you are consciously engaged in being aware, then you are *not* aware; you are striving to be aware, you are still part of a process of "becoming" and so in a state of subtle conflict or duality.

We must point out here, however, that the term "awareness" means different things to Krishnamurti and Maharshi. In the former's

teaching, awareness is the sense of "I-am-ness", the Beingness or Universal Consciousness, resulting from transcendence of the psychological observer or the "I". To Maharshi, awareness is identical with the Self or the Absolute, which is realized when in turn the "I-am-ness" or Universal Consciousness is transcended. Because this awareness or the Absolute has spawned the entire relative world, it cannot logically be defined in terms of those relative things — space-time, matter and mind — being totally beyond the grasp of the intellect. Hence, it is sometimes referred to simply as That (the famous expression "That Thou Art" equates our identity with it). And it has been "defined" in the only possible manner as I AM THAT I AM, a self-contained or circular definition, since the highest truth can obviously never be defined in terms of lower truths.

Once Maharshi was asked how to obtain and cultivate awareness. He answered: "You are awareness. Awareness is another name for you. All that you have to do is to give up being aware of other things; that is, of the not-Self. If one gives up being aware of them, then pure awareness alone remains, and that is the Self."<sup>2</sup> In this connection "other things" can only mean "all the things of this world", since the Self is not one of them but is actually their ultimate Source.

It may thus be clear that what constitutes one's training ground for *sadhana* comprises the whole of everyday living, which includes minor matters as well as the most testing situations, and not only when the mind is "under observation" and therefore on its best behaviour. True spirituality requires constant vigilance, a witnessing of all one's actions and relationships so that one does not get caught in any of the "other things" Maharshi refers to. After all, why stay awake only part of the day? Why let inattention create more problems than necessary? If one sees the urgency of the matter, every moment counts. Then one will naturally live every day as though it were one's last.

<sup>2</sup> A. Devaraja Mudaliar, *Day By Day With Bhagavan*, p.244.

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# THE MOUNTAIN OF ILLUSION

By 'MATIMAND'

**I**N MY youth, like most people, I too believed that a spiritual guide, a guru was indispensable to know oneself, to be enlightened. With all the religious-minded people I knew, it seemed an unshakeable conviction that without the grace of the guru, all efforts towards Self-Knowledge would be futile. Stories of seekers were told to substantiate it. I was deeply impressed and often muttered Sanskrit chants in praise of the guru, hoping to find him one day. I was assured that he would manifest when I was ready for him. But I could not wait. The need to find the guru became increasingly urgent. I was in my teens when I left home in search of him.

I went straight to the foothills of the great Himalaya, the abode of seekers of God, Truth, yogis and the mahatmas. That seemed to be the likeliest place where my guru was, perhaps, waiting. The hills were majestic, awe-inspiring. The river flowed joyfully. The woods were deep. My eager eyes searched among the ochre-robed sadhus, bearded or clean-shaven, bald-headed or with matted hair. If I could not recognise him, he was sure to recognise me and beckon. I searched and searched. I scanned faces hoping to see a gesture of recognition. I spent all the time in this manner. Food and rest hardly mattered. I must find the man who would free me, unravel the mystery of life, death and the universe, hold the mirror before me, show me my own Self.

What an anti-climax to this hot search awaited me! One day a man in orange robes stood before me and declared, "Your guru is not in the hills.

Go and find him on the plains." That broke the spell. It dawned on me that I was chasing a will-o'-the-wisp. Though I was sad that I could not find my guru, I was glad that my area of search had narrowed.

I went back home where my parents fondly hugged me in relief and to the school where a backlog of studies was waiting for me. I pursued my search during the long holidays. I visited several ashrams and mutts, met guru maharajs and mahatmas, and sat at their feet. I clapped my hands and chanted divine names, closed my eyes, sat and told beads and muttered mantras. I did not seem to move any closer towards Self-Knowledge. I was as confused as ever. Would I ever be ready for the guru, so that he would come to me? Or was there no such person? Perhaps I should solve, sort out, or unravel the mystery by myself, and know myself?

I laughed: know myself by myself! How childish! Can one pass through the endless mazes of the mind by oneself and solve the riddles of life by oneself? No. I must wait for the guru, whether he is hiding in the hills or on the plains. I cannot even learn a language, a subject by myself! I did not even know how to be ready for the guru. How can I play the guru for myself?

Soon, a little book fell into my hands. When I started reading it, it became clear that it was totally different from any other book I had ever read. The words were very simple but went straight into one's heart. The book was utterly bereft of quotations. There was no name-drop-

ping. The author was evidently one who was used to finding out things by himself and speaking from the depths of his experience, whereas most men speak and write from others' experience!

I read passage after passage which startled me, shook me head to foot. "To follow another — a guru, a tradition, an ideal — is the most destructive thing you can possibly do, because you are then destroying — by comparing — your own intelligence, your own freedom and the discovery of what is real. If you follow, there is no Self-Knowledge."

Had anybody else made such an explosive statement before? Not that I knew of. Here was a hard-hitter if there was one. He said, "Your devotion is the love of yourself covered over by the chant of your mind. The picture is yourself."

The author went on detonating dynamites:

"It is amongst men, and not away from men, that truth and happiness are to be found... Truth

can only be found through the living instruments appointed for its discovery, namely, thought, emotion and sense. Break away from all things that are illusions and from the institutions that divide. Be free yourself and so set others free."

These and many other explosive statements blasted away the rock on which my lifestyle had stood. All the beliefs, likes and dislikes, which had shaped my life began to fall away. Here was a teaching which aimed not at correcting a mental error or two but transforming the whole mind!

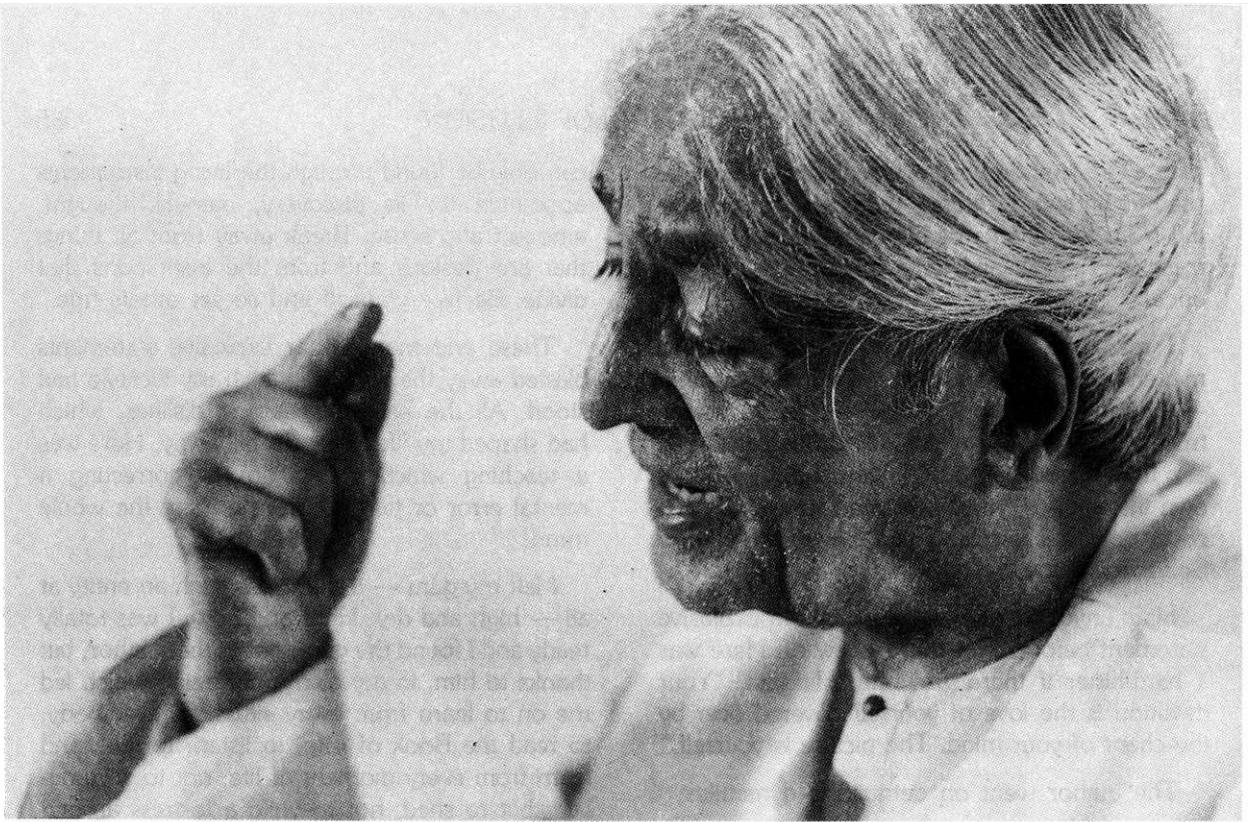
I left my guru — if there was such an entity at all — high and dry. Here and now, I was totally ready and I found the guru; not in that author, but thanks to him, in my own inner being which led me on to learn from every situation, everybody, to read the Book of Life, to listen, to look and learn from every moment of life; not to accumulate, but to shed, not to build a fortress around me but to break out of psychological prisons and be free!

## The Moment of a Rose

By Joan Greenblatt<sup>1</sup>

**There was a beautiful rose in the garden by the side of a very special cottage. Mountain peaks rose in the distance and with the setting sun cast a pink glow throughout the valley. The first day the rose was tightly closed, a singular lovely white bud. The second day it opened with pink-tinted petals on the outside and a white center. The third day it was all pink. The fourth day a slight brush of the hand sprinkled the petals one-by-one onto the ground. It was a simple but lovely sight to witness the birth and death of a rose. There was no struggle in its existence, it lived for the moment — in the moment. In each moment there was beauty and non-resistance, it just was.**

<sup>1</sup> Written underneath the Pepper Tree at Krishnamurti Foundation America, Ojai, USA



## THE ENIGMA THAT WAS J. KRISHNAMURTI

By DR. SUSUNAGA WEERAPERUMA

**B**EING IN a permanent state of *samadhi* is the traditionally accepted hallmark of self-realised persons. Their *samadhi* is always continuous; it is never continual. It is not experienced intermittently.

Variouly described as "the otherness", "the intensity" or "the immensity" in Krishnamurti's writings, all the evidence points towards the fact that his states of *samadhi* were short-lived.

"Very early this morning, many hours before dawn, on waking there was that piercing intensity of strength with its stemness. There

was in this stemness, bliss. By the watch it 'lasted' for forty-five minutes with increasing intensity."<sup>1</sup>

"Every thought, every feeling was gone and the brain was utterly still.... And of a sudden that unknowable immensity was there, not only in the room and beyond but also deep, in the innermost recesses which was once the mind."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Krishnamurti's Notebook*, p.81.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p.251-52.



During those periods when Krishnamurti was not overpowered by "the otherness" he behaved like an ordinary human being. He was subject to states of fear, anxiety, shyness, irritation and depression. Yet he was an exceptional person because he was totally devoid of envy, hate or violence.

Before giving public talks Krishnamurti felt shy and nervous. But when swayed by "the otherness" his personality changed noticeably, especially when delivering a discourse. His shyness temporarily disappeared and he always spoke like a man under the influence of an unseen power. He would then seem to be in a trance. Words of wisdom flowed from his lips. Often, after a discourse, he had no recollection of what he had just said. Immediately after fulfilling his special role as a spiritual teacher, Krishnamurti would revert to the psychological state of an ordinary human being. It is a pity that Krishnamurti's biographers have overlooked the fact that he had this dual personality. They failed to understand that most of the time Krishnamurti

behaved like any ordinary mortal, and a very lovable one at that; but at other times, he became a human channel for the manifestation of the divine 'otherness'.

Do self-realised persons experience the state of *Brahman* only temporarily or permanently? Ramana Maharshi remarked:

"A person who has been going about in the sun feels cool when he reaches the shade. A wise man stays permanently in the shade. Similarly, the mind of the one who knows the truth does not leave Brahman."<sup>3</sup>

Thought, according to Krishnamurti, cannot heal any psychological wounds because thought is itself the wound. Thought cannot liberate us because thought is itself the main obstacle to Liberation. Krishnamurti said, "Thought can only think about *what is*; it can never know." Reality, then, is in the interval between two

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<sup>3</sup> *Who Am I?* p.2.

thoughts. So long as man remains enslaved to thought, conditioned by thought, he can never find that indescribable unconditioned state of bliss. The mind is incapable of transcending its own frontiers. Hence, however hard the mind tries to improve itself via various kinds of disciplines, practices and *sadhanas*, such actions will be to no avail. Yet, contradictorily, Krishnamurti insisted that unless spiritual aspirants work *very hard* they will never succeed in discovering the Absolute.

Now, is it really possible to work without exercising the mind at all? Any exertion of effort necessarily involves the use of the conditioned mind. Krishnamurti distrusted thought to such an extent that he urged us never to use it for a spiritual purpose. "You may not invite Reality, it must come to you; you may not choose Reality, it must choose you."

After having likened Reality to a kind of grace, he still wanted us to work hard. The problem is that the moment I involve myself in any activity that is directed towards my spiritual upliftment, I find that I invariably activate the thought-process.

Ramana's teachings are devoid of confusion as regards the question of thought. While fully recognising the limitations of thought, he showed a helpful and practical method of *using* thought to bring about its own demise. When Ramana was asked how the mind would become quiescent, he replied:

"By the inquiry 'Who am I?'. The thought 'Who am I?' will destroy all other thoughts, and, like the stick used for stirring the burning pyre, it will itself in the end get destroyed. Then, there will arise Self-realization... . When other thoughts arise, one should not pursue them, but should inquire, 'To whom did they arise?' It does not matter how many thoughts arise. As each thought arises, one should inquire with diligence, 'To whom has this thought arisen?' The answer that would emerge would be, 'To me.' Thereupon, if one inquires 'Who am I?' the mind will go back to its source; and the thought that arose will

become quiescent. With repeated practice in this manner, the mind will develop the skill to stay in its source."<sup>4</sup>

Krishnamurti and Ramana differed widely on the question of the usefulness of thought as a means to the Absolute. According to Krishnamurti, the mind can never accurately think about God. Such thinking can only result in the formation of mere opinions and beliefs that have no relationship whatsoever to the actuality of God. Why be satisfied with a concept of God that is a fictitious creation of the imagination?

But Ramana taught that the thought of the Self is not without value:

"He who gives himself up to the Self that is God is the most excellent devotee. Giving one's self up to God means remaining constantly in the Self without giving room for the rise of any thoughts other than the thought of the Self."<sup>5</sup>

One is heartened by the fact that Ramana did not see thought in black-and-white terms. Like nuclear energy, thought can be immensely destructive if wrongly used but equally capable of elevating us to the very threshold of divinity.

Krishnamurti urged his listeners to be constantly aware of their thoughts and feelings without in any way condemning or justifying them. The wandering of the mind can be ended by thinking-out and feeling-out *every* thought-feeling. Such awareness involves the avoidance of judging or evaluating the stream of consciousness. During the 1940's he advocated an effortless and passive awareness.

Many persons who experimented on themselves complained that such awareness was not only arduous but also failed to liberate them. Then in 1956 Krishnamurti contradicted himself. He stated that total awareness cannot be maintained all the time. He therefore suggested a minute or two of total awareness followed by a period of relaxation when one can observe the

<sup>4</sup> *Who am I?* p.4.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.* p.8.

operation of one's own mind. Awareness is central to Krishnamurti's teachings. He insisted upon awareness as the means of transcending the limitations of the mind and the consequent discovery of Truth.

Krishnamurti maintained that it is thought that creates the thinker. The "I" is merely the fictitious invention of thought. Hence the dissolution of thought automatically results in the dissolution of the "I". Krishnamurti's teaching in this regard was diametrically opposed to that of Ramana's, who said, "Of all the thoughts that arise in the mind, the I-thought is the first. It is only after the rise of this that the other thoughts arise."<sup>6</sup>

More important than the question of the origin of thought is that of its ending. Krishnamurti refused to prescribe any method or technique for this purpose. He said that thought will end of its own accord when there is full understanding of the thought process. Presumably, this faculty of understanding comes into being when the mind is silent. Is it any help to be told that one comes by this no-thought state, that it occurs accidentally, without any exertion of effort?

I was closely associated with Krishnamurti and his worldwide activities for more than three decades. His human and endearing qualities as well as his *siddhis* have been described in my book.<sup>7</sup>

Although his mind is extraordinarily clear and profound, one is puzzled by the fact that Krishnamurti was also a bundle of contradictions. The problem of reconciling the different sides of his enigmatic personality is not easy. It is for the reader to discover, if possible, any elements of unity and harmony that may underlie the following contradictions.

In the Asian world it is generally the case that the lives of saints are characterised by a certain simplicity and austerity. Although Krishnamurti advocated simple living, he actually led a life of luxury amidst the rich and famous. He was always the darling, the protege of the wealthy

and the privileged. Krishnamurti wore beautifully tailored suits and only handmade shoes pleased him. What a contrast to Ramana and other sages who were content with a mere loincloth! He also enjoyed travelling in high-powered motor cars. Indeed, his passion for cars was legendary. Surrounded though he was by material possessions, it is significant that he was indifferent to them. He was somehow not attached to the things of this world and was always ready to give away any of his belongings to those in need.

With all the rhetoric that he could muster, Krishnamurti denounced the activities of *all* gurus, whom he likened to exploiters of the gullible. He insisted on absolute self-reliance in spiritual matters. Those who are confused, acting out of their own confusion, cannot but select gurus who are also confused. The clear-sighted need no gurus, he argued, because they are always lights unto themselves. That may be so, but how many have that rare clarity which characterises the enlightened?

By denouncing all gurus, was he not doing an injustice to that minority of genuine Self-realised gurus? By casting aspersions on other teachers was he not subtly promoting his own teachings? Although he severely criticised the institution of the guru, was he not himself, to all intents and purposes, a kind of guru? Krishnamurti did not of course have a beard and wear saffron-coloured clothes but he was the spiritual instructor to thousands of his admirers. Like any other guru, Krishnamurti counselled numerous persons with psychological problems. To the distressed he privately prescribed *sadhanas* despite his publicly declared opposition to all spiritual practices.

Krishnamurti rebuked photographers who tried to take pictures of his radiant face. But he did not mind being photographed by specially selected persons. He gave the impression that he disapproved the glorification of his personality. Yet he permitted the use of his name for the

<sup>6</sup> *Who Am I?* p.6.

<sup>7</sup> *J. Krishnamurti As I Knew Him*, Pub: Chetana Ltd., Bombay - 1988.

establishment of various foundations, information centres and schools. He soon became the expositor of a body of teachings with a certain cult following. The followers of Krishnamurti resent the word "guru" but is he not their respected father figure?

All ashrams were held in abomination by Krishnamurti. He stated that meditation, which is a voyage of self-discovery, should be done individually and never within the restrictive confines of a community of persons. Group meditation was termed a "vulgarity". He regarded ashrams as "concentration camps" where the mind was subjected to conditioning influences. Nevertheless, Krishnamurti was responsible for beginning several educational centres where students and teachers were expected to devote much time to self-observation while living communally. During his lifetime Krishnamurti regularly guided his followers at these centres which are, in essence, ashrams.

Organised religions and spiritual organisations were vehemently condemned by Krishnamurti. So in 1929, after 18 years of its existence, Krishnamurti dissolved his own Order of the Star. It was a bold act. Thousands of his disciples felt lost and leaderless. After declaring, "My only concern is to set man absolutely, unconditionally free", why did he later in life (in the 1960's) establish several Krishnamurti Foundations? What he did was clearly inconsistent with his earlier opposition to such organisations.

When Bishop Leadbeater discovered the boy Krishnamurti, the Theosophists were quick to recognise the youngster's vacant mind with its enormous spiritual potential. He had a certain vagueness and openness and all the makings of a marvellous medium. So they declared that Krishnamurti was destined to be the "Vehicle of the World Teacher". Krishnamurti was to be the chosen medium or spokesman of the Lord Maitreya, the future Buddha, and not the great Teacher himself.

Whenever Krishnamurti was asked whether

he was in fact the World Teacher, he evaded the question by saying that it is the teachings that are important and not the label or designation of the person who expresses them. What matters is the song and not the name of the singer. However, Krishnamurti never denied his special destiny. He was deeply conscious of his special mission in life despite his repeated denials of having any image of himself.

Was Krishnamurti just an ordinary human being most of the time who sometimes gave expression to divine messages? If we accept this possibility, as certain Theosophists do, it helps considerably to understand Krishnamurti's dual nature. It explains his many contradictions.

No account of Krishnamurti is complete without a reference to his great compassion for all beings. He was seriously concerned about the problem of human suffering and sincerely felt that it was his personal responsibility to alleviate it. His boundless love even extended to the wild animals he met in the course of his solitary walks in jungles and other places. He had no fear of dangerous animals and in this respect he was like Ramana. Buddhists believe that compassion will be the predominant feature of the future Maitreya Buddha. Krishnamurti was the embodiment of loving kindness. His teachings have a certain Buddhist flavour. Was he then a harbinger of the future Enlightened One?

When it was stated that Krishnamurti's teaching seems to be very much like Buddha's, Ramana Maharshi commented, "Yes — yes, beyond expression."<sup>8</sup>

That Krishnamurti had shortcomings was a matter of sadness to many who adored him. Was he inwardly a fully transformed spiritual master, despite the imperfections that were evident in his outward behaviour? Who am I to judge? Perhaps it is best to concentrate instead on the marvellous spiritual teachings that were given to the world through him.

<sup>8</sup> *Talks*, p.192.

## “Get Out of the Field!”

*J. Krishnamurti's teaching activity manifest in his public talks, writings, discussion, dialogues, personal presence and life example.*

*The discussions took place in various parts of the world. The groups were usually compact, and included persons from diverse backgrounds.*

*Here is one description<sup>1</sup> of the experience: "This discussion group (Rajghat, Benares, 1963), like the others I was to attend over the years, included a dimension normally beyond ordinary consciousness. It didn't matter what direction our talk took, or what the theme had been at the beginning, for the area being investigated would open out and often change course. As we followed the flow, domains and depths immeasurably beyond the opening understanding were uncovered. There was always a sense of wholeness and urgency. Sometimes during a dialogue, one or two of us would become distressed or troubled. There would be long pauses, followed by a sudden pick-up; baffled responses sometimes erupted. There would be a quick seeing, a quick leaping through one another's perceptions, like a game of mental leap-frog, with each one of us leaping over and beyond the other's stance — no going back to what had been, but a vaulting through the present perception to a new position, and occasionally, into another dimension. I would leave the small discussions with a sense of extraordinary lightness and wholeness."*

*What follows is an extended excerpt from a hitherto unpublished 36 page transcript of one such (two hours long) interaction which took place between J. Krishnamurti, Asit Chandmal, Dr. David Bohm, and Prof. P. Krishna at Brockwood Park, England, on August 28, 1977.<sup>2</sup>*

—Editor

**P. Krishna:** I don't understand the fact that you are not willing to consider anything that is within the field of time and yet you agree that there is a difference between one man who is conditioned and another who is [also] conditioned.

**Krishnamurti:** And a man who is not conditioned.

**PK:** Oh no, I don't know of a man who is not conditioned.

**K:** What are you talking about?

**PK:** I am saying that there is a difference between a dictator and a democrat even though both are egoists.

**K:** I don't consider it a tremendous difference; I'm sorry, but they're both in the same bracket.

<sup>1</sup> *Truth is A Pathless Land: A Journey with Krishnamurti* by Ingram Smith; Quest Books, Wheaton, Ill, U.S.A. 1989 p.220.

<sup>2</sup> Copyright 1977/1991 Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Limited, Brockwood Park, Bramdean, Hampshire, U.K. S024 OLQ.

**PK:** Yes, but to my mind....

**K:** Sir, they are at extreme ends of the same field — one is brutal, the other is brutal in his own way. They are in the same field because both are partial....

**PK:** But there are many events which are partial which have had tremendous significance for people.

**K:** ... because they are partial — wait, sir, you haven't understood....

**PK:** Take a political event....

**K:** I am telling you that humanity looks, tastes, smells, does everything partially. Therefore, a man talks partially and is given tremendous significance. People accept it. When Hitler talked about a greater Germany, a new Germany, the thousand year Reich, that was 'tremendous'. It was partial, patriotic, nonsensical. That's why people listened, because they think in partial terms. A man comes around to somebody and says, 'Think totally, wholly', and they say, 'What are you talking about?'

**PK:** Yes, but when we go to decide a government, we have two politicians who are both obviously working within the field of time and ego, yet one is superior to the other, because one is dictatorial and one is democratic.

**K:** Of course. Of course.

**PK:** And you can't say this has no significance.

**K:** I know, but they are still within the same field of politics.

**PK:** Yes.

**K:** I am objecting to that field of politics; it's partial and through the part you can never bring about good for the whole. It's obvious.

**PK:** You mean to say that anyone who has not yet quite dissolved his ego is automatically evil?

**K:** No.

**PK:** Even though he is trying his best?

**K:** There is evil in him.

**PK:** Yes, there is evil in us, but it may not express itself.

**K:** Enough, sir. *(laughs)*

**PK:** Sir, there is Mother Teresa, working for all the poor people, fallen people, and so on. She is devoting her life. I see a difference between her and a man like Hitler who kills people and tries to eliminate a race. I cannot put them in the same bracket. To you they are in the same room, but to us this room is life.

**K:** I don't put them in the same bracket. All I say is they are working in the same field. They may be distant — it's an enormous field, one is in one corner, the other in another — but they're in the same field.

**PK:** That field is our life, sir.

**K:** That's what I am saying. Get out of it!

**PK:** Well, this brings me to the next question. Even if an individual does step out of this field...

**K:** Ah, that's a hypothetical question. I wouldn't answer that.

**PK:** No, sir, it's quite clear that such an individual is unable to help the people in the field. So what is the great significance of stepping out? You have still done something for yourself.

**K:** No. Then we are into quite a different thing. You didn't hear that man say: 'You are the total, the whole of humanity'. You, Krishna, are the rest of humanity. Do you accept that? Psychologically, not theoretically, but factually?

**PK:** In the sense that we are basically the same, yes.

**K:** Yes.

**PK:** Similar.

**K:** Yes, similar. So, if you transform yourself — not from this to that — end *this!* We said that transformation is not from this to that, but...

**PK:** The ending of this.

**K:** Yes. When there is an ending of this, your consciousness is transformed, and you,



*Krishnamurti under the trees at Meiner's Oaks, Ojai, in 1940*

Krishna, being the rest of the world, therefore it affects the rest of the world.

**PK:** But you see the rest of the world going down the stream the same way. Buddha came and went. Christ came and went.

**K:** That's not your concern.

**D. Bohm:** I think we discussed this last night. One point raised was the relationship of the man who is transformed that way to the others. In other words, what is he doing? Perhaps, that is the meaning of this question.

**PK:** Yes. I feel that such an individual is unable to help the others. So, it is still [only] that he has solved his own problem.

**K:** Wait a minute. You are missing my point. What do you mean 'help'? To move from one corner of the field to the other corner of the field?

**PK:** Or move out.

**K:** No, no. Which is it? I'm asking you.

**PK:** Sir, moving from one corner of the field to another can be helped and people are helping each other to do that.

**K:** That has no value.

**PK:** I wouldn't say it has no value. It has no value from the point of view of a man who has stepped out; from the point of view of stepping out of the field, it has no value.

**K:** That field has no value...

**PK:** This I don't agree, because...

**K:** Wait, I haven't finished.

**PK:** I think the fact that there is now no slavery, the fact that there is less domination of one nation over another, is very significant for humanity. I am not willing to say it has no meaning.

**K:** Yes, that's very nice, but it's still in the same field.

**PK:** I agree, but you said it has no significance. It has significance.

**K:** If you are living in the field and all your exercise is in the field, all your thinking is in the field, all your affairs are in the field, one corner is better than the other,...

**PK:** Yes.

**K:** ... but it's still within the field.

**A. Chandmal:** Sir, the man who has stepped out of the field, has he affected the consciousness within the field?

**K:** Yes.

**AC:** The whole consciousness of everybody?

**K:** Yes. I am certain of it.



*Prof. P. Krishna,  
Rector, Rajghat  
Education Centre,  
Rajghat, Varanasi*

**DB:** What makes you so certain.

**K:** It is so.

**DB:** I mean, it could be.

**K:** A man like Hitler has affected the whole.

**DB:** But he is in the field.

**K:** Within the field.

**DB:** But how can you make it clear to the man who is in the field that he is being affected by a man who is out, that the man who is out of the field affects the field as a whole?

**K:** Because, after all, he brings about a new light, a new perception, a new something....

**PK:** Yes, but they translate it into the old.

**K:** Wait, wait, I haven't finished yet. He brings something totally new which perhaps some of the men in the field can capture.

**DB:** Right. But now I think we have another point; you may be trying to say that some people in the field are more perceptive than others.

**K:** Yes.

**DB:** Not everybody is equal in the field.

**K:** No, of course not.

**DB:** Therefore, some are more likely to see it than others.

**K:** Yes.

**DB:** And therefore this man who is out of the field may make it possible...

**K:** For a few in the field...

**DB:** ...to see something.

**AC:** Two things, sir. The man who has stepped out, does he affect the whole field of human consciousness?

**K:** I say he does.

**AC:** Plus the people who come into contact with him, who have a certain receptivity, it affects them more?

**K:** Surely.

**AC:** Is that true, sir?

**K:** Surely. They may be living in the field. Then their whole movement of life will be to move out.

**AC:** Is that why they come to you?

**K:** Perhaps.

**PK:** I'm not sure, sir. I'm not sure that if Buddha had not been born the world would have been very different today. I am not sure.

**K:** No. I doubt it too.

**PK:** Therefore...

**K:** Wait, wait. You are talking from the field.

**AC:** Why did you say that, sir?

**PK:** There is no other way to talk; I am in the field.

**K:** Therefore, your statement has no value.

**AC:** Why did you say that?

**K:** Sir, as long as you are living in the field and talking from the field and saying the Buddha had no value, you are looking at it partially.

**PK:** No, I see it this way. I don't say that Buddha had no value, but after Buddha was dead and gone and couldn't be seen on the physical plane, then the 'church' began. Right?

**K:** Of course.

**PK:** And then [his teaching] was distorted. And this is likely to happen to every man, because people are going to translate things in terms of their own field.

**K:** Sir, are we discussing from the field, living in the field, and trying to bring the other into the field? Or are we saying, "Look, we live in the field; perhaps one corner is better than the other, but those of us who are serious want to move out of the field"?

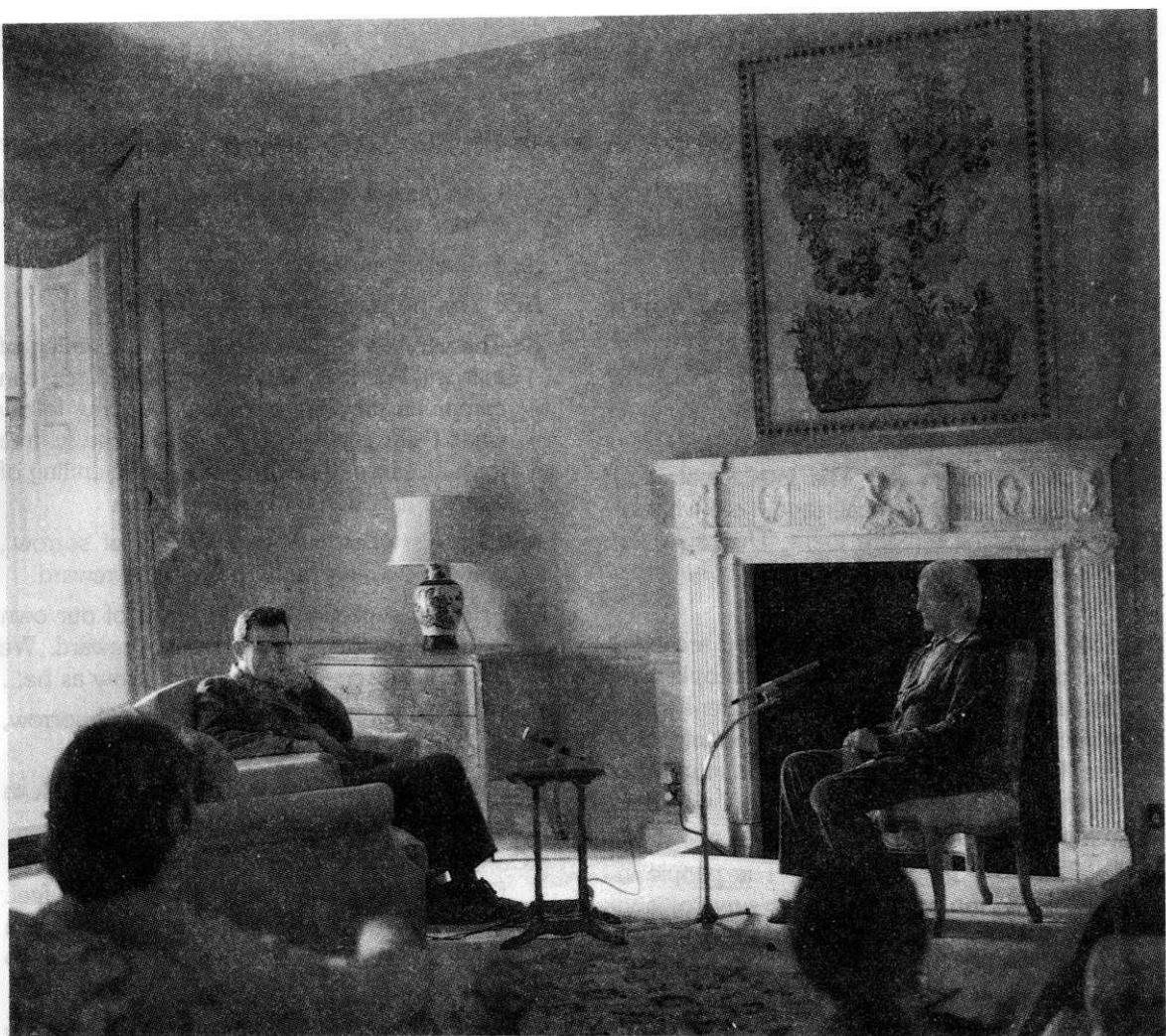
**AC:** Sir, may I come back to the question of the man who has moved out of the field affecting the whole of human consciousness. He affects more those people who came into contact with him. He affects even more those people who are more receptive to him.

**K:** Of course. Naturally.

**AC:** Which implies, sir, a certain level of receptivity or openness in the phenomenon.

**K:** Obviously.

**AC:** Now, sir, what is it that makes a certain person respond to you more?



J. Krishnamurti at Brockwood Park, having discussion with Dr. David Bohm

**K:** I don't know. It may be karma. Don't go back to it all.

**AC:** I want to know, sir. I don't say karma.

**K:** It may be purely chance. Wait, wait! It may be that they have had a hell of a life, and they feel something must... You follow?

**AC:** Sorrow.

**K:** Their sorrow, or it may be something beautiful which they have never seen before inwardly, this extraordinary sense of beauty, and they say, 'By Jove...' So there are all these factors, chance...

**AC:** Now, sir, you meet people who have come to you with different levels of receptivity and who have come for different reasons, such as you describe. What is your response to the

situation in terms of wanting people — not 'want' in the ordinary sense...

**K:** I follow; go on.

**AC:** ... people you want to step out of the field? How are you responding to it? The way I see your response is to talk to these people and describe to them what is happening to them: 'A' and 'B' led a personal life which exemplified what you are talking about.

**K:** Carry on, carry on.

**AC:** Now, it is not 'succeeding', if I may put it in inverted commas.

**K:** I understand.

**AC:** There are these two things: your talking to people and your leading the life you are ...

**K:** Carry on.

**AC:** ... so, isn't there something else beyond this which is possible?

**K:** Wait. Wait. Look at it the other way. Which is, meeting people and talking is at both the conscious level and also the deeper level. Right?

**AC:** Yes, there must be receptivity.

**K:** Of course, of course. The intellectual says, 'By Jove, it's quite logical, sane; I see what he means', but he remains there. The romantic, emotional, sentimentalist, also. So, what is your question?

**AC:** My question is, sir: in what way are you, who are out of the field, affecting people who are within the field who have different levels of receptivity to you or to this phenomenon? The barrier is obviously not on your side. What is the barrier within the field which is preventing...

**K:** Look, sir, it's simple enough. The people in the field — I'm sorry it sounds superior and contemptuous, I'm not — they only want reward. They think in terms of reward. They have been trained in punishment and reward all their life. Now along comes a man who says there is no reward or punishment. Right? They are not used to this.

**AC:** No. The man also says there is an ending of sorrow and that becomes a reward for them.

**K:** Of course, so they are all thinking in terms of reward.

**AC:** Yes, this is it. Is that the barrier, that one comes to you wanting something?

**K:** Perhaps, sir. That is a barrier.

**AC:** Now, sir, if I may ask, seeing this, can't there be another form of communication —

I don't know what — that can cut through the barrier which the other person has?

**K:** Is the other person willing to listen?

**AC:** Yes, he is, but he is not able to.

**K:** The very act of listening is the awakening of that intelligence. Then that intelligence can communicate with another. Do you follow what I am saying? If you are *actually* free from all sense of reward, that is the ending of sorrow. It is not a reward. *It is so.*

**AC:** For us when you say, 'ending of sorrow' you are holding out a promise, a reward.

**PK:** But we probably think in terms of our own personal sorrow and then that's reward. We think of personal sorrow, not sorrow as he...

**K:** I know. There is not only personal sorrow, there is global sorrow.

**PK:** Yes, but when we think of it, we think in terms of ending the personal sorrow.

**AC:** Or achieving enlightenment, or whatever. There is a motive; that is the barrier, I feel. Now, you see this barrier in this person, you see this person keeps coming back to you, so there is obviously something...

**K:** Which is what? Sir, for instance, he may move very, very slowly. You can't give up a habit instantly; you will take days.

**AC:** But you say it can be done instantly.

**K:** Yes, but you say, 'No, sir, I am used to the other. What the hell are you talking about? Tell me quickly how I can do it.' You are still thinking in terms of reward.

**PK:** Sir, if I may ask you, were you once in the field?

**K:** I question it too. *(laughs)*

**PK:** Because, you see, I am not sure if it is

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possible to get out of the field. You say that it is possible, but if you haven't stepped out of the field, if you were just never in the field, then I don't know if it is possible to step out of the field.

**K:** Of course.

**PK:** In other words, in the very beginning we said there is a vicious circle. Is it possible to break that vicious circle once you are caught in it?

**K:** A man who is not born in the field may have more clarity than the man in the field.

**PK:** Yes.

**K:** So, he says, 'Get out. This is the way out.'

**PK:** But he didn't get out; he just was out. And, therefore, it may be an impossible thing.

**K:** No. You are missing my point. If you have never been in it, you see the whole thing at a glance and, therefore, he says, 'Look, this is the way to do it'.

**PK:** It is like telling the ant there is no roof, that it can get out of a place...

**K:** Oh no, no.

**PK:** ... but it sees only two dimensions and feels completely enclosed. For the ant it is impossible.

**K:** So, what is it we are talking about, sir? You began by saying that as long as the ego exists, there is no insight; insight comes only when there is the other. So, I said insight takes place when there is no time — time being the ego — and we are still talking within the field of time; all that you have said is still within the field of time. And I say, 'For God's sake, stop for a minute and listen'. And you say, 'I can't listen because I am caught'. And you *are* caught. It's up to you.

**PK:** But you are saying that a man who is caught can step out.

**K:** I say so. Obviously.

**PK:** Do you know a single person who has done it?

**K:** That's not my business.

**AC:** And you are very concerned that people

**A realised one sends out waves of spiritual influence which draw many people towards him. Yet he may sit in a cave and maintain complete silence. We may listen to lectures upon truth and come away with hardly any grasp of the subject, but to come into contact with a realised one, though he speaks nothing, will give much more grasp of the subject. He never needs to go out among the public. If necessary he can use others as instruments.**

**The Guru is the bestower of silence who reveals the light of Self-knowledge which shines as the residual reality. Spoken words are of no use whatsoever if the eyes of the Guru meet the eyes of the disciple.**

**— Sri Ramana Maharshi**

step out. Otherwise, you wouldn't be...

**K:** Of course, of course.

**PK:** How are you sure that he can step out?

**AC:** You are very concerned with it, sir. I am repeating myself. There are three ways, as I see it, that you show your concern. You talk to people to create centres where there is ...

**K:** To create sensitivity.

**AC:** ... sensitivity. The other [way] — which I don't know — is affecting consciousness ...

**K:** Leave that, leave that.

**AC:** The third is the life itself which you are leading, which is a tremendous thing.

**K:** It doesn't matter.

**AC:** But is it having an effect, sir? Do you see it having any effect?

**K:** Sir, I am not concerned with it.

**AC:** You are concerned with it.

**K:** It's like a river flowing. If you want to drink it, drink it.

**AC:** But, sir, you observe people; you watch them very carefully; you know them. Is it having any effect?

**K:** I wouldn't answer you that question.

**AC:** Is it at all a valid question?

**K:** No, it isn't. It is a valid question if you ask if it is affecting you, Asit; then I'll deal with it. But, if you say generally...

**AC:** No, no. It is a direct question.

**PK:** We are obviously affected. I mean we have all benefitted, but we have benefitted...

**K:** No.

**PK:** Wait a minute, sir. Let me say it. Listen. I

think that mankind has benefitted, but still within the field.

**K:** I see.

**PK:** We have not benefitted in the sense of coming out of the field ...

**K:** That's what I am concerned with.

**PK:** ... at the same time, we have benefitted within the field and there is such a thing for us as benefitting within the field.

**K:** Wait. I say that's not a benefit at all. It's like moving from this corner to that corner, and saying, 'That's marvellous'.

**PK:** Yes, but there is significance in that also.

**K:** Mighty little significance.

**PK:** Yes, mighty little from your point of view.

**K:** Sir, logically it has very little importance.

**Devotee:** Why does not Bhagavan go about and preach the truth to the people at large?

**Maharshi:** How do you know I am not doing it? Does preaching consist in mounting a platform and haranguing the people around? Preaching is simple communication of knowledge; it can really be done in silence only. What do you think of a man who listens to a sermon for an hour and goes away without having been impressed by it so as to change his life? Compare him with another, who sits in a holy presence and goes away after some time with his outlook on life totally changed. Which is the better, to preach loudly without effect or to sit silently sending out inner force.

Again, how does speech arise? First there is abstract knowledge. Out of this arises the ego, which in turn gives rise to thought, and thought to the spoken word. So the word is the great-grandson of the original source. If the word can produce an effect, judge for yourself, how much more powerful must be the preaching through silence.



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## 'I' AND 'I-I': A READER'S QUERY

By DAVID GODMAN

**S**OMETIME LAST year I received a letter from Professor James E. Royster of Cleveland State University, USA, which contained the following interesting question:

My reason for writing is to raise a question with you that has long puzzled me. I have been reading Ramana Maharshi for about twenty years and frequently find him using the expression 'I-I' but I'm not clear on his meaning. Why 'I-I' rather than simply 'I'? I can think of many possible meanings but I am not at all sure what Ramana intended. Is it to suggest that the sense of separate self (or self-con-

sciousness) arises only in relationship to another sense of separate self? Or that the individual atman is derived from ("subtracted" from) the Absolute Atman, Brahman Nirguna? Does 'I-I' refer to the ego or the Universal Self? My guesses and interpretations go on and on.

If you can shed some light on this issue I will be most appreciative. Perhaps there has been an article in *The Mountain Path* or elsewhere that takes up this question.

This question has not, to my knowledge, been discussed in any great detail in either *The Moun-*

tain Path or any other Ashram publication. I therefore sent the following detailed reply to the Professor. Since I suspect that some devotees may disagree with some of my conclusions, I should say in advance that this is not intended to be a definitive explanation. It merely reflects my own views.

\* \* \*

Bhagavan never used the term 'I-I' to denote the mind, the ego or the individual self, nor did he intend it, as Professor Royster speculates, to indicate that there is any relationship between the individual 'I' and the Self. On the contrary, Bhagavan makes it clear on many occasions that 'I-I' is an experience not of the ego but of the Self. Verse thirty of *Ulladu Narpadu* is quite emphatic about this:

Questioning "Who am I?" within one's mind, when one reaches the Heart, the individual 'I' sinks crestfallen, and at once reality manifests itself as 'I-I'. Though it reveals itself thus, it is not the ego 'I' but the perfect being, the Self Absolute.<sup>1</sup>

Verses nineteen and twenty of *Upadesa Undiyar* describe the same process in almost identical terms:

19. "Whence does the 'I' arise?" Seek this within. The 'I' then vanishes. This is the pursuit of wisdom.

20. Where the 'I' vanished, there appears an 'I-I' by itself. This is the infinite.<sup>2</sup>

Although Bhagavan is here clearly equating the experience of 'I-I' with the experience of the Self, one should be wary of jumping to the conclusion that he is saying in these three verses that the 'I-I' experience occurs after the final realisation of the Self. Why? Because on many occasions Bhagavan told devotees that the 'I-I' experience was merely a prelude to realisation and not the realisation itself. I shall return to the question of whether the 'I-I' experience can be equated with Self-realisation later in this article, but first I feel that it would be more profitable to examine some of the quotations in which Bhagavan gave detailed descriptions of the 'I-I'.

Bhagavan frequently used the Sanskrit phrase *aham sphurana* to indicate the 'I-I' consciousness or experience. *Aham* means 'I' and *sphurana* can be translated as 'radiation, emanation, or pulsation'. When he explained what this term meant he indicated that it is an impermanent experience of the Self in which the mind has been temporarily transcended. This distinction between the temporary experience of the 'I-I' and the permanent state of Self-realisation which follows it is well brought out in the question-and-answer version of *Vichara Sangraham (Self-Enquiry)*:

Therefore, leaving the corpse-like body as an actual corpse and remaining without even uttering the word 'I' by mouth, if one now keenly enquires, "What is it that rises as 'I'?" then in the Heart a certain soundless *sphurana*, 'I-I', will shine forth of its own accord. It is an awareness which is single and undivided, the thoughts which are many and divided having disappeared. If one remains still without leaving it, even the *sphurana* (having completely annihilated the sense of the individuality, the form of the ego, 'I am the body') will itself in the end subside, just like the flame that catches the camphor. This alone is said to be liberation by great ones and scriptures.<sup>3</sup>

This answer can be taken to be an amplification of and a commentary on the three verses already quoted, for the same sequence of events is described, but at greater length: after the source of the 'I'-thought is sought for, the 'I'-thought subsides, disappears and is replaced by the *aham sphurana*. What this longer quotation makes clear is that even this *sphurana* of 'I-I' has to subside before the final and permanent state of Self-realisation is attained.

<sup>1</sup> *Truth Revealed*, v. 30, 1982 ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Upadesa Saram* translated by B.V. Narasimhaswami. Although the work is entitled *Upadesa Saram*, it is actually a translation of *Upadesa Undiyar*. *Upadesa Saram* is Bhagavan's Sanskrit rendering of *Upadesa Undiyar*.

<sup>3</sup> Question three of *Vichara Sangraham*, translated by Sadhu Om, taken from page 98 of *The Mountain Path*, 1982. The word order has been slightly changed in this version.

Bhagavan's use of the word *sphurana* in this quotation once puzzled Devaraja Mudaliar. He therefore asked Bhagavan about it and received a detailed, illuminating answer:

I have always had doubt about what exactly the word *sphurana* means [in question three of *Vichara Sangraham*]. So I asked Bhagavan and he said, "It means... 'which shines or illuminates'". I asked, "Is it not a sound we hear?" Bhagavan said, "Yes, we may say it is a sound we *feel* or *become aware of*". He also referred to the dictionary and said, "The word means 'throbbing', 'springing on the memory', 'flashing across the mind'. Thus both sound and light may be implied in the word *sphurana*. Everything has come from light and sound."

I asked Bhagavan what it is that 'shines', whether it is the ego or the Self. He said that it was neither the one nor the other, but something in between the two, that it is something that is a combination of the 'I' (Self) and the 'I' thought (ego) and that the Self is without even this *sphurana*.<sup>4</sup>

Another more philosophical explanation of the *aham sphurana* and the 'I-I' can be found in one of the later answers of *Vichara Sangraham*. This is a most interesting answer because it can serve as a commentary on the first half of one of Bhagavan's most famous verses. In *Sri Ramana Gita*, chapter two, verse two, Bhagavan states that, "In the interior of the heart-cave, *Brahman* alone shines in the form of *Atman* with direct immediacy as I, as I".<sup>5</sup>

Although this verse, and particularly its second half, has been extensively discussed in the Ramana literature, no commentators, so far as I am aware, have mentioned Bhagavan's own written explanation of the 'I-I' shining in the Heart.

D: It was stated [in your previous answer] that *Brahman* is manifest as the Self in the form of 'I-I' in the Heart. To facilitate an understanding of this statement, can it be still further explained?

M: Is it not within the experience of all that during deep sleep, swoon etc. there is no knowledge whatsoever, that is, neither Self-knowledge nor other knowledge. Afterwards, when there is experience of the form "I have woken up from sleep" or "I have recovered from swoon" — is that not a mode of specific knowledge that has arisen from the aforementioned state? This specific knowledge is called *vijnana*. This *vijnana* becomes manifest only as pertaining either to the Self or the not-Self, and not by itself. When it pertains to the Self it is called true knowledge, knowledge in the form of that mental mode whose object is the Self, or knowledge which has for its content the impartite (Self), and when it relates to the not-Self it is called ignorance. The state of this *vijnana* when it pertains to the Self and is manifest in the form of the Self is said to be the *aham sphurana*. This *sphurana* cannot remain independently, leaving the Reality. It is this *sphurana* that serves as the mark for the direct experience of the Real. Yet this by itself cannot constitute the state of being the Real. That, depending on which this manifestation takes place, is the basic Reality, which is also called *prajnana* [pure consciousness]. The Vedantic text '*prajnanam brahma*' [*Brahman* is pure consciousness] teaches the same truth.<sup>6</sup>

Here an interesting phenomenon needs to be commented on. In his writings Bhagavan has made several relatively brief statements<sup>7</sup> in which he equates the 'I-I' experience with the Self. At first sight they appear to be descriptions of the state of Self-realisation, but when they are read in conjunction with the long explanations of the

<sup>4</sup> *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, 23.4.45.

<sup>5</sup> *Sri Ramana Gita*, 6th ed.

<sup>6</sup> Question and answer no. 32 from *Vichara Sangraham*. Part of the translation has been taken from the booklet *Self-Enquiry* and part from *The Mountain Path*, 1982, p. 98.

<sup>7</sup> *Upadesa Undiyar*, vv. 19 and 20, *Ulladu Narpadu*, v. 30, and *Sri Ramana Gita*, ch. 2, v. 2.

'I-I' which can be found elsewhere in his writings<sup>8</sup> and in his verbal comments, it is possible to see in these verses a description of the impermanent *aham sphurana* rather than the permanent state of realisation. This is an unusual interpretation, but I believe that it is a sustainable one. However, I would not go so far as to say that it is the only legitimate way of interpreting these verses.

In the previous quotation from *Vichara Sangraham* the 'I-I' is defined as being a clear knowledge (*vijnana*) of the Self in which the mind, still existing, clings tightly to its source and is permeated by emanations of 'I'-ness radiating from the Self.

Ganapati Muni may have had this particular answer in mind when he wrote to Bhagavan and asked the following question: "Is abidance in *vijnana* a means for gradually attaining the perfect, or is it not? If it is not certainly a means for that, then for what purpose is it?"<sup>9</sup>

In his reply Bhagavan repeated the relevant parts of the answer from *Vichara Sangraham* but he also added some remarks on how self-enquiry leads to *aham sphurana* and how abidance in *aham sphurana*, or 'I-I', leads to Self-realisation:

The 'I'-thought which rises in this manner [by catching hold of something] appears in the form of the three *gunas*, and of these three the *rajas* and *tamas* aspects cling to and identify with the body. The remaining one, which is pure *sattva*, is alone the natural characteristic of the mind, and this stands clinging to the reality. However, in the pure *sattvic* state, the 'I'-thought is no longer really a thought, it is the Heart itself.... The state in which the pure *sattva* mind shines clinging to the Self is called *aham sphurana*.... The source to which this *sphurana* clings alone is called the reality or pure consciousness.... When the mind, having pure *sattva* as its characteristic, remains attending to the *aham sphurana*, which is the sign of the forthcoming direct experience of the Self, the downward-facing Heart becomes upward-facing and remains in the form of That [Self]. This

aforesaid attention to the source of the *aham sphurana* alone is the path. When thus attended to, Self, the reality, alone will remain shining in the centre of the Heart as I-am-I.<sup>10</sup>

The quotations given so far should make it clear what Bhagavan was referring to when he spoke of the 'I-I' experience, but they fail to address one of Professor Royster's principal questions: why does Bhagavan use the term 'I-I' rather than 'I'? The term 'I' is clearly inadequate and confusing since it denotes either the Self or the ego rather than the *aham sphurana* which is, as Bhagavan says, "neither the one nor the other". A.R. Natarajan in his commentary on *Sri Ramana Gita* suggests that "to denote the continuous nature of the throb of consciousness, Ramana repeats the words as 'I-I'".<sup>11</sup> This is certainly plausible. An alternative explanation, suggested by Sadhu Om,<sup>12</sup> can be derived from the rules of Tamil grammar. In simple Tamil sentences the present tense of the verb 'to be' is usually omitted. Thus, the expression '*nan-nan*' ('I-I' in Tamil) would generally be taken to mean 'I am I' by a Tamilian. This interpretation would make 'I-I' an emphatic statement of Self-awareness akin to the biblical 'I am that I am' which Bhagavan occasionally said summarised the whole of *Vedanta*. Bhagavan himself has said that he used the term to denote the import of the word 'I'. This explanation appears in both *Upadesa Undiyar* (verse 21) and in the talks which precede *Sat Darshana Bhashya*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Vichara Sangraham*, answers 3 and 30.

<sup>9</sup> 'Sri Bhagavan's Letter to Ganapati Muni', *The Mountain Path*, 1982, pp. 95-101.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Sri Ramana Gita*, by A.R. Natarajan, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> *Upadesa Undiyar*, translated by Sadhu Om and Michael James, p. 20.

<sup>13</sup> *Sat Darshana Bhashya*, 7th ed. p.iii. I was told a few years ago by Sri K. Natesan, who was present in the Old Hall when Kapali Sastri read out the manuscript version of *Sat Darshana Bhashya*, that Bhagavan himself made the author delete the original phrase (Sri K. Natesan can no longer remember what it was) and replace it with 'import of I'.

Whichever explanation one chooses, either these or others, one should avoid those which postulate that the experience is called 'I-I' because it radiates in discrete pulses, for Bhagavan was quite emphatic that the experience was continuous and unbroken. For example, in the essay version of *Vichara Sangraham* he wrote: "Underlying the unceasing flow of varied thoughts, there arises the continuous unbroken awareness, silent and spontaneous, as 'I-I' in the Heart."<sup>14</sup>

I would like now to address more fully the question of whether the 'I-I' experience, as defined by Bhagavan, is present after realisation takes place. Most devotees who are familiar with Bhagavan's teachings would have no hesitation in asserting that this is so. If pressed to provide evidence to support their point of view, they would probably quote the verses from *Ulladu Narpadu* and *Upadesa Undiyar* that I have already cited, and probably add verse twenty of *Upadesa Saram*. They would be quite justified in doing so, for it is possible to translate and interpret all these verses in such a way that their meaning would be that the 'I-I' experience is a consequence and not a precursor of Self-realisation. To see how this is so, one must look at the verbs in these verses and examine what they mean in their original languages. For the sake of convenience I will give the verses again with the relevant verbs printed in italics.

1) Questioning "Who am I?" within one's mind, when one reaches the Heart the individual 'I' *sinks crestfallen*, and at once reality manifests itself as 'I-I'. Though it reveals itself thus, it is not the ego 'I', but the perfect being, the Self Absolute. (*Ulladu Narpadu*, verse 30)

2) "Whence does this 'I' arise?" Seek this within. This 'I' then *vanishes*. This is the pursuit of wisdom. *Where the 'I' vanished*, there appears an 'I-I' by itself. This is the infinite (*poornam*). (*Upadesa Undiyar*, verses 19 and 20)

3) Where this 'I' *vanished and merged* in its source, there appears spontaneously

**"All that the mind can do is to know itself. It must know its own limitations — the motives, the feelings, the passions, the cruelties, the lack of love, and be aware of all its many activities. One must see all that and remain silent, not asking; not begging, not putting out a hand to receive something. If you stretch out your hand, you will remain empty-handed forever. But to know yourself, the unconscious as well as the conscious, is the beginning of wisdom; and knowing yourself in that sense brings freedom — which is not freedom for you to experience Reality. The man who is free is not free for something or from something; he is just free; and then if that state of Reality wishes to come, it will come. But for you to go seeking it is like a blind man seeking light; you will never find it."**

— J. Krishnamurti  
(Stockholm 1956)

and continuously an 'I-I'. This is the Heart, the infinite Supreme Being. (*Upadesa Saram*, verse 20)<sup>15</sup>

The first two italicised verbs, 'sinks crestfallen' and 'vanishes' are translations of the Tamil phrase *talai-sayndidum*, which literally

<sup>14</sup> *Vichara Sangraham*, essay version, ch. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Taken from *The Maharshi's Way*, a translation of *Upadesa Saram* by D.S. Sastri, 1989 ed., p. 38. The sources of the other two quotations have been cited in footnotes 1 and 2.

means 'will bow its head'. In ordinary usage it means 'will humble itself', 'sinks crestfallen', or 'will bow its head in shame'. However, in colloquial usage it can also mean 'will die'. If this colloquial usage is preferred, both verses will have as their meaning that the 'I' will only manifest *after* the death of the individual 'I'. Sadhu Om in his translations has preferred the colloquial usage 'will die', but other translators have opted for variations on 'sinks crestfallen'. This may seem like pointless pedantry, but a crucial distinction is at stake: if the verb chosen indicates a permanent extinction of the ego, then the 'I-I' arises as a consequence of Self-realisation; but if the chosen verb indicates that the 'I' has only temporarily subsided (e.g. 'vanished', 'merged', 'disappeared', etc.) then Bhagavan is indicating that the 'I-I' manifests before realisation. It is of course possible to have it both ways and say that the 'I-I' is experienced both before and after realisation. Adherents of this school of thought would probably say that the *Upadesa Undiyar* and *Ulladu Narpadu* verses describe the post-realisation 'I-I' experience whereas the *Vichara Sangraham* quotations refer to the *aham sphurana* experience which precedes it.

The third italicised phrase, 'where the 'I' vanished', is a translation of the Tamil word 'ondru' which means 'where it merges' or 'where it becomes one with'. Since the union referred to in this verse can be dissolved by the re-emergence of the 'I', the term *ondru* does not imply a permanent extinction of the 'I'. However, those who support the thesis that the 'I-I' manifests after the permanent eradication of the 'I' would probably point to Bhagavan's Sanskrit translation of this verse. In it he uses the word *nasa* (the fourth italicised verb, 'vanished and merged') where the word *ondru* is used in the Tamil original. This has been variously translated as 'destroyed', 'annihilated', and 'perished', all terms which indicate a permanent destruction of the 'I'. It is quite permissible though to translate *nasa* as 'disappear' or 'vanish', and indeed several translators have done so.<sup>16</sup> Since one should select a meaning which is

consonant with the idea expressed in the original Tamil, I feel that 'vanish' or 'disappear' is preferable. The implications of words such as 'destroy' or 'perish' are not present in the original text.

There are two other translations which can add a little evidence to this debate. In the 1920s Lakshman Sarma translated *Ulladu Narpadu* into Sanskrit under Bhagavan's supervision. He had to recast each verse several times in order to satisfy Bhagavan that his translation was completely accurate. When verse thirty was translated, Lakshman Sarma translated *talai-saynididum* as 'bows its head in shame'<sup>17</sup> and received Bhagavan's imprimatur on it. Many years later, Major Chadwick translated *Upadesa Saram* into English and had his manuscript corrected by Bhagavan. In this version Bhagavan approved of the word 'disappears' as a translation of the Sanskrit word *nasa* in verse twenty.<sup>18</sup>

To sum up this linguistic excursion: the verses on 'I-I' that Bhagavan wrote are open to two interpretations. They can be taken either to mean that the 'I-I' is experienced as a consequence of realisation or as a precursor to it. My own view, and I would stress that it is only a personal opinion, is that the evidence points to it being a precursor only. In justification of this view I would say that,

- 1) In his lengthy explanations of the 'I-I' Bhagavan always speaks of it as a temporary experience;

<sup>16</sup> In addition to D.M. Sastri, two other published authors have translated *nasa* in verse twenty of *Upadesa Saram* as 'vanished': Swami Atmananda in *Light on Religious Practices*, p. 29 and Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha in *Upadesa Sara of Maharshi Ramana*, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> *Revelation by 'Who'*, 1980 ed, v. 35. Because of additional verses included at the beginning of the text, Who's numbering system differs from other translators. Verse 30 becomes verse 35 in his version.

<sup>18</sup> *The Poems of Sri Ramana Maharshi*, by Major Chadwick, 3rd ed., p. 15. The original notebook with Bhagavan's handwritten corrections is kept in the Ashram archives.

2) In a long conversation with S.S. Cohen which will appear later, Bhagavan twice states that the 'I-I' consciousness is different from the *sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi* state, that is, the natural state of the *jnani*;

3) Bhagavan's Tamil and Sanskrit verses on this subject can all be interpreted in such a way that they support this view.

I should like now to raise an interesting question, and, if possible answer it. If the 'I-I' or *aham sphurana* experience occurs immediately before realisation, and not after it, is there any evidence to show that Bhagavan himself went through such an experience on the day of his own realisation? I think there is, although it is somewhat flimsy. I will begin by quoting one other verse which Bhagavan wrote:

Therefore on diving deep upon the quest  
 "Who am 'I' and from whence?"  
 thoughts disappear  
 And consciousness of Self then flashes forth  
 As the 'I-I' within the cavity  
 Of every seeker's Heart...<sup>19</sup>

If one adds this to the previous similar quotations I have already cited,<sup>20</sup> there are now four written accounts by Bhagavan which have in common an almost identical theme: as a result of self-enquiry, the 'I'-thought subsides, disappears and is replaced by the 'I-I' 'flashing forth' in the Heart. What authority does Bhagavan have for saying this? I would answer by making the novel suggestion that these writings are autobiographical in nature and that Bhagavan is recording what happened to him on that decisive day in 1896. I would support this view by comparing the introductory comments from *Vichara Sangraham*, answer three, to the well-known account of the death experience which has been printed in many Ashram books.

1) Therefore, leaving the corpse-like body as an actual corpse, and remaining without even uttering the word 'I' by mouth, if one keenly enquires, "What is it that rises as 'I'?"...<sup>21</sup>

2) I lay with my limbs stretched out stiff

as though *rigor mortis* had set in and imitated a corpse so as to give greater reality to the enquiry. I held my breath and kept my lips tightly closed so that no sound could escape, so that neither the word 'I' nor any other word could be uttered. "Well then," I said to myself, "this body is dead.... But with the death of this body, am I dead? Is the body 'I'?"<sup>22</sup>

The similarities cannot be ignored. Indeed, since the preamble to the *Vichara Sangraham* answer is so close to the published accounts of his death experience, it is possible that the remainder of the answer (see page 80 for the full quote) is also autobiographical. If this whole answer is merely a thinly-disguised account of Bhagavan's own Self-realisation, then one can say that he experienced the *aham sphurana* as a consequence of his enquiry, and that the *aham sphurana* finally subsided, leaving the full, permanent and *sphurana*-less experience of the Self. No hint of this can be found in B.V. Narasimhaswami's account of the death experience, but in Krishna Bhikshu's Telugu biography Bhagavan takes up the story of what happened after he had begun his enquiry into the nature of the 'I'.

Now the body is inert, devoid of consciousness, while I am full of awareness. Therefore death is for the inert body. This 'I' is indestructible awareness. The knowledge that remains when the body gives up its affairs and when there are no sensory workings is not sensory knowledge. This *aham sphurana* is direct knowledge, Self-experience, self-effulgent and not imaginary.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Atma Vidya Kirtanam*, v. 2, taken from *Collected Works*.

<sup>20</sup> *Ulladu Narpadu*, v. 30, *Upadesa Undiyar*, vv. 19 and 20, *Vichara Sangraham*, answer 3.

<sup>21</sup> *Vichara Sangraham*, answer 3.

<sup>22</sup> *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self Knowledge*, ch. 2. In an alternative version (*The Mountain Path*, 1982, p.68) Bhagavan asks himself, "What was this 'I'? Is it the body? Who called himself the 'I'?" This version, in which a definite act of self-enquiry takes place, is even closer to the *Vichara Sangraham* version.

<sup>23</sup> *Ramana Leela*, 7th ed., pp. 20-21.

In 1945 Bhagavan confirmed that he had experienced the *aham sphurana* on the day of his realisation. In a conversation with Swami Rishikeshananda in November that year he remarked: "In the vision of death I experienced at Madurai, all my senses were numbed, but my *aham sphurana* was clearly evident to me..."<sup>24</sup> In neither Krishna Bhikshu's nor Anantha Murthy's account does Bhagavan go on to say that the *aham sphurana* subsided, leaving the full and permanent state of Self-realisation. However, since he on many other occasions asserted that the *aham sphurana* was a temporary experience and that it must subside and disappear before realisation can take place, it is reasonable to infer that he did in fact experience the sequence of events described in *Vichara Sangraham*, answer three, on the day of his own realisation.

There is one other point which can be mentioned in passing. Though Bhagavan rarely talked about it, there appears, occasionally, to be a cosmological aspect to his usage of the term *aham sphurana*. On one occasion he said, "The Supreme Being is unmanifest and the first sign of manifestation is *Aham Sphurana*".<sup>25</sup> In what may be an amplification of this unusual statement, Bhagavan once told Devaraja Mudaliar:

"... both sound and light may be implied in the word *sphurana*. Everything has come from light and sound." ...

Explaining how the Self is mere light and how it is both the word or sound and also that out of which word or sound originally came, Bhagavan said, "Man has three bodies, the gross, the one made of the five elements, the *sukshma* or subtle one made of *manas* and *prana*, and the *jiva*. Similarly, even Iswara has three bodies. All the manifest universe is his gross body, light and sound are his subtle body, and the Self in his *jiva*."<sup>26</sup>

According to this explanation the *aham sphurana* can be viewed as the subtle body of Iswara, the source or springboard from which the material world springs or evolves. However, this is somewhat fanciful, being sharply at vari-

## Aloneness

By Patrick Roberts

You have heard that a *jnani*  
is perfectly alone  
Like the sun — complete, beyond all  
relationship,  
Dependent on no one for happiness —  
Being solely blissful radiant  
Consciousness.

Ignorant of your total happy aloneness  
You long for someone to fill  
That coal-black hole in your dreary heart,  
Pining to create some symbiotic state  
Like a child that cannot sleep unless  
An artificial light is on all night.

ance with Bhagavan's mainstream ideas on creation.

As a conclusion, it will be appropriate to include an extract from *Guru Ramana*. In one of his conversations with Bhagavan, S.S. Cohen asked several questions about the nature of the 'I'. In his answers, Bhagavan made several interesting comments, many of which are not recorded elsewhere in the Ramana literature.

Mr C: *Vivekachudamani* speaks of the 'I' consciousness as eternally shining in the Heart, but no one is aware of it.

Bhagavan: Yes, all men without exception have it, in whatever state they may be — the waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep — and whether they are conscious of it or not.

<sup>24</sup> *The Life and Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi* by T.S. Anantha Murthy, 1972 ed., p. 6-7.

<sup>25</sup> *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, talk no. 518.

<sup>26</sup> *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, 24.3.1945. These remarks are part of Bhagavan's explanation of the word *sphurana* in question three of *Vichara Sangraham*.

C: In the Talks section of *Sat Darshana Bhashya*, the 'I-I' is referred to as the Absolute Consciousness, yet Bhagavan once told me that any realisation before *Sahaja Nirvikalpa* is intellectual.

B: Yes, the 'I-I' consciousness is the Absolute. Though it comes before *Sahaja*, there is in it as in *Sahaja* itself the subtle intellect<sup>27</sup>; the difference being that in the latter [*Sahaja*] the sense of forms disappears, which is not the case in the former.

This answer suggests an interesting distinction between the 'I-I' consciousness and *kevala nirvikalpa samadhi*, both of which, according to Bhagavan, are temporary experiences of the Self. *Nirvikalpa* means 'no differences', so in *kevala nirvikalpa samadhi* no names or forms are perceived. However, on the basis of this answer, one can say that forms are still perceived during the 'I-I' experience.

In his writings Bhagavan has said that self-enquiry leads to the experience of *aham sphurana*, and that abidance in the *aham sphurana* leads on to a full realisation of the *sahaja nirvikalpa* state. He was less positive about *kevala nirvikalpa samadhi*, often saying that it was a temporary state and that the mind would eventually re-emerge from it. He generally tried to discourage devotees from trying to reach this state since he regarded it as something akin to an unproductive detour.<sup>28</sup> One can infer from his remarks and writings that self-enquiry, properly undertaken, bypasses this *kevala nirvikalpa* state completely and reaches the *sahaja* state via the alternate route of the *aham sphurana* experience. Mr Cohen received confirmation of this as he continued his conversation with Bhagavan:

C: Bhagavan, you said yesterday that there exists in the human body a hole as small as a pinpoint, from which consciousness always bubbles out to the body. Is it open or shut?

B: It is always shut, being the knot of ignorance which ties the body to consciousness. When the mind drops away in the temporary *Kevala Nirvikalpa* it opens but shuts again. In *Sahaja* it remains always open.

C: How is it during the experience of 'I-I' consciousness?

B: This consciousness is the key which opens it permanently.

This opening process may be the same one that was described by Bhagavan in his letter to Ganapati Muni, which I quoted earlier. Part of it read: "When the mind having pure *sattva* as its characteristic remains attending to the *aham sphurana*, which is the sign of the forthcoming direct experience of the Self, the downward-facing Heart becomes upward-facing and remains in the form of That [Self]." If the Heart becoming upward-facing is the equivalent of this small consciousness-emitting hole opening, then this is another instance of Bhagavan saying that abidance in the *aham sphurana* is the way to make the Heart open permanently.

When the Heart is permanently open, the world, which was previously assumed to be external, is experienced not as separate names and forms, but as one's own Self, as the immanent *Brahman*. In *nirvikalpa samadhi*, according to Bhagavan, the Heart temporarily opens to admit the mind, but then closes again. Thus the *nirvikalpa* experience of the Self is both limited (in so far as it is temporary) and 'internal'. Because the Heart remains closed, the *sahaja* experience of the world being *Brahman* is absent. There is merely an internal awareness of one's real nature which lasts as long as the duration of the *samadhi*. As mentioned before, in the *aham sphurana* experience, external awareness is retained, but names and forms continue to be perceived as names and forms until the 'I' finally dies in the Heart.

<sup>27</sup> When Bhagavan mentioned that the subtle intellect remains in the *sahaja* state, he was referring to the *vijñanamayakosa*, or 'the sheath of pure intellect'. He would occasionally say that the *jñani* keeps in contact with the world via this sheath, although such statements do not sit well with his assertion that the *jñani* has no mind. See *Guru Ramana*, 7th ed., pp. 100-101 for further details.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, no. 54, in which Bhagavan notes that one can get stuck in *nirvikalpa samadhi* for years without making any progress.

One final point needs to be stressed. In *Ul-ladu Narpadu*, *Upadesa Undiyar* and *Vichara Sangraham* Bhagavan makes the point that it is self-enquiry that leads to *aham sphurana*. Nowhere is it mentioned in these texts that other methods lead to this state. This point is made again in the concluding section of Mr Cohen's talk with Bhagavan:

C: How to reach that Centre where what you call the ultimate consciousness — the 'I-I' — arises? Is it by simply thinking "Who am I"?

B: Yes, it will take you up. You must do it with a calm mind — mental calmness is essential.

C: How does that consciousness manifest when that Centre — the Heart — is reached? Will I recognise it?

B: Certainly, as pure consciousness, free from all thoughts. It is pure unbroken awareness of your own Self, rather of Being — there

is no mistaking it when pure.

C: Is the vibratory movement of the Centre felt simultaneously with the experience of Pure Consciousness, or before, or after it?

B: They are both one and the same. But *sphurana* can be felt in a subtle way even when meditation has sufficiently stabilised and deepened, and the ultimate consciousness is very near, or during a sudden fright or great shock, when the mind comes to a standstill. It draws attention to itself, so that the meditator's mind, rendered sensitive by calmness, may become aware of it, gravitate towards it, and finally plunge into it, the Self.

C: Is the 'I-I' consciousness Self-Realisation?

B: It is a prelude to it: when it becomes permanent (*Sahaja*) it is Self-realisation, Liberation.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Guru Ramana*, 1974 ed. pp. 81-3.

**"The Real is causeless and thought that has cause cannot experience it."**

**— J. Krishnamurti**

\* \* \*

**"The 'me' cannot give itself up. All that it can do is to be quiet; and it cannot be quiet without understanding the whole structure and the meaning of the 'me'. Either that structure and meaning can be understood totally, immediately, or not at all; and that's the only way; there is no other way. If you say 'I will practise; I will gradually work at it till the 'me' dies', then you have fallen into a different kind of trap, which is the same 'me'."**

**— J. Krishnamurti (Ojai, 1966)**

\* \* \*

**"Liberation is not an end. Liberation is from moment to moment in the understanding of what is — when the mind is free, not made free."**

**— J. Krishnamurti (1949-50 talks in India)**

## BOOK REVIEWS

**TRUTH IS A PATHLESS LAND: Journey with J. Krishnamurti:** by Ingram Smith. Pub: Theosophical Pub. House (Quest Books), Wheaton, USA. pp.220, \$8.25

J.K. whose passing away a few years ago was lamented nearly all over the world, seems a very new, unusual kind of prophet, with a message truly revolutionary in scope and calculated to provoke thought by its deceptive simplicity and apt to bewilder us by its intrinsic depth of content. His only concern as he said at the very beginning of his coming of age as a prophet, was to liberate men and women, every individual among them, from the authority of a leader or guru. One was to be one's own teacher and one's own disciple! Without this total freedom from discipleship to an external guru, there is no possibility of access to Truth. All discipleship perverts the disciple! And though J.K. did not say so, it corrupts the teacher too. How utterly different, how dangerously different this attitude seems to be! 'Drift' however is not the message of J.K. Strenuous self-discipline is what he insists on. There is no path to Truth, and organised belief and institutionalised religion are likely to mislead you, instead of affording salvation. The true state of man is self-acquired freedom from the idiocy of ideologies of various kinds, a state of *self-directed pursuit of self-discovered values*. Awareness, illumination comes of its own — you cannot choose anymore than you can avoid it. Is this not like the Buddhism of Lord Buddha, though totally different from the Buddhism of its various schools?

Ingram Smith, an Australian broadcaster, also a founder member of an Australian group seeking light from Krishnamurti, had the inestimable good fortune of listening to and recording J.K.'s views which can, looked into closely, bring us back(?) to the message of Sri Ramana, and to Socrates and the Upanishads. One feels humble in the face of the genuineness of people living far apart from one another, in space and, for a wonder, in time, speaking the same language, the language of the Self.

Maybe the English language has too many limitations to be an entirely adequate vehicle of J.K.'s Vedantic thought. When he speaks of Choiceless Awareness, one recalls from the *Kathopanishad*: "Na ayam atma.....yam eva esha vrunkte tena labhyah"

J.K.'s thought is one more vital testimony that one can capture the secret of the spirit in Man if one sets himself earnestly and resolutely to do so.

— Prof. S. Ramaswamy

**J. KRISHNAMURTI: Talks with American Students.** Pub: Shambhala, Massachusetts, 02115, USA. pp.182, \$8.95

This is a series of talks K gave in 1968 to college students in the US and Puerto Rico, exploring the meaning of freedom and rebellion. K brings to these talks his well known style of approach, the predominant aspects of

which have always been a healthy disregard for any kind of dependence and, a ritual refusal to give any room for clinging to any concept. The *Talks* abound with scintillating and systematic philosophical enquiry into conflict, fear/anger, and the need for and possibility of looking/listening as *pure sensation*, without the past images, the 'known'. The discerning see that his accent is always on that which lies beyond words and concepts. The *Talks*, which has a good bit of dialogue, is simply brilliant for his analysis and probing of Mind and its conditioning. But then there is the danger of this merely leaving the pseudo-intellectual in a plateau of false self-assuredness and disdain of or blindness to other valid approaches. After all words are mere symbols and K's use of language to point to that which lies beyond language, is what *sagunopasana*, worship or approach through images, is all about. Every world teacher must needs carry his own cross; the lesser followers of the teaching are apt to merrily overlook K's tremendous understatement of the need for sincere, silent practice.

A lovely book with Krishnamurti at his very best.

— Marlis Hibschenberger.

**J. KRISHNAMURTI AND SANT KABIR:** by Rohit & Shridevi Mehta. Pub: Motilal Banarsidas, New Delhi 110 007. pp.127, Rs.85/Rs.135 (pb/hb)

Rohit Mehta is a well known speaker-author whose insights into spirituality are much appreciated. He has the virtue of revealing but not devaluing the teachings of Theosophy, Sri Aurobindo and J. Krishnamurti. The book under review has been co-authored by his wife Shridevi who has a longstanding interest in Kabir. The style of the book is more akin to speech rather than the written word, and it is presumed the manuscript was based on a series of talks, which is all for the best since RM has the gift of conveying through simple, direct, linked flow of language, thoughts that trigger awakening in the reader.

Their 'Study in Depth' is not an analytic comparison that is self-contained, but rather the reverse. Their study is a door to insight and not a collection of fossilised thought. One puts the book down feeling lighter and more open to life with all its mysteries. This is no mean achievement and the Mehtas are to be congratulated for the insights they have intelligently shared.

Unfortunately the book in its present format leaves much to be desired. For a book which will obviously sell the print is far too small. The editorial work is shoddy, especially in the first chapters. There are numerous grammatical and spelling errors. In places arguments need to be tightened as there is a tendency to be repetitive. There is at least one simple factual error and the Bibliography entitled *References* is so sloppy it is inexcusable. On top of this, there are no indications in the text as to where the many quotes of JK are from. Let us hope in the second edition these mistakes can be rectified because

the book is a valuable study well worth the effort to buy and read.

— Quilkey

**FOR THOSE WITH LITTLE DUST:** Selected Writings of Arthur Osborne. Pub: Ramana Publications, P.O. Box 1326, Sarasota, Florida 34230 USA; (also at Sri Ramanasramam, 606 603, India) pp.212, \$12.95

This reviewer, having read most of the important literature relating to Sri Ramana Maharshi, including Osborne's earlier treatises on the life and teachings of the Master, was rather sceptical that this new volume could shed further light on these subjects. So upon its reading, he was pleasantly surprised for being proved wrong in this respect. The Introduction, for example, is about the clearest summary of Bhagavan's teaching that I have seen anywhere. The work consists of articles and editorials written by Osborne for *The Mountain Path*, the journal which he started in 1964. It ranges over a wide spectrum of aspects of Ramana's teaching and, more generally, deals with the spiritual quest and the most common questions that arise in this connection. The author was highly erudite with a marvellous capacity of communicating the fundamentally inexpressible and explaining the most subtle and elusive aspects of spirituality in a lucid yet conversational manner. In this connection, one is reminded of the late Alan Watts.

The unusual title of the book is derived from an alleged saying of the Buddha. After attaining enlightenment, the Buddha's first impulse was to abide in the effulgence of Bliss without going forth to convey the incommunicable to mankind. Then he reflected, "Some there are who are clear-sighted and do not need my teachings, and some whose eyes are clouded with dust who will not heed it though given, but between these two there are also some with but *little dust* in their eyes, who can be helped to see; and for the sake of these I will go back among mankind and teach."

The contents of this work comprise such subjects as the method of *vichara* (the inquiry "Who Am I?"), alternative spiritual approaches (*Bhakti*, the various Yogic paths, Tantrism, Hermeticism, etc.), and the hidden meanings in the esoteric currents of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and also literature and poetry. In his efforts to clarify these matters, Osborne is always highly resourceful, and some of his explanations are truly beautiful.

In several chapters of the book, the author provides convincing explanations as to why progress of the *sadhaka* ever goes in "alternative waves of expansion and contraction" — that is, progressing and backsliding — something that few other writers have been able to do successfully. He writes: "What has always proved fascinating in paths of the tantric, as of the yogic variety is that they develop higher powers and perceptions in the aspirant during the course of his quest instead of leaving them to flow through spontaneously on its completion. They carry on the tasks of demolition and building simultaneously. The very path

combines the two processes of contraction and expansion — squeezing the ego until it is small enough to pass through the eye of a needle and expanding the mind to infinite pure intelligence. But on an *Advaitic* path there is very little expansion until the contraction is completed." It may be noted how *en passant* Osborne refers to a well known and puzzling saying by Christ and provides his own ingeniously novel interpretation of it.

This volume, Ramana Publications' first venture into book production, is tastefully put together and well produced. For those with little dust, the work is highly recommended.

— Robert Powell

**TEACHINGS OF SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI:** An anthology. Tr. and comm. by A.R. Natarajan. Pub: Affl. East West Press, Madras 600 010. pp.174, Rs.50

In this anthology three important works of Sri Ramana are included: *Upadesa Saram*, *Sat Darshanam*, and Selections from *Ramana Gita*. The Maharshi did not come to teach any philosophy. He is a self-realised soul, not a builder of metaphysical system. He brought into the open the truth that he realised in the depths of being. His teachings reflect the Vedantic path of self-knowledge and his original works and translations of classics all flow from the fundamental question he put to himself "Who Am I?". This query if enquired into properly and ceaselessly, has the capacity to resolve everything including itself into the dawn of self-realisation. This exalted egoless state personified in Ramana is extolled in the scriptures as the highest experience of non-duality, and referred to variously as *Sahaja Sthiti*, *Jivan Mukti*, *Sthita Prajna*, *Trigunatatita* etc. In Sri Maharshi we have the contemporary example of one who, though appearing in human body and very human, was not in the least bound by these coils. He taught and transformed many, including learned scholars, through Silence.

Sri A.R. Natarajan is the author of many books on the teachings of Ramana and deserves congratulations for this scholarly anthology.

— Prof. K.S. Ramakrishna Rao

**THE YOGA OF HERBS:** by Dr. David Frawley and Dr. Vasant Lad. Pub: Lotus Press, Santa Fe, 87502-6265, USA. pp.188+61, \$11.95.

**AYURVEDIC HEALING:** by Dr. David Frawley. Pub: Passage Press, Utah 84121-21713, USA. pp.346+23, No Price.

The books "Ayurvedic Healing" and "Yoga of Herbs" make in-depth study of the principles of Ayurveda and of Ayurvedic therapy, which are presented to the reader in an easily understandable and assimilable form. Dr. Frawley has emphasised the essence of Ayurveda in each of these chapters without in any way trying to modernise the knowledge or give explanations to satisfy a western-

educated intellect. The approach to understanding Ayurvedic healing and therapy by herbs has to be holistic, realising that humans, other living beings, the earth and the universe are all interdependent parts of an integrated whole. At present there is ignorance about the principles of Ayurveda and lack of appreciation of the value of Ayurvedic therapy amongst the Western educated doctors in India. This ignorance works to the disadvantage of the patients who have to be advised as to the best treatment possible after analysing the available methods. Hence a study of "Ayurvedic Healing" must be made compulsory for all the modern medical graduates in India so that they will understand what Ayurveda means and also its relevance to the present day. Convenient indexes are given at the end of the book for easy reference.

The term "Yoga of Herbs" has been used for the other book, as has been applied to the chapters of the Bhagavad Gita. In the modern world when sophisticated modern therapy has severe side effects and also is often misused, an understanding of treatment by herbs becomes invaluable. After presenting the background of Ayurvedic principles the energetics of herbs is discussed from the Ayurvedic view point of Rasa, Virya, etc. The herbs have been classified under different headings pertaining to their effect on the body; notes are given on the different methods of herbal preparation. This book by Frawley and Lad is a valuable addition to Ayurveda and Herbal medicine.

These two books can also be of great use as text books for the Schools of Ayurveda and kept in the libraries of all medical colleges and pharmacology departments for ready referral.

— Dr. B. Ramamurthi

FROM THE RIVER OF HEAVEN - Hindu and Vedic Knowledge for the Modern Age: by David Frawley.  
Pub: Passage Press, Utah 84121-21713, USA.  
pp.180, \$12.95.

It is a delight to review this book written by Dr. David Frawley who is a Vedaachaarya. The quintessence of Vedic knowledge and Sanaathana Dharma are presented in a most inspiring fashion in this eminently readable book. Dr. Frawley presents the relevance of Vedic knowledge in the modern days, and discusses the inner and eternal significance of Sanaathana Dharma. The book covers Ayurveda, Vedic Astrology, Vedic Social Sciences, Vedic Cosmology and Yoga. Every chapter gives a panoramic view of the eternal wisdom that has been handed to us by our ancients. The brilliant presentation inspires in the reader a wonderful feeling of taking part in a grand experience of ancient wisdom. What a beautiful way of presenting the value of Sanaathana Dharma: 'The eternal is the universal and it is through discovering it and enshrining it again within us that our journey proceeds'.

Though primarily meant for a Western audience this book has great relevance to Indian intellectuals and should be possessed and read by all Indians irrespective of their

religious background. Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Jains and Hindus alike will be greatly benefited by a deep understanding of ancient Vedic wisdom, presented in a lucid and inspiring style. Indians need re-education in their own culture and this book is most welcome and appropriate. I would recommend this book to every educational institution and to every household in the country. The book must be printed in India as a cheap Edition and translated into major Indian languages.

— Dr. B. Ramamurthi

SATYAJIT RAY: The Inner Eye: by Andrew Robinson.  
Pub: Rupa & Co; distr. by Affiliated East West Press,  
Madras 600 010. pp.412, Rs.75.

Satyajit Ray is a man of integrity. That one quality more than justifies an appreciation of the book under review. Even though his work is unique for its absorption in the Bengali milieu, his art transcends cultural boundaries. His insight into human nature is so clear and precise it speaks to all whose eyes are attuned to the deeper aspects of the human psyche.

The author has done a marvellous job in skilfully weaving together Ray's life-story, his film oeuvre in its conception, the actual production of it and the response by the public. What immediately strikes a reader is the distinct capacity (call it greatness) of a dedicated person, who though in the midst of the chaotic business of making a film, has his eye upon the ultimate, being evolved through the complex interplay of actors, script, technicians and the various hazards of the trade viz., funds, power-failures, variable weather and time-consuming searches for the right location or props.

Ray came from an illustrious family of writers and illustrators. Both his grandfather and father were intimately associated with Tagore. His father, who died young, created a nonsense world reminiscent of Carroll or Lear, unique in Bengali literature. Ray began his career in Calcutta as a commercial advertising designer and artist. In 1950 after seeing De Sica's 'Bicycle Thieves' he was determined to be a film maker.

The epic undertaking involved in making 'Pather Panchali' (Song of the Little Road) from 1950 to 1955 is an extraordinary story of talent, luck and perseverance. It made Ray's career. Ever since, in regular succession, he has given us deeply moving insights into human nature. His films rely usually upon simple plots and in their rhythm there is a slow, profound unfolding. Ray is chiefly concerned with how a person responds to a challenge from an uncontrollable source. His is the palette of a superb artist presenting in deft strokes and subtle shades the soft nuances of the individual.

If this admirable book stimulates you to see his films its function has been achieved.

— Quilkey

**WISDOM BLISS & COMMON SENSE:** by Darshani Deane. Pub: The Theosophical Pub. House (QUEST Books), Wheaton, USA. pp.229, \$8.50.

The author had in her dedicated, unrelenting quest for truth experienced life in many hues and dimensions. As a prolific traveller and professional musician she has received a rare breath of experience and depth of understanding. Though proficient in many spiritual traditions (Vedanta, Reja Yoga, Vipassana, Gurdjieffian) she is disarmingly simple in presentation: a sign of true integration in her personal search. Her principal mentor is Swami Krishnananda of Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh.

The book is divided into short chapters which cover a gamut of challenges which would inevitably confront a seeker. The direct and practical approach reveals a wealth of knowledge in the author's response to a particular difficulty. The opening section covers the obstacles, apparent or otherwise, a person needs face: anger, fear, guilt, jealousy, judgement, pride, suffering. The second section explains the mechanics of walking the Path: choosing a path, grace, love, mantra, meditation, renunciation etc. Each chapter is centered around a human encounter the author had with an individual whose particular problem or outlook required clarification.

Here is an example of the author's pertinent reply to one who experiences impatience amidst her demanding duties as a mother: "Having meditated you know that when no words arise in your mind, the mind becomes still and you experience peace. Words carry power. When words arise in your mind, powerful images rise along with them. You identify with the images. That identification evokes pleasure or pain. When we recognise this phenomenon for what it is, we cannot help but be fascinated by it: through the power of words alone, we create our inner world... we can never change the world. All we can do is change our reactions to it."

This worthy book has the capacity to give wise counsel for those who care for the practice of meditation and all its implications in this world we live in.

— *Quilkey*

**COMING TO OUR SENSES:** by Morris Berman. Pub: Unwin Hyman/Harper Collins Ltd., London W6&JB. pp.344+80. £8.99.

What immediately strikes the reader is the density of thought. Packed with stimulating ideas, crowded elaborations, swarms of quotes backed up by a bevy of proficient references, it is a bookish book. The blurb on the inside jacket quotes eminent persons who eulogise the skill of the writer and the arguments he presents. It is all very engaging and yet, coming to grips with the actual theme of the enterprise is to be caught in a miasma of effects lacking depth of true insight.

The book is an elaborate attempt to provide an answer (read: explanation) why there is a seeming void in us; a

hollowness that never can be fulfilled whatever our frantic efforts to ignore or explain away. The author presents this void as an emptiness, a negativity which we attempt to fill with distractions (work/ambitions; drugs/pleasures) because we are not grounded in our body which for the author is the litmus-test of reality. "The Self is tied to the body until death, it gets elaborated in such a way as to take a view point on the body, have a conception of it. It is here that our problems begin." Indeed. For the author, we are the body.

Aside from the generally questionable psychological and quasi-metaphysical presentation there are two interesting historical chapters on the relation between the heretical Cathars and Troubadours in 12-13th Century France, and the rise of Nazism with its pseudo-gnostic ideas. But in the end one is left strangely exhausted by the voluminous arguments and tortuous paths the author treads. He parades a tremendous amount of knowledge; in the end we are no wiser. The book fails to catch fire, soggy with a deluge of words.

— *Quilkey*

**RADHAKRISHNAN - A biography:** by Sarvepalli Gopal. Pub: Unwin Hyman, Harper Collins Pub., London W6 &JB. pp.384+25, No Price.

A committed historian of Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. S. Gopal brings out yet another classic of a biography of a 'great universal man', his own father, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. It is a classic, for the one whose story it is, is of such dimensions by attainments and achievement.

For Radhakrishnan Indian civilization is the concretised form of her philosophy. His 'philosophy of religion' viewed Religion as an eternal movement towards a never brimming, all absorbing total perfection. It rendered mandatory an interest in men and events around him, both regional and global. Thus we find him an active, creative and constructive educationist, philosopher and statesman.

In taking the reader through Radhakrishnan's ascent from his birth in an obscure village in Andhra to the giddy heights of India's Presidency in the Rashtrapathi Bhavan, Dr. Gopal has made the biography the history of India's quest for her cultural and political identity both on the eve of and during the early two decades of her independence. It is sad that Cheiro's forecast should prove true that R would before his death lose his mind. His return to Madras in 1967 after five hectic years as President left him lonely in mind and spirit. A stroke in end 1968, and then a succession of minor strokes and a fall in 1973 that broke his hip, lost him his mental faculties and arrested his physical movements. Thus he lingered under shadow of death for seven years long and slow until the early hours of April 17, 1975.

In fulfilling his filial obligations perhaps, Dr. Gopal dwells needlessly on the unsavoury parentage and carnal carryings-on of his father. When Radhakrishnan allowed

himself to be persuaded to accept the Vice-Presidency a second time, Gopal suspected his father's secret desire for power. When the son refers to these weaknesses of that great one, one may suspect Dr. Gopal of labouring under an inordinate desire to pass for an objective historian. But I believe the parameters for a biography and an autobiography are and should be different. Very relevant in an autobiography of either Radhakrishnan or of Gopal himself, in a biography these details could in better taste be omitted.

— Dr. O. Ramachandra Kaundinya

**NICHIREN SHOSU BUDDHISM** — An Introduction: by Richard Causton. Pub: Rider & Co., London WC2N 4NW. pp.299, £4.95.

Nichiren Shosu Buddhism is an orthodox sect of Nichiren Buddhism of Japan. It regards Nichiren Daishonin as its founder and Nikko Shonin as his immediate successor. Its head temple is Taiseki-ji in Shizuoka prefecture. Nichiren Shosu Buddhism upholds the self and its objective world as essentially one. The individual attaining Buddhahood simultaneously transforms his environment into the Buddha-land. In contrast to other Nichiren sects which regard Shakyamuni as the object of worship and Nichiren Daishonin as a great Bodhisattva, *Nichiren Shosu* reverses the Daishonin as the embodiment of the Buddha appearing in the latter day of the Law.

Not conforming to a specific life-style, this sect has attracted millions of adherents around the world in recent years. Its message is simply that those who commit themselves in faith, study and practice will achieve their goals and be moved to dedicate themselves to wider cause of human happiness, world peace and environmental harmony. Richard Causton, chairman of this sect in U.K., explains its teaching and practice, sets it into its international and historical perspective and gives examples of how individuals and their families have overcome their problems and begun to reveal their full potential.

What fascinated the reviewer is the clear way this sect seems to ally spiritual growth with everyday life. This book is worth reading and preserving.

— Prof. K.S. Ramakrishna Rao

**LONGING FOR DARKNESS: Tara and the Black Madonna**: by China Galland. Pub: Random/Century Hutchinson, London SW1V 2SA. pp.392, £16.99 hb.

The perennial quest for wholeness which has become such a key issue since the 1960s, is echoed in this interesting book by China Galland. A personal odyssey stretching over ten years took her around the world in search of both physical and mental healing. Eventually she was to realise that her ailments were at their root due to a spiritual imbalance within herself. Reacting strongly to the patriarchal strictures of her Catholic upbringing, she

searched both inwardly and through meeting various spiritual teachers to find the 'female face of God'.

Central to her story is a critique of the concept that darkness is necessarily negative. In fact, throughout history "the womb-like nature of darkness" has commonly been associated with healing and redemption. Further she explores and comes to accept the Buddhist idea that "there is no separate, independent self, only the great connectedness of all being." Another intersection with the teaching of Ramana Maharshi is her realisation that the sacred is a dimension of everyday life and not just for monks. Spiritual practice whether married or not, is possible for everybody.

The pilgrimage that she undertakes leads her through Zen Buddhism, to Tara, the female Buddha in the Tibetan tradition, to Durga and Kali, to the Black Madonna of Christianity and to the present Dalai Lama. Symbolically the ancient story of Durga, the warrior queen called upon to defeat the male demon Mahisa, and to restore the cosmic balance, which the author mentions, is a poignant parable for our times. In a world where the masculine has run amok with the degradation of nature, and of a technology that exploits and dehumanises, the philosophy of the East and of the feminine, as expounded in this book will increasingly have an important part to play in healing our troubled planet.

For all concerned about such issues this is a thought provoking book.

— Michael Muirhead

**THE EIGHT IMMORTALS OF TAOISM**: ed. Kwok Man Ho and Joanne O'Brien. Pub: Rider & Co. London SW1V 2SA. pp.156, £5.99.

The eight immortals amble amicably through the stories. Their immortality, superhuman powers and some human weaknesses remind us of the gods in Indian mythology. However, they live for the most part on earth helping the earth dwellers. Quite earthy themselves, these eight immortals are very human, truly interesting and often lovable. One says 'often' lovable because on rare occasions some of the immortals can be downright obnoxious like Lu Tung Pin when his petty pride leads him to nearly destroy an entire village. But then, they do not claim transcendence over weakness, though they do strive to keep a check on anger, pride and desire, and are, for the most part, victors in the battle. Some of the stories are touching for their simplicity and nobility, others teach a lesson in morality, still others are purely amusing. The stories carry the distinct flavour of Chinese values and life of the 6th to 12th centuries A.D. Yet they are relevant at all times so long as there is laughter and seriousness and poverty and oppression, so long as there is earnest striving and crooked corruption, so long as good and bad, joy and sorrow, health and illness are interwoven in the fabric of life. An eminently readable book with an equally interesting and informative introduction.

— Dr. Sarada Natarajan

SELF and NON-SELF: The Drg Drsya Viveka: by Raphael. Pub: Kegan Paul International, London WC1 3SW, pp.69+29, No Price.

The above under review is an extensive commentary by Raphael on the forty-six sutras of *Drgdrsyaiveka* attributed to Samkara, a work which is an essential introduction to Advaita Vedanta. In fact the first sutra in itself forms the introduction to the 'problem', the process of resolution, and the last word in Advaita. *Self and Non-Self* examines a fundamental philosophical problem, that of subject and object. Drg Drsya Viveka is the rational and discriminative method of separating the observer *drk*, from the object *drsya*, the self from the non-self, the spectator from the spectacle.

Raphael's commentary remains faithful to tradition and will be of use in various ways to students and scholars of Vedanta at different stages. The parallels drawn in the commentary with Plotinus, St. Augustine and other Western thinkers add to the value of this book. Scholars will welcome this book with its profuse Bibliography based on the work of Prof. Marie Piantelli.

— Prof. K.S. Ramakrishna Rao

MODERN CIVILIZATION - A Crisis of Fragmentation; by S.C. Malik. Pub: Abhinav Publications, E-37, Hauz Khas, New Delhi 110 006. pp.182, Rs.150.

Even though the problems facing contemporary society seemingly originated in some of the revolutionary findings of science, the author delves deeper into the crisis, researching for the lost harmony and considers the various intellectual, artistic and scientific probes to rediscover one's place in the scheme of things. Prof. Malik offers daringly new solutions to the problem of meaninglessness, solutions that affirm while they redefine both modern science and traditional values of civilisation. He delves deep into the epistemological cum ontological causation of the emergency confronting the being and becoming of man and provokes the thoughtful reader to a serious engagement with his or her self by his novel way of thinking.

— Prof. K.S. Ramakrishna Rao

INDIA: A Million Mutinies Now: by V.S. Naipaul. Pub: Rupa & Co. Distr. by Affil. East-West Press, Madras 600 010. pp.521, Rs.250.

Naipaul, a Trinidadian by original nationality, now a well loved writer and British national, writes with the ease, the grace, the facility of diction of one born to the language, English. His earliest visit to India in search of his family origins, yielded a book shot through with the deepest pessimism, entitled *An Area of Darkness*. Later still came *India: A Wounded Civilization*. This, his third work on India is, while extremely well written and characteristically perceptive, in tone and tenor, is 'neutral'. It is

not a prodigal son's narrative, as it might seem to some, but that of a shrewd observer who can work the miracle of revealing self-portraiture of many of the trouble makers, the mutineers in the making, of which independent India seems to have more than its fair share, or at any rate more than is good for the health of India as a Nation. Shivsena leaders, Punjab secessionist terrorists, Dravida Kazhagam rebels against Hindu society and Dharma—Naipaul has met representative specimens of these and many other groups and made them speak 'frankly' if not always very truthfully about the India that they are bent on disintegrating and destroying with all their might. It is a depressing sign of our times that Naipaul felt like visiting these specimens, these mini-mutineers straggling for the prizes of leadership which include wealth, jobs for friends and relatives, and a great deal of 'influence'. These specimens are indeed as much part of India as the drains and the wide open-space lavatories Naipaul saw on both sides of the Railway line when he first visited here and wrote *The Area of Darkness*. What distresses one is that Naipaul thinks he is helping us to understand the problems facing India by his vivid description of his meetings with the odd specimens that figure in this narrative.

The book is marked by a vivacity of narration and by a most remarkable capacity to evoke telling revelations from the busy nobodies that he has met. One wonders however, whether the book is a service to the public, though it may enrich its author, thanks to the high price at which it is being sold and the fantastic appetite for gossip of the average 'lover' of books.

— Prof. S. Ramaswamy

SAI BABA THE MASTER: by Acharya E. Bharadwaja. Pub: Sree Guru Dev Paduka Publications, Lawyerpet Extn., A.P. 523002. pp.369+23, Rs.40.

In approximately 1854 in the village of Shirdi in Maharashtra state, a youth of about sixteen who was unknown to the local inhabitants, was seen seated under a neem tree on the outskirts of the village. No one knew where he came from or his parentage, but his radiant appearance and severe spiritual practices attracted the attention of the villagers and thus began the enigmatic life of Sai Baba of Shirdi, who was to live for the next sixty years in Shirdi until his mahasamadhi in 1918.

Written in an anecdotal style similar to Hemadpant's *Sri Sai Satcharitra*, Bharadwaja relates many incidents from the life of this remarkable saint who affected Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians alike by his unorthodox and frequently eccentric ways.

The author was drawn to Sai Baba in 1955 as a result of personal tragedy and this book is a testament to the fact that despite the demise of the physical body a great saint continues to reach across time and space to guide sincere spiritual aspirants towards spiritual understanding and knowledge. As Sai Baba of Shirdi said, "wherever you are,

here or beyond the seven seas, I will ever be with you to guard and protect you."

Many readers will receive renewed encouragement for spiritual endeavours from the inspiration engendered by this book.

— Erica Bader

BABA SATYA SAI: Part II: by Ra. Ganapati. Pub: Divya Vidya Trust, 8, Seventh Main Road, Madras 600 028. pp.497, Rs.50.

Avatara is *avatarana*, descent, the grossification and incarnation of Akasa as and into Earth. It is also the bridge, the guru, goading from without, the earth-bound Manava to go within and merge in Madhava, the Heart-Space, called Self.

There are Avatars and Avatars. As Swami (Sri Sai Baba, as he is fondly referred to) himself says, "I am God, but so are you! Only you are not aware of it!" Even among those who know they are God who may rightly be called Avatars, there is such a 'range'! At one 'end' is the manifestation which is utterly human; the Avatar of such simplicity and ordinariness personified that He stands out. *Eesaavaasyam idam sarvam*, the Lord is all there is, in and around us. Yet we fail to notice the Silent Presence in the miracles that visit us every moment. So the first level of descent into man's sensory world is that of Dakshinamurti, a young boy, all by Himself, anonymous and calm, collected and captivating, under the Banyan tree. Problems temporal and spiritual are dissolved for those that approach Him. In speech and action He gives no confirmation of His being in any way responsible for timely relief. Though appearing to many as the embodiment of the six Lordly Qualities, He makes no promise of protection, no announcement of an advent, no declaration of a world to be transformed. When you look at Him with physical eyes, the only compromise He makes is to look at you, and in that look conquers you joyously for ever. Seated formless He looks (out?) through your eyes to meet His own gaze. Such near direct experience is vouchsafed for those that seek the subtle, having found the gross a mere shadow. Bhagavan Sri Ramana is a recent instance of this 'descent'.

Halfway 'down' this Avataric range is a Bhagavan Ramakrishna who traverses, for all sadhakas to see, the roads, of Karma, Bhakti and Jnana, the paths leading to Allah, to Christ and Vishnu, and to Siva, the three ancient highways to God, and declares them all to be valid and yielding victory to those dedicated.

At the other 'end' of the range one finds the Sai Avatar declaring, "I do not belong to any place; I am not attached to any name. I have no 'mine' or 'thine'. I answer whatever the name you use. For me the world is something afar, apart. I act and move only for the sake of mankind. No one can comprehend my glory, Mahima, whoever he is, whatever his method of enquiry, however

long his attempt. I have a 'Task': to foster all mankind and ensure for all lives full of Ananda. I have a 'Vow': to lead all who stray away from the straight path again into goodness. I am attached to a 'Work' that I love: to remove the sufferings of the poor and grant them what they lack. I rescue all who are devoted to me aright: that is, they have to treat joy and grief, gain and loss, with equal mind... I will not give up my mission, nor my determination. I know I will carry them out; I treat the honour and dishonour, the fame and blame that may be the consequence with equanimity. Internally I am unconcerned." (p.17)

The Avataric 'range' has in common the following: no evidence of any spiritual evolution for the Avatar, all encompassing Prema, Dharma Samsthapana on a large scale, Bhakta Rakshana on individual basis, and display of human frailties now and then. So, at one 'end' the Avatar comes declaring purpose and achieves it. At the other 'end' it comes without declared purpose, but the effect is there for all to see; the presence of Sankalpa has to be inferred. Though Sri Ramana ascribed all events to prarabdha, one cannot ascribe His own birth in mortal frame to prarabdha! The very first time the puzzle of death, of 'I', occurred to him, we have it on His own word that He 'looked' at it, and it was all over *in a trice*. The effortless, instantaneous recognition, with no sadhana before or after, shows that there was no reason for His embodiment, His materialising a body, for all to see and relate to, if it were not out of His Silent Sankalpa, however denied! (*Kaarana udbhavaaya, jagat hita avataaraaya* says the Ashtottara blessed by Bhagavan Himself!)

The Avataric 'range' is then the range of *Vaak* speech, from *paraa vaak* unvoiced, to *vaikhari* fully voiced. While silence can produce little controversy, the 'other end' with all the pomp and power manifested down to earth, the grossest element, stirs up, along with devotion, much decrying and debate. But all for the ultimate good, which is the Avatar's Sankalpa! The author says: "The unassailable claims of Sai Baba to avatarhood, lies in the immense power He has concretely shown in attracting millions of wayward people to the path of Dharma, and in the unstinted protective Grace His worldwide devotees receive in temporal and spiritual spheres. Even if crores may be sinking in adharma and wallowing in atheism how do you account for this single entity turning millions among them to the path of dharma and divine Grace, in spite of the gravely adverse circumstances?"

The book under review is the belated second edition of the second part of the learned author's translation of his original *Swami* which appeared in Tamil. The MP, October 1987 carries a review of the first part. The wait has been worthwhile, for the author has in this edition added extensive material (100 pages) as fourth chapter. In the first four chapters he subjects the Avatar to an x-ray analysis; a feast of scholarly surgery and a bold probe by a devotee of Truth into holy waters, but keeping, between the banks of heart and head, perfect balance. He takes on many ticklish questions about recorded instances of the omnipotence and omniscience of the Avatar being latent and not patent. Instances where the Avatar misquotes or

makes faulty statements, or where circumstances shaped themselves in ways other than declared Will: the very instances which the 'ultra-devotee' would push under the carpet, or pretend did not exist at all in his anxiety to 'protect' the Avatar! While some instances could be explained as *kshobana* (deliberate confounding of the devotee as an act of Grace), the author rightly concludes that others are best seen as revealing the error-prone human side of the Avatar which we see Him committing in public with least self-consciousness, endearing Himself to all. Sri Ramakrishna says (p.134): "Jewels cannot be made out of pure gold. Only when a little copper is alloyed it lends itself for jewel-making." The sage of Kanchi says (p.137): "Just as an Avatar allows natural movements of the human body, so also it allows natural movements of the human mind to a certain extent... it is at such times that an Avatar weeps, scolds, fails, forgets etc. Yet this is contained within limits. Its mind cannot make adharmic movements: it won't think and act unrighteously. Because the very purpose of Avatar is dharmic." Swami himself clarifies (p.150): "An aeroplane has to land on earth for passengers to board. At the time of landing it does not fly, but only moves on tyres on the runway. To be in your midst, and gather you and lift you up, this Sai plane has got wheels and tyres after the fashion of humans.... I must pay the taxes for having taken the physical body by way of certain human features and limitations..... All things *without* are subject to the limitations of time and space. My outer form is no exception. So the outer darshan is insufficient and purposely so..." The popular question of why an omnipotent Avatar should not will an instantaneous world-transformation, is also convincingly answered in an extensive quote from the Kanchi Acharya.

The latter half of the book is an eleven-course feast of tasting Swami as the adept of Jnana, Karma, Prema, Dharma, Santa, Yoga, and as the embodiment of Vedic, Agamic, Puranic and Sastric knowledge. One sees the Avatar setting an example for modern Man. Today, reckless Advertisement keeps the fire of 'want' raging, and the enticement of the Credit Card keeps the consumer ever in a debt-trap and on the run. The reviewer finds in Sai Baba's 'advertisements' of His advent, the model of how advertising ought to be: it should be undiluted fact; it should deliver what it promises; and above all it should attract and goad the would-be consumer into eventual practice of simple-living, high thinking and concern for all life.

Ra. Ganapati deserves a doctorate for at least a few chapters of this *tour de force* of a book. The reviewer though quite undeserving, has like the author, basked in the purifying Grace of Bhagavan as Sri Ramana, the Kanchi Acharya, and Swami. One is well aware of the foolhardiness of the 'fish trying to measure the sky'. Yet the book welcomes the reader, like it did the author and reviewer, to journey like the self-luminous fire-fly to probe the Sun 'because It is there'! One glorious fate awaits all.

— J. Jayaraman

**DARSANAM:** A Quarterly Journal from the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram at:13, IV Cross Street, Madras 600 028. For private circulation only.

This is a new quarterly, with the February issue now available. The issues are to be thematic. The first Number is devoted to the theme of *Sri Nathamuni and Yoga Rahasya*. Yoga Rahasya is a unique text on Yoga received by Sri T. Krishnamacharya when he was but twelve years old, in a yogic trance, directly from Nathamuni of the 9th Century A.D. The text with translation and commentary is now being serialised. The other issues in 1991 will be: May: Physical Fitness, August: Mental Health, and November: Krishnamacharya Jayanthi Special.

— J. Jayaraman

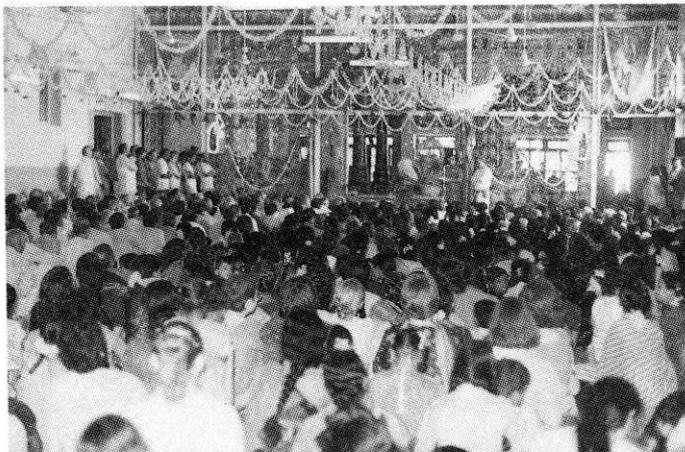
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## BOOKS RECEIVED

- GOSPEL OF SWAMI RAMDAS:** by Sw. Satchidananda. Pub: Anandashram, Kanhangad, 670531. pp.623, Rs.70. II edition. (Reviewed in MP July 1980)
- PAGAL HARNATH:** by Hargopal Sepuri. Pub: Kusuma Haranath Central Mission, Madras 600 059. pp.227, Rs.15.
- ANIMAL WELFARE & NATURE: Hindu Scriptural Perspectives:** by G. Naganathan. Pub: Theosophical Pub. Hse., Madras 600 020. pp.25, No Price.
- UTTARA GEETAA:** by Vedantam Lakshmana Sadguru. Pub: 21/156 Murugesan Compd., Cuddapah 516 001. pp.104, Rs.15.
- JEEVAMANI:** author & publisher as above. pp.72, Rs.10.
- PUSHING BORDERS TO NEW HORIZONS:** by M.P. John. Pub: author, 16 Rue de la Compagnie, Pondicherry 605 001. pp.113, Rs.20. *Brilliant essays from the poet-mystic, on Moral Life, Economy, Ecology etc.*
- ADVICE TO HOUSE-HOLDERS:** by Sw. Jyotirmayananda. Pub: YRF Publ., 6111, W., 74th Av., Florida 33143, USA. pp.180, \$12.95.
- MAJOR POETICAL UPANISHADS:** by Sw. Gabhirananda. Pub: R.K. Math, Purnattukara, Trichur 680 551, Kerala. pp.124+66, Rs.22.
- STOTRAMALA:** Poems of Poet Saints of Maharashtra: J.E. Abbot. Pub: Samata Books, 573 Anna Salai, Madras 600 006. pp.207, Rs.45.
- UNFORGETTABLE YEARS:** Memories of 29 old devotees of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi: Tr. & Ed. by A.R. Natarajan. Pub: RMCL, 40/41 II Cross, Lower Palace Orchards, B'lore 560 003. pp.167. Rs.30.
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# ASHRAM BULLETIN

## EVENTS AT THE ASHRAM

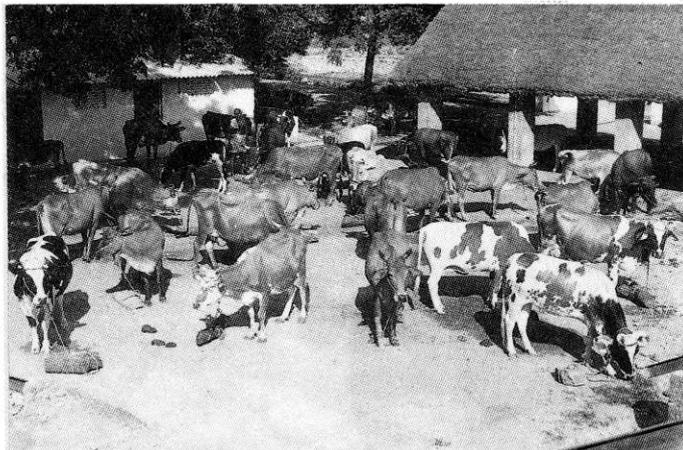


The year begins auspiciously with Sri Bhagavan's *Jayanti* (1.1.1991)

Ashram Cows getting ready for *Maattu Pongal* festival (15.1.1991)

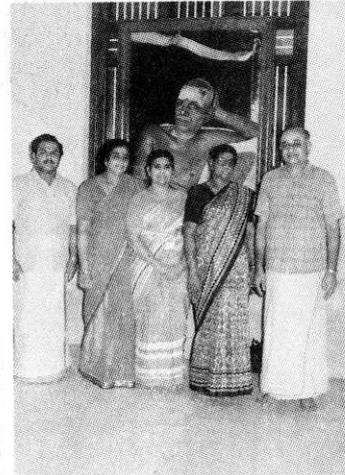


*Sri Vidya Havan* (22.3.1991)



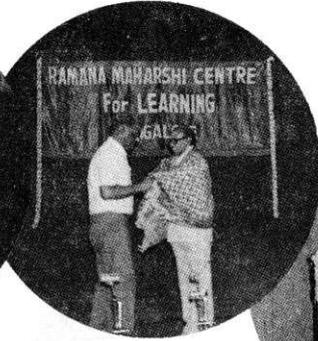
*Sri Sadhuram Swami* spent a few months at the Ashram and taught '*Tiruppugazh*' to devotees.

*Amruthavarshini* group headed by *Smt. Chakkubai* sang at Bhagavan's shrine.



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### SRI MURUGANAR'S BIRTH CENTENARY

Rich homage was paid to Sri Muruganar, the great poet-saint, in Bangalore on March 29. The Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning deserves congratulations for organising the day-long seminar so well.

Sri T.N. Venkataraman, President of Sri Ramanasramam, inaugurated the seminar by offering a bouquet to Sri Muruganar's portrait.

Smt. Kanakamma, H.Vaidyanathan, V.Chandramouli, Sadhuram Swamigal, T.K.Jayaraman, Smt. Padma Venkataraman, Dr. T.N. Pranatharhi Haran, V. Ganesan, S. Ramachandran and Kala Rangaswamy spoke.

The poet's songs in praise of his Master, Sri Ramana, were rendered into music, dance and drama.



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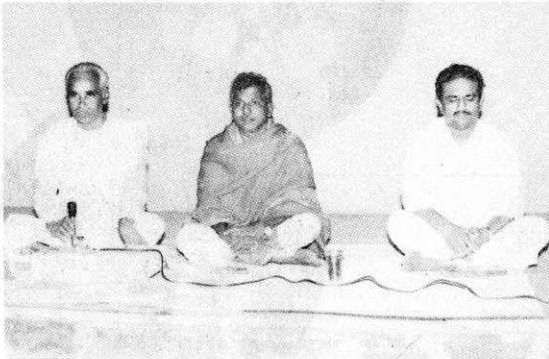
### EVENTS AT RAMANA KENDRAS



**Arunachala Ashrama, New York City:**  
Sri Bhagavan's *Jayanti* (1.1.1991)



**Ramana Maharshi Foundation, London:**  
Celebrating Sri Bhagavan's *Jayanti*.



*Jayanti* at Tadpatri: (31.12.90) (l to r) M/s. Y. Sreenivasa Rao, V.V. Brahmam and I. Subramanyam.



**Ramana Kendra, Delhi:**  
(l to r) Mr. Norola, Prof. M.L. Sondhi, Rev. Uchida.



**Sri Ramana Maharshi Kendra, Trivandrum:**  
Inaugurated by Sri Swami Sakrananda.



**Arunachala Deepotsavam at Sringavruksham:** Yearning devotees, listening to Sri Nanagaru (B.V.L.N. Raju - not in picture)

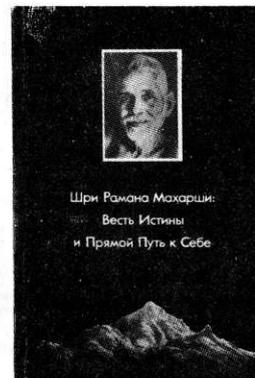


**Ramana Seminar at Bangalore:** Our Editor giving a talk on "What are we waiting for?"



300th '*Ramananjali*' at the Seminar

## SRI BHAGAVAN IN RUSSIA AND EASTERN EUROPE



Cover page of new  
Russian book

That "man does not live by bread alone" is a reality to the spiritually hungry in the USSR and Eastern Europe. Since the rise of *perestroika* and *glasnost* and the fall of the Iron Curtain, Sri Ramanasramam has been receiving an ever-increasing flow of letters from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, requesting books, photographs, assistance in *sadhana*, and answers to questions that have had for long remained unexpressed.

### Translations:

Translations are also proliferating apace. **OM (Oleg Mogilever)**, author of the serialised garland of sonnets, "Inquiry into the 'I' ", has together with Sri Ramanasramam, completed the first authorised edition of a selection of Sri Bhagavan's works in Russian, *The Message of Truth and the Direct Path to the Self*, including translations of *Maharshi's Gospel* and *Who am I?*. This was published by Sri Ramanasramam in Leningrad and released in April this year. The demand was so great that the first printing alone had to be increased from 1,00,000 to 5,00,000 copies.

After work on the book, Sri OM came to spend a month of intense *sadhana* at Sri Ramanasramam, his only purpose being to perfect his practice of self-enquiry and experience at first-hand the ever-abiding Presence of Sri Bhagavan in the place sanctified by His holy feet.

**Sri Jiri Vacek** of Czechoslovakia, **Ivan Ristic** of Zrenjanin and **Zoran Denic** of Belgrade, Yugoslavia are also at work with Sri Ramanasramam on authorised translations of Sri Bhagavan's works. These will be announced as soon as they are in print.

### New Ramana Kendras and Centres of Study:

#### USSR:

**Vladimir Afanasyev** has written to announce the creation of the Spiritual Life Centre, an officially registered organisation in Krasnodar, RSFSR. He himself has been asked to create and head its Department of Yoga and Indian Spirituality, which will investigate and teach the various Hindu ap-

proaches to enlightenment, including the path of Sri Ramana. His plans include public lectures, seminars, conferences and practical studies. These events are being advertised through the local media — TV, radio and press — in order to reach as many people as possible. Sri Afanasyev writes, "Spiritual knowledge will help a person to determine the meaning of life, true freedom and happiness, and find the Path to their achievement."

#### YUGOSLAVIA:

**Zrenjanin:** **Sri Ivan Ristic**, who spent six months at Sri Ramanasramam in 1989-90, returned to Zrenjanin and established *The Maha Yoga Society* there, with the 'Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi Adhyatma Kendra' at its centre. He is conducting a variety of courses to introduce beginners to the direct path of *Atma Vichara*. Students who have mastered the fundamentals and wish to perform serious *sadhana* are being trained, and a private *Sadha-nalayam* is being built this year. It is hoped that funds will be sufficient for a residential ashram and accommodation for visitors. In addition to his translation activities, Sri Ristic, who has taken the name of **Advaitananda**, is also engaged in leading regular *bhajans* and *sankirtans* with the help of transliterated texts. Bhagavan's *Jayanti*, *Aradhana* and day of arrival at Tiruvannamalai, together with monthly *puṇimās* (full moon), are among the cycle of festivals being celebrated at the new kendra.

**Belgrade:** A small Ramana Kendra is already quietly functioning in Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia, for over three years. In January, six of its members visited Sri Ramanasramam to pay their homage to the Guru's Feet, intensify their *sadhana*, and begin work on a translation of some of His works. Led by **Mukta (Zoran Denic)**, the group has studied a variety of spiritual traditions and is now firmly established in the path of self-enquiry as taught by Sri Ramana. Their plans include a condensed version of *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* and *Day by Day with Sri Bhagavan*, arranged according to subjects in order to provide an essential foundation for the deeper study of Ramana literature.

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MEMBERS OF RAMANA FOUNDATION, AMERICA (l to r) Matthew Greenblatt, Joan Greenblatt, Ramani, V. Ganesan, Robert Powell. (Top) Riaz Padamsee, Behroz Padamsee

### RAMANA MAHARSHI FOUNDATION OF AMERICA, INC.

A few dedicated devotees in the USA strongly felt that people unnecessarily run around in circles looking for a "living guru" when Sri Ramana's Presence and Guidance could not be more "alive". Sri Bhagavan blesses them. Spontaneously and effortlessly He brought RAMANA MAHARSHI FOUNDATION OF AMERICA to light, working through all as the wind in bamboo flutes! During his tour of the US, Sri V. Ganesan saw the imminent need for such a fresh look at the message of the Maharshi and encouraged the sponsors — Mrs. Joan and Mr. Matthew Greenblatt — to register a Foundation named after our Master.

On November 15, 1990, 'RAMANA MAHARSHI FOUNDATION OF AMERICA, INC.' was registered to "research, preserve and disseminate the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi". The founding members of the corporation are:

- Sri V. Ganesan, Sri Ramanasramam
- Mr. Matthew Greenblatt, Sarasota
- Mrs. Joan Greenblatt, Sarasota
- Mr. Roland Olson, Mt. Horeb
- Mr. Robert Powell, La Jolla

Sri V. Ganesan is its President.

Spacious land (to be acquired) in which trees, plants and birds abound, would form the nucleus for the Foundation. Inmates would be free to enrich their *sadhana*, under the direct influence of the "living Guru" — Sri Ramana. No teaching or discipline would be imposed on any. Sharing at all levels would be the criterion. Spontaneous action would be welcomed. Researching Maharshi's teaching, using modern technology, would be at the core of the Foundation's activity. Publishing books on Him in America would also follow.

Those who are interested in strengthening the Foundation with pragmatic suggestions are requested to contact:

Mr. Matthew Greenblatt,  
RAMANA MAHARSHI FOUNDATION OF AMERICA, INC.,  
2516, Valencia Drive, SARASOTA,  
Florida - 34239, USA. (Tele: 813-951-0431).

### SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI FOUNDATION, LONDON

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI FOUNDATION, LONDON, was founded to make Sri Maharshi's precious teaching available in the West. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan, Annie Elkins and Alan Jacobs, the Foundation was inaugurated on August 6, 1990, by Sri V. Ganesan, at the Indian Institute of Culture (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan) in London, with devotees attending from France, Germany, Holland, Italy.

The aims of the Foundation are:

1. To have the PRESENCE of Sri Ramana ("I am here, where can I go").
2. To promote *satsang* amongst devotees.
3. To conduct scientific research on His teachings.
4. To emphasise that Self-realisation is accessible to all, and that the Ramana Way is the easiest.
5. To assist earnest seekers in self-enquiry.

The Foundation's board of trustees includes:

Sri V. Ganesan	:	President
Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan	:	Executive Chairman
Ms. Annie Elkins	:	Secretary
Mr. Alan Jacobs	:	Adviser

Subscription is £12 per annum. Those who donate £50 or more become Fellows of the Foundation.

Letters, contributions, donations and enquiries should be made to:

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI FOUNDATION, LONDON,  
C/o Ms. Annie Elkins,  
Bunt Wills Foundation, Studio 'E',  
49, The Avenue, LONDON - NS6 7NR, England.

Devotees gather at the above address for *satsang* on the second Saturday of each month.

They bring out a "Newsletter" dedicated to Sri Bhagavan.

MEMBERS OF RAMANA FOUNDATION, LONDON (l to r) Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan, Annie Elkins, V. Ganesan and Alan Jacobs





Deepening Paali Thirtam (tank near Ashram) and waiting for the rains!



Seminar on Vallalaar Ramalinga Adigal at Tiruvannamalai: Sri T.N. Venkataraman, President, Sri Ramanasramam, inaugurates.



Ex-servicemen's Welfare function at Tiruvannamalai presided over by our Ashram President.

## THE ANNAMALAI REFORESTATION SOCIETY

Introduced to our readers in *The Mountain Path* (Aradhana 1990), The ARS is a registered society (Chief Patron: **Dr. M.S. Swaminathan**) of anyone who is devoted to *Arunachala* and committed to having a forest on the holy Hill once again. Though declared "Reserve Forest", the Hill is barren. Sustained afforestation is possible only with greater community commitment. To generate such awareness, the following steps were completed in 1990:

(a) Cleaning of desecrated south-western segment of the fifth prakara of the Arunachaleswara Temple. (b) Deepening its three wells and repair of water channels. (c) Design and development of a large garden including flowering shrubs and sacred trees. (d) Planting of 3000 saplings in the area around Virupaksha Cave (5 acres) and ensuring their protection.

The activities for 1991 include: (a) The WWF has made a grant to ARS for planting 4,000 indigenous, multiple-use saplings on the Hill this year. (b) Garden and nursery for hill-planting in fourth prakara of Arunachaleswara Temple. (c) Continuing attempts to move official machinery to stop the burning of the Hill every year. This, by itself would tremendously aid the regeneration of bio-mass on the Hill.

(d) Contact with local schools for one-day camps and formation of Eco-clubs.

## RAJGHAT GATHERING 1991, VARANASI

The Krishnamurti Foundation India is happy to announce that its Annual Public Gathering will be held this year at the Rajghat Education Centre in Varanasi from November 12 to 15, 1991.

The intention of the Gathering is to enable interested persons to come together as friends to share, discuss and investigate fundamental questions of life in the light of Krishnaji's Teachings.

The programme each day will commence with a chanting/silence session in the morning and will include video showings of Krishnaji's talks, invited talks, group discussions, evening walks and cultural programmes.

Boarding and Lodging (in school hostels) for the period of the gathering (4 days) will cost U.S. \$ 60 per person. For details please contact:

The Secretary,  
Rajghat Education Centre  
Krishnamurti Foundation India  
Rajghat Fort, Varanasi - 221 001,  
UP, India.

Statement about ownership and other particulars about THE MOUNTAIN PATH according to Form IV, Rule 8, Circular of the Registrar of Newspapers for India:

1. Place of Publication — Madras-18; 2. Periodicity of its Publication — Quarterly; 3. Printer's Name — T.V. Venkataraman; Nationality — Indian; Address — Karthik Printers, 12, Aranganathan Subway Road, Madras 600015; 4. Publisher's Name — T.N. Venkataraman; Nationality — Indian; Address — 552, Mount Road, Madras - 18; 5. Editor's name — V. Ganesan; Nationality — Indian; Address — Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai; 6. Name and Address of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than 1% of the total capital — SRI RAMANASRAMAM, Tiruvannamalai - 606 603.

I, T.N. Venkataraman, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: 31-3-91

Signature of the Publisher: (Sd) T.N. Venkataraman

**Obituary****Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje**

**Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje**, Princess of Devas, reached the Lotus Feet of her Master, Sri Ramana, on April, 25, 1991, in Madras. A scholar in traditional *sastras*, a linguist, an orator who kept the listening public in the thousands spell-bound, Smt. Raje was one of the rare fortunate resident-devotees who enjoyed the fatherly affection of Sri Bhagavan in the 40's. She was even nicknamed by some as the "Sakuntala of Sri Ramanasramam"! Her erudition was vast, as her devotion to the Master was deep and unshakable. Her association with saints, sages and scholars was a rare achievement in her life. Devotees of Sri Ramana have lost in her a dear sister totally surrendered to Bhavavan!

**Sri U.S. Chandavar**

**Sri U.S. Chandavar** was the founder-secretary of "Sri Ramana Seva Sangh", Kumta. His devotion and surrender to Sri Bhagavan were matchless. His services in the field of education in Karnataka was praiseworthy. He attained the Lotus Feet of his Master on August 8, 1990. Devotees of Sri Bhagavan will miss in him a pious-silent-guru-bhandu!

**Announcement**

By Sri Bhagavan's Grace, Sri Ramanasramam's official organ, *The Mountain Path*, is being published regularly with enriched contents. Though the four issues are brought out biannually in two volumes — *Aradhana* and *Jayanti* issues — the rising cost of paper, printing and postage is increasingly felt. This necessitates our decision to increase the subscription rates, as follows:

**In India:**

Annual Subscription	:	Rs. 30
Life Subscription	:	Rs. 500

**Abroad:**

Annual Subscription	:	£ 7.50 or \$ 15
Life Subscription	:	£ 125 or \$ 250.

(Airmail surcharge will continue to be £ 5 or \$ 10 per annum on all subscriptions).

We request devotees and readers to kindly cooperate with us in implementing this important change.

*The Mountain Path*,  
Sri Ramanasramam  
(1.6.1991)

T.N. Venkataraman  
*Publisher*

**FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS**

<b>SRI BHAGAVAN'S ARADHANA DAY</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>12.5.1991</b>
<b>MATRUBUTHESWARA MAHA PUJA</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>6.6.1991</b>
<b>GURUPOORNIMA (VYASA PUJA)</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>26.7.1991</b>
<b>KRISHNA JAYANTHI (GOKULASHTAMI)</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1.9.1991</b>
<b>DAY OF BHAGAVAN'S ADVENT TO ARUNACHALA</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1.9.1991</b>
<b>VINAYAKA CHATHURTHI</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>12.9.1991</b>
<b>NAVARATRI FESTIVAL (COMMENCES ON)</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>8.10.1991</b>
<b>SARASWATHI PUJA</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>17.10.1991</b>
<b>VIJAYADASAMI</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>18.10.1991</b>
<b>DEEPAVALI</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>5.11.1991</b>
<b>SKANDA SHASTI</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>12.11.1991</b>
<b>KARTHIGAI FESTIVAL (COMMENCES ON)</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>12.11.1991</b>
<b>KARTHIGAI DEEPAM</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>21.11.1991</b>
<b>SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTHI</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>23.12.1991</b>
<b>PONGAL</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>15.1.1992</b>
<b>CHINNASWAMIGAL ARADHANA</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>19.1.1992</b>
<b>MAHA SIVARATRI</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>2.3.1992</b>
<b>SRI VIDYA HAVAN</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>20.3.1992</b>
<b>TELOGU NEW YEARS DAY</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>4.4.1992</b>
<b>TAMIL NEW YEARS DAY</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>13.4.1992</b>

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