

The Bhagavad Gita:

An Evolving Loving Commentary



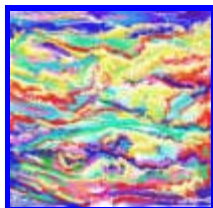
by V. S. Ferguson

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My reverence & deep respect for the Bhagavad Gita



The Bhagavad Gita is one of the greatest, most profound books ever written. Anyone who reads this ancient sacred text realizes that the Gita possesses a unique level of wisdom rarely expressed in our times.

It is my understanding that the consciousness in the Gita is that of the Dvapara Yuga, the cycle of time that precedes our current Kali Yuga, the Age of Conflict and Confusion. Therefore the ideas, circumstances, and characters in the Gita - which is an integral part of the great Indian epic, The Mahabharata - give us a glimpse into human potential, meaning what is possible and also what was perhaps normal before our consciousness became 'cooked-by-time' in the dense frequencies of the Kali Yuga.

My relationship with the Bhagavad Gita goes back to the 1960s and throughout my life I read the Bhagavad Gita and attempted to grasp its subtle meaning. Each reading of these powerful words always left me feeling somehow lifted, my consciousness purified. However, I did not truly understand. Still I knew an invaluable treasure lay within this book and I was not to be discouraged. I would stubbornly say, "Someday, I will understand this." I am now 60.

In the summer of 2004, I was reading the Chicago University Press J.A.B van Buitenen translation, The Bhagavad Gita in the Mahabharata. I recommend this translation as a first time read because it is very accessible, especially to all who have a western mindset. The forward written by Haven O'More rather shockingly states that J.A.B. van Buitenen's translation is "... Raw. It means without bullshit, without mystification." At first I felt this was a bit harsh for academia; but as I read numerous other translations, I realized that many are nothing more than various teachers bending Krishna's words to reflect their own belief systems or cults. With J.A.B. van Buitenen, the reader has a chance, without indoctrinating filters, to make his or her own beginning at understanding this profound text - which does have the power to enlighten.

I remember so well those hot summer days in 2004 reading on the screen-porch in the dappled shade of cedars, maples, and pine trees. Day after day I would listen with my heart to Krishna's words of wisdom to his friend Arjuna, and I would cry and cry and cry the sweetest tears. Tears come easily when you feel the presence of God. I felt as if I were being given the eyes-to-see and the ears-to-hear. Even now when I think of that time, tears can pool in my eyes and my heart is filled with joy and gratitude. Krishna is my guru!

It is in the spirit of a deeply sincere humility and out of a love that can never be described or expressed that I set out here to share with you my understanding of this remarkable and magnificent text. We do have India to thank for the safekeeping of the Bhagavad Gita in her sacred language Sanskrit. Eternal India is a boundless reservoir of wisdom, beauty, brilliance, and complexity. What a legacy she has kept protected throughout time for the rest of the world.

Before one can begin to understand the Bhagavad Gita, the Hindu concepts of *Purusha* and

Prakriti, and the 3 *gunas* - *raja*, *tamas* and *sattva* - must be assimilated. I will cover this topic separately and I highly recommend René Guenon's books 'Studies in Hinduism' and 'Man and His Becoming According to Vedanta' which are both in depth studies in basic metaphysics. Guenon is brilliant and your mind will be clearly expanded by anything he wrote. There are also some excellent books on the *gunas* in *Samkhya* from India, such as 'The Concept of *Apavarga* in *Samkhya* Philosophy' by Dr. K.P. Kesavan Nampoothiri.

My recent years have been solely devoted to reading the Sanskrit texts, to absorb and become these teachings, and to do that I have been a bit of a hermit. I will always cherish these tender reclusive years. However it was the arrival of the great Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/K.K. Nair, into my life that brought everything I had learned into clarity. Unfortunately his primary book on the Bhagavad Gita, 'The Gita for the Modern Man' is out of print and in spite of Herculean efforts, I have not been able to obtain a copy. But luckily for me, there is quite a good concentration of his thoughts on the Gita in two of his other books: 'The Betrayal of Krishna' and 'The Mahabharata, A Literary Study.'

I have written four articles on 'The Betrayal of Krishna' and praised Krishna Chaitanya/K.K. Nair properly to the high heavens, because it is a rare miracle to find a mind so clear, immense, and fine that it can encompass all knowledge east and west. The only comparable I can think of is Arthur Koestler, or perhaps Noam Chomsky. But our Indian scholar has the advantage of India and Sanskrit. Krishna Chaitanya/K.K. Nair has not only absorbed all the creative thoughts of the western world, but he also has an overview of the Sanskrit texts and the historical progression of Indian thought that will really knock your socks off!

In my own words and as simply as I can say it, Krishna Chaitanya/K.K. Nair's summing up of the Bhagavad Gita is this:

We all have God dwelling within our Heart. We can realize that God not only dwells within us, but within everything. God is ALL!

VASUDEVAH SARVAM ITI

Each of us has the opportunity to align our consciousness with the God within, or we can reject this 'partnership' and go our own way. This is the intriguing and somewhat mysterious freedom that God has given mankind.

If we choose to align with the God-within us, something wonderful happens: This realization generates within us as individuals, a deeper sense of connection and communion with others. (Bh.G. VI.31) This is not the instinctual bond of clan or tribe, but this is the product of our own earned enlightenment. Our inner illumination that God pervades All and the Knowledge that we are One with the universe, moves us to identify our own 'self' with the world and all creatures.

LOKA-SAMGRAHAM

This gives Karma Yoga a new meaning. Empowered by real Knowledge (Jnana Yoga), we now have the spontaneous and joyous impulse to venture forth and work for the well being of this world. We are free to act without entrapping our consciousness in the spider-like webs of the holographic matrix. Krishna does not assure us that we will succeed. We will in fact be met by the warp-and-weave of the acts others have already set into motion. But in the adamant knowledge of the God-within us, we will act selflessly and without attachment to the results of our work to hold the world together. (Bh.G. III.25)

The future of our world appears grim at best. Those of you who are reading this are well aware of the condition of the environment and the changing weather patterns, which can only be a tragic reflection of the human heart. These days are dark and on the deepest level of our being, we all sense the world to be moving ineluctably towards some as yet unknown and terrible events. After years of studying the evidence in terms of the lies, the greed, and what

can only be an utterly blind arrogance by those who are in power, I decided that my only recourse was to retire for a time and be alone to make a connection to 'a greater power.' It is my hope that this website will encourage you to do the same.

I would not say these have been easy years and yes, there were days when self-doubt or indolence overwhelmed me and I fell off my path. But as Krishna says, the happiness that springs from knowledge and the serenity of your inner spirit, at first seems like poison, but with perseverance becomes nectar, *AMRTA*, the elixir of Immortality (Bh.G. XVIII.37). This has been my experience.

Out-of-control consumption is leading the Earth to her final days. Shallow pleasures are ephemeral and leave a bitter emptiness. Finding God within you lasts forever. Finding God within gives you the courage to work for the well-being of the world. I offer this study of the great Bhagavad Gita, the Song of God, in true humility in the hope that these words will open its resplendent doors to your heart.

We Meet in the Heart
V.Susan Ferguson / 2006



Arjuna and His Charioteer Krishna Confront Karna
 (artist unknown; India, c. 1820) Philadelphia Museum of Art

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The Bhagavad Gita as an Integral Part of the Epic Mahabharata



The Bhagavad Gita is an integral part of a vast epic, the great Sanskrit poem, The Mahabharata. According to the scholar J.A.B. van Buitenen the Mahabharata has had an immense influence, more than any other text, on Indian civilization. The Mahabharata is not just another tale of the ceaseless human drama, but it is ‘the storehouse of political wisdom, philosophical doctrine, religious doctrines, and a splendid work of literary art’ (M.N. Dutt).

Indian tradition has accepted Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa as poet author of the Mahabharata. *Krishna* means dark in complexion, *Dvaipayana* refers to his birth in a river islet as *dvip* means Island, and *Vyasa* means the compiler of texts. Most scholars agree that the main story was the conscious composition of one poet, or at least a small group of poets. But over time there were many additions to the Mahabharata and therefore versions or what is termed recensions.

Before paper was introduced in 1000 AD, the Sanskrit texts were written on birch bark in the upper north India and palm leaf in the south (J.A.B. van Buitenen). You can imagine how perishable these manuscripts were and so they were transcribed regularly. With so many versions, the quest for a definitive version had to be undertaken and was finally achieved in 1970 under the direction of scholars at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute at Pune India.

With 100,000 couplets, the Mahabharata is the world’s longest poem and the longest literary work. It is several times the length of the Bible and eight times longer than the Iliad and the Odyssey put together. The epic itself says that the Mahabharata is like ‘an ocean which carries out all types of compositions pertaining to all kinds of knowledge’ (M.N. Dutt).

The dates for the writing of the Mahabharata vary. Van Buitenen gives the origin between the 8th and 9th century BC. Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair accepts 150 BC as the date for the Bhagavad Gita. M.N. Dutt states that the date of the original events of the Mahabharata is at least 1000 BC, but Indian tradition finds the events of the war near 3100 BC, thus the epic was composed after 3100 BC.

According to Alain Danielou the Dawn of the Kali Yuga began in 3,606 BC and the Kali Yuga's official arrival was in 3,102 BC. The Puranic tradition is that the Kali Yuga began when Krishna, the great hero of the Mahabharata, left the earth.

While I appreciate scholars delving deeply into the historical facts of the Mahabharata, I don't feel that it is useful to approach this epic with a western biased critical attitude. The Mahabharata is a resource, a fountain, an ocean of wisdom, knowledge, and insight into human character that reflects a time before our current Kali Yuga amnesia, when density has literally 'cooked' our consciousness in Time and left us totally dependent on the five senses.

As the poet author of the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita, Vyasa possessed a higher consciousness and intelligence not seen on this planet for thousands of years. For me, India's genius is her acceptance of historical events mysteriously morphing, moving, and slipping into what we in the west call myth. What is out-of-this-world is perhaps more real than the so-called real. The Irish also have a talent for this blurring of worlds.

We westerners suffer serious spiritual deprivation and poverty of imagination through the adherence to a confining definition that relegates to mere myth all experiences which take place beyond the scope of the five senses. Our current inability to access and flow in consciousness into the higher dimensional realms is a symptom of the Kali Yuga and a result of the imprisonment of our consciousness within the limitations of what can be quantified by our five senses. Thus we are cut off from the Invisible Realms.

As Hamlet says: There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.



The stories in the Mahabharata, and the other great Indian epic the Ramayana, make it abundantly clear that we humans once had ongoing interactions with other worlds through experiences which gave meaning to our lives, and yet now are considered 'myth' or mumbo-jumbo. But anyone who has spent time in meditation, or for that matter any artist or poet, will tell you that such worlds do exist and that they are often the finest source of artistic inspiration.

In my view, facts are often spurious or merely the product and filtered opinions of whoever collected them; facts are whatever the group agrees upon at any given time. Arthur Koestler's brilliant book, 'The Sleepwalkers: A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe' is acute evidence of this 'fact'! In the Kali Yuga such addiction to quantification can be perilous

and sometimes humorous, because this is the time when people prefer false ideas and esteem those who are without virtue. I offer Rene Guenon's equally brilliant 'The Reign of Quantity' as evidence. History is written by the conquerors. In this age of the unbalanced ego and its skewed subjective hologram, the Mahabharata offers an oasis of eternal wisdom along with really the best stories you have ever read!

It is said of the great epic The Mahabharata that "Whatever is here is found elsewhere. But whatever is not here is no where else."

While the above statement may sound a bit proud to anyone who has not dived into the Mahabharata, once you start to get a feel for the story and the characters, you have to realize it is true. Every possible human drama is portrayed in the epic and there are interactions with the non-human realms, the gods, Apsaras, Asuras, and so many others that draw your imagination into realms unknown.

These superb otherworldly adventures are not just for the sake of a tale-well-told, **they contain wisdom.** The Mahabharata is filled with the highest level of spiritual consciousness at every turn, along with some grand love stories, including a lady with 5 husbands, and a bloody war between families which is complicated by generations of decisions, deeds, oaths, and envy - a war with some intriguing very sci-fi sounding weaponry.

Over the years the Mahabharata has become my favorite book and reading Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair's work 'The Mahabharata, A Literary Study' has greatly deepened my understanding. This esteemed Indian scholar seems to have quietly adopted the poet Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa as his mentor and father-in-spirit. Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair is passionate about the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita. He understands the poet in a unique way, which I suggest is as one genius to another. He feels strongly that the Gita should not have been 'torn lose from the matrix of the epic and regarded as another treatise on philosophy' by what he calls 'schoolmen', meaning Sankara, Ramanuja, and others. (See The Betrayal of Krishna/Part 4)

With his considerable intellect and insight, Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair observes, 'There is nothing cultist about the theism of the epic and the Gita; only something far greater, a great poet's intuition of a divine intentionality behind creation, evolution, history.' The epic gives the reader the opportunity to see and understand the world as a fabric of cosmic proportions woven in time - the Matrix. Ineluctably the events of the past emerge in the present to create the future. Sometimes we are aware of the threads that weave our hologram, and more often we remain unconscious of how our every act creates what will be. We become precisely what we do.

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair sees quite correctly that the Mahabharata is as valid today as it has been through all of written history. The characters are as complex and fatally human as any 21st century man or woman. To my mind, the epic holds the blueprint of every intricacy

and event possible in the human drama during the Kali Yuga. The battlefield at Kurukshetra is no different than any battlefield that holds the promise of Armageddon to a civilization.

He internally remembered himself ...



One fine example of how the Bhagavad Gita is an pivotal part of the Mahabharata is in the Karna Parva, or the Book of Karna. The moment has arrived for a great battle between two great warrior heroes - Arjuna is a Pandava and Karna fights for the Kauravas. The scene is unbearably tragic because Karna is in fact Arjuna's older brother and the eldest Pandava by birth, but Arjuna does not yet know that he is about to kill a truly great and noble soul whose mother is also his mother.

The description of the battle between these two men is riveting and right out of sci-fi fantasy. The sky is darkened with arrows and each hero, even Krishna who is Arjuna's charioteer, receives countless wounds from 100s of arrows. The arrows eventually cover Karna 'like the rays of the sun' and blood flows down his entire body. Snakes transform themselves into arrows that burn through and shatter Arjuna's gold diadem. Deities and other celestials such as the Apsaras observe, cheer, and now and then shower flower petals down on Karna, Krishna and Arjuna when they have performed some particularly brave or virtuous act.

In the early stages of the fight, Karna cuts down Arjuna's arrows in the sky above. It seems that both men have magical weapons, which have been given to them by gods or imbued with power by their own penance and consciousness through mantras. Their arrows are far from ordinary and often have the effect of electromagnetic pulse weapons, lasers, or destructive sonic wave forms. They can instantly multiply so that one arrow has the effect of 100s or 1000s, and yet these arrows can be nullified by the other warrior's arrows in the air when he too has the power.

Seeing his friend Arjuna 'confounded' by Karna's admirable defense, Krishna once again urges Arjuna on by first taunting him a bit and then showing him the wisdom of his destiny. Krishna tells Arjuna that he will kill Karna 'this day' and 'with the same energy that you have shown in Yuga after Yuga in killing persons possessed of dark weapons and fierce Rakshasas (demons)...' (M.N. Dutt Ch.89.44).

Thus we are lead to understand that Arjuna is one who transmigrates through time to defeat the dark-side again and again, and works for the well-being of the world - LOKASAMGRAHA - as the scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair advocates. Inspired by Krishna's words, Arjuna has an adrenaline enhancing epiphany and Arjuna, who was considered the greatest warrior of the time, '**internally remembered himself and for what he had come to the world ...**' (M.N. Dutt Ch.89.49).

This incident not only expands Krishna's discourse with Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita, but also explains why the conversation took place. Krishna knows Arjuna. Indeed Krishna has always known him in Yuga after Yuga and he is there to remind Arjuna of who he really is, meaning the God deep within him, and spur Arjuna on to his intended destiny.

Remembering our true identity as a portion of the Creator and allying our consciousness with the God within us in the ultimate cosmic partnership, liberates us from the veils of density and delusion, and empowers us to work for the weal of the world in a way that no ambition or material reward or psycho-babble behavioral training ever could. Krishna empowers his beloved friend Arjuna to Remember who he is!

A window back into Time ...

The Mahabharata is said to have taken place around 3100 BC, at the end of the Dvapara Yuga. For me this epic offers a window back into time and gives us a glimpse of what the world might have been before the Kali Yuga. An interesting episode in the Vana Parva, or the Book of the Forest, reveals a tantalizing clue concerning the variations in material manifestations that occur as our consciousness moves through Time from Yuga to Yuga.

One of the Pandava brothers, big strong Bhima, meets the great monkey-hero Hanuman from the days of the other great Sanskrit epic, The Ramayana. The Ramayana takes place in the Yuga previous to the Dvapara, the Treta Yuga. In the Ramayana, the hero Rama, an incarnation of the deity Vishnu, engages an entire army of monkey-men (shades of Planet of the Apes) to fight off Ravana, the Rakshasa demon king who has abducted Rama's precious and pure wife Sita. The high-souled monkey chief Hanuman becomes the greatest devotee and friend to Rama.

Bhima is deeply honored to meet the heroic Hanuman. 'None is more fortunate than me ...' (M.N. Dutt). He asks Hanuman to reveal the form he assumed long ago when he leapt across the ocean to find the lovely bereft kidnapped Sita, who was bravely fighting off the demon king Ravana's repulsive advances. Hanuman smiles at Bhima and explains to him that because the Treta Yuga has passed, no one can see him as he was in that time. Hanuman no longer possesses that form in this moment of their meeting, a time of deterioration and diminution.

Everything in the world is affected by the passage of Time and as the frequencies change, so

does the ‘strength, size, and capacity’ (van Buitenen - 3.148.5) of everything - including the natural world, the rivers, trees, and mountains. The world and we humans are smaller in every respect, consciousness, substance, integrity, and physical size. ‘The Siddhas, the celestials (gods), the great Rishis (seers), all conform to Time, as it comes to be in the different Yugas’ (M.N.Dutt - Vol.2, Ch.149). Even the great hero Hanuman is susceptible to the immutable alteration in the frequencies of Time as they affect consciousness and thus the visible world.

Later Hanuman relents and does show Bhima his ability to assume ‘a gigantic body’ the size of a mountain. The monkey-hero ‘pervaded space’ (van Buitenen) It is because Bhima is sinless that he can see Hanuman’s expanded form and although Hanuman says he could grow even larger, he warns Bhima that he can only stand to see this much.

The Law, meaning Dharma, deteriorates in each Yuga. Time controls the Matrix. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna that he is Time grown old to destroy the world. (Bh.G. XI.33)

God’s Perfection is Dynamic

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair has what I perceive as an insider’s view of the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita. His deeply comprehensive insights into the poet author Vyasa have made me realize how subtle these works are, and in turn how subtly intricate this world is, in spite of our insistence on seeing things in terms of polarities, black and white, good and evil. The world and each person in it is a highly complex weave of contrasts, colors, nuances of tones and feelings that are quite out of reach of the ‘sound-bite’ we are fed by the monopoly media, which only seeks to titillate, pacify, and numb - or the latest quick-fix self-help books that come and go in our consumer gimmick-loving culture.

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair has forced me to grow and to think in a new way, to realize a more authentic approach to God. This eminent Indian scholar has led me to understand that, as he says, ‘God’s perfection is dynamic.’

Most of us think of God as an absolute, something already perfect, already attained. But if you contemplate this assumed state of absolutism and stasis simply in terms of your own experience - and are we not at least a partial reflection of our creator - in terms of what we as human beings thrive on and enjoy, God would not be stasis. God would be dynamic force ever expanding and renewing and recreating itself in new forms, higher consciousness, and conceivably new universes.

Thus God is not static, not one perfect stasis that we must forever seek and achieve. God’s perfection is in every changing fluctuation, the oceanic drifting flow, and each oscillating waveform. God is the dynamic force that emanates from within us and moves us to expand, experience, and incorporate ever fresh, new, higher and deeper expressions as the Cycles of Time weave themselves around, into, and through the Oneness that permeates All.

It is obvious to anyone with even a taste of experience that life is not only some peaceful pastoral scene, a saccharine-sweet Hollywood ending, or the songs of sentiment. The Sanskrit texts understand the titanic supernova power and violence of universal creation and destruction. In his book on the Mahabharata, Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair quotes the Katha Upanishad:

‘The whole world, whatever there is, springs from and moves in life which is a great terror (mahad-bhyam), an upraised thunderbolt (vajramudyatam).’

The poet Vyasa wrote the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita in the form of a poem - not as some philosophical or religious treatise as the ‘schoolmen’ might. The texts are great literary works as well as being the source of an authentic primordial wisdom. Vyasa uses the epic story to convey the dynamic nature of Creator and to illustrate how we may Become and achieve a ‘qualitative’ similitude - SADHARMYA - with deity (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair).

The characters in the Mahabharata are forced to evolve through stressful circumstances, and the ‘strings and arrows of outrageous fortune’ either make them great or break them. It is all dependent on the choices they make, for as the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says:

‘Even as one acts, even as he behaves, so does he become ... The doer of good becomes good, the doer of evil becomes evil.’ (4-4.5.)

Great spiritual need is often camouflaged as emotional suffering

In his book ‘Freedom and Transcendence,’ Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair argues that man does not ‘strive for pleasure, but for a meaning.’ He suggests, using the work of Victor Frankl, that the conscious pursuit of pleasure is neurosis and that whenever we deliberately pursue our own pleasure, our attempts fail. Pleasure for its own sake is somehow sour, shallow, and unfulfilling, leaving us in that state of constant craving, empty and addicted to our desire for more.

The truth is that ‘genuine and enduring pleasure’ emerges as a result of the natural course when we pursue a goal that makes us better. When we strive for wisdom, self-mastery, and to become something higher, finer, and enlightened, we experience pleasure as an enduring joy that gives us the strength of self-confidence to endeavor and Become even more.

It is the great tragedy of our time that we do not understand the value of suffering. Conventional psychotherapy and the endless plethora of mood altering suppressant drugs provided by a profit motivated pharmaceutical industry has convinced most people that their emotional angst should not be felt. The truth is that depression and heartache and even guilt are messages from your soul to look deeply into your life and rethink your outfit!

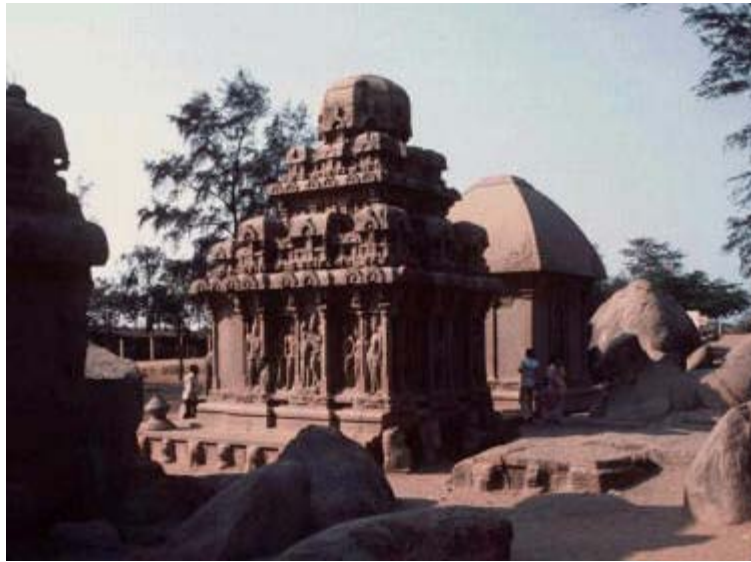
‘A great spiritual need is often camouflaged as emotional suffering ... The superficial allaying of symptoms is metaphysically irresponsible.’ (Freedom & Transcendence - Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair)

Evolve into A Finer Grain of Being

Yudhisthira is a man of Dharma, with supposedly impeccable morality and yet he foolishly gambles away his wealth, kingdom, and even his brothers and wife, Draupadi. The Dice Game is a cosmic symbol for Life and its metaphorical implications are not shallow (Handelman & Shulman). Each dice stands for one of the four Yugas and in Shiva stories it is understood that the Lord throws the dice and loses himself into the manifestation of creation. Yudhisthira has much to learn, not just to be a better dice player, but he must learn through experience to become a wiser man who does indeed deserve to be the ruler of his kingdom. Yudhisthira and the others in the epic must, as Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says, ‘evolve into a finer grain of being.’

As we pass through the cycles of time and these ‘finer grains of being’ evolve, primordial metaphysics would imply that a deeply darker and more insidiously refined evil would also emerge. Thus we see the shadows of malevolence permeating our leaders in convoluted ways, such as spin and the manufacture of false image, that were never imagined by men like Thomas Jefferson or even a Napoleon. We see greed saturate our everyday lives as the leaders of industry shock us with their crass unthinking short sighted aggression, so much so that it appears that the very chemicals man has invented to preserve life, may be the source of our extinction.

Life will never end completely. Life is eternal and will return as the Cycles of Time begin again and again. God is akshara - the Imperishable. The Mahabharata gives us a grand cosmic roadmap, the blue print for our current age, the Kali Yuga. For those who tune their hearts to hear, the Bhagavad Gita reveals the wisdom to live it with integrity, decency, and a true elegance of being.



While the Gods Play

Shaiva Oracles & Predictions of the Cycles of History & the Destiny of Mankind

Alain Danielou

Inner Traditions International, 1987, Vermont

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

With the Commentary of Sankaracarya

Translated by Swami Madhavananda

Advaita Ashrama, 2004, Kolkata

Freedom and Transcendence

Krishna Chaitanya

Manohar, 1982, New Delhi

The Sleepwalkers: A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe

Arthur Koestler

Penguin, 1990

The Reign of Quantity & the Signs of the Times

Rene Guenon

Sophia Perennis; 4th Rev edition (June 9, 2004)

God Inside Out: Siva's Game of Dice

Don Handelman & David Shulman

Oxford University Press, 1997

The Birth of the Poet-Author of the Bhagavad Gita & the Mahabharata: Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa



‘Whatever about *Dharma* (Cosmic Law), *Artha* (Goal & Purpose), and *Kama* (Desire), that is contained in this Mahabharata, may be met with else where; but whatever is not in it, is not to be found anywhere.’ (M.N. Dutt Vol 1. Ch. 62.53, Adi Parva)

According to the text itself, the Mahabharata was written in three years by Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa and the poet modestly tells us that hearing the Mahabharata is better than attaining heaven. The sacred Sanskrit texts often promise spiritual and celestial rewards simply by the act of listening to them. The Mahabharata is no exception to this charming pitch and states that those who hear it read, or read it to others will go to the world of Brahma and become equal to the celestials. The text also promises that the Mahabharata makes the heart desire to attain salvation.

So in this spirit - as I have always wanted to be an *Apsara*, a sort of celestial dancing enchantress - I take delight in retelling the story of the birth of Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa, the poet author of the Mahabharata and its Bhagavad Gita.

The Birth of the Poet Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa

Uparichara Vasu was a king devoted to virtue and hunting, but one day this king lay down his weapons and became an ascetic. He practiced such severe and power producing austerities that Indra, the ruler of the celestials, became frightened. Did Uparichara Vasu seek to replace him?

Feeling afraid, Indra appeared to Uparichara Vasu and extolled the beauties and great qualities of an earthly kingdom and his life. Thus making Uparichara Vasu feel exceeding proud and fortunate to be a king on earth. Declaring his friendship, Indra gave him gifts, perhaps a bribe of sorts to keep his sights off Indra’s domain.

The gift most interesting to me was a large celestial crystalline chariot that was capable of

carrying the king through the sky. These flying ships, or as J.A.B. van Buitenen has translated them ‘airborne chariots’, are sprinkled throughout the Sanskrit texts. Even though Uparichara Vasu has a physical body, he alone among mortals will be able, by the power of Indra’s *maya*, to fly across the sky like a celestial.

One fine Spring day, Uparichara Vasu was hunting in the forest - presumably having given up his austerities. The entire forest was ‘maddened by the sweet notes of *Kokilas* (birds) and echoed with the hum of intoxicating bees.’ In other words, the potent fervor of the birds and the bees inflamed his manly passion. The king became ‘maddened’ by desire and sat down beneath a blooming Ashoka tree, the tree of love blossoms, to cool off.



The sweet fragrance of the Ashoka blossoms permeated the air and a soft breeze blew through the forest. Intoxicated by the power of Spring and the perfume of the luxuriant flowers, Uparichara Vasu became so excited that he spilled his seed. To ‘save its utility’ (M.N. Dutt) he collected that liquid on a leaf. Perhaps in those days men valued their sacred source of DNA and did not squander it as freely as in our times.

Consecrating the sperm with mantras, Uparichara Vasu gave the leaf to a hawk nearby to deliver to the king’s wife back home in the palace so the life giving seeds would not be wasted. But as fate would have it, high in the sky the delivery-hawk was met by another hawk who mistook the leaf for a bit of meat and attacked. During the fight, the seeds of life fell into the Yamuna river.



Deep in the waters of the river there lived an *Apsara* who had been cursed by a Brahmana to

live as a fish. These willful men are always causing some sort of mischief, losing their tempers and cursing some unsuspecting soul through the auspicious powers acquired by their great austerities.

Seeing the seed of Uparichara Vasu in the water, the Apsara-fish swallowed them. Ten months later she was caught by fishermen, who cut her open and found two children of human form - a boy and a girl. As soon as the children were born, the Apsara was released from her fish form, which apparently was the condition of her curse, to return to her sky-dancing with the other celestials.

The fishermen then gave the children to the king, Uparichara Vasu, who made the male his heir. The girl was both beautiful and virtuous, but because of her birth from the womb of a fish, albeit a cursed Apsara, she smelled of fish and so the king gave her back to the fishermen.

The girl's name was Satyavati and she spent her days running a boat across the river Yamuna. One day a wise *Rishi* (Seer) saw her and overcome by her beauty, desired to have her. Desire/*Kama* is always a driving force in the human drama and that truth is also to be found in the Sanskrit tales.

Satyavati resisted the advances of her Rishi, observing that there were many more Rishis standing on the banks of the river who might see them. Inflamed by his desire for her, the determined Rishi created a fog and covered the entire place with darkness. Being a virtuous girl, Satyavati still protested, saying that if she lost her virginity she would not be able to bear life.

Being a man, the Rishi was naturally pleased by her efforts to resist him and promised her that she would remain a virgin even after their love making. He also offered her any boon she might desire. Boons play an important part in the Sanskrit texts and many a plot is thickened by boons given by deities and Seers.

Satyavati asked for the boon of becoming sweet scented, in other words the poor girl wanted to lose her fishy smell. Not only did she lose her foul fish odor, but the Rishi gave her such an intensely sweet fragrance that it permeated great distances.

That day Satyavati conceived a child, which was born on an island (*dvai*) in the river Yamuna and that child was none other than the poet author of the Mahabharata, Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa!

I retold this tale because first I think it is absolutely charming and also reveals some intriguing ideas, such as the gift of the crystal flying car and Indra's fear of humans becoming too powerful which is expressed in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

And to this day, [those] who...know the self as I am Brahman [IS-ness], become all this universe.

Even the gods [any other dimensional beings] cannot prevent his becoming this, for he has become their Self. ...if a man worships another deity thinking: He is one and I am another, he does not know.

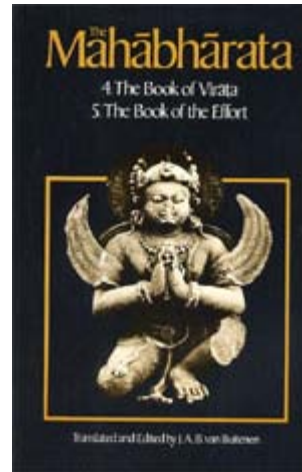
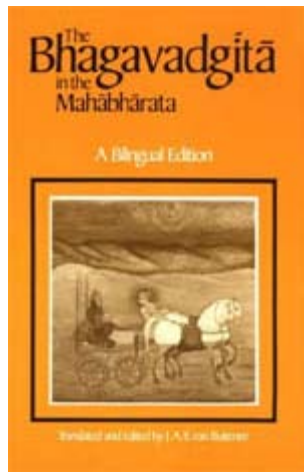
He [who does not know] is like a sacrificial animal to the gods. As many animals serve a man, so does each man serve the gods. Even if one animal is taken away, it causes anguish to the owner; how much more so when many are taken away!

Therefore it is not pleasing to the gods that men should know this [that they are IS-ness].

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, I.iv.10

I also wanted to give the flavor of the Mahabharata in the sense that the stories are created with intensely complex plots, as events are woven together in a magical way designed to hold your attention. These stories would have been passed down the generations around the fire, on your father's knee, or nestled in your mother's lap. These stories, laden with timeless wisdom as they are, would have been imprinted in your heart from childhood as a resource always available to you, the yardstick by which to evaluate your own life experiences. The tales are imbued with the Wisdom of the Ages.

Now on to the events that lead up to the Bhagavad Gita ...



The Texts:

The Bhagavadgita in the Mahabharata A Bilingual Edition

Translated & Edited by J.A.B. van Buitenen
The University of Chicago Press, 1981

-J.A.B. van Buitenen's translation has an illuminating clarity and is excellent for a first time read, especially for readers with a western background. The transliteration is on the left-page side and the English on the right. There is also an indepth scholarly introduction and many useful footnotes.

Abhinavagupta's Commentary on the Bhagavad Gita GITARTHA SAMGRAHA

Translated from Sanskrit with Introduction & Notes by Boris Marjanovic
Indica Books; 2004, Varanasi India

-Abhinavagupta wrote in the years 990-1015 A.D. and is widely acknowledged as one of India's greatest minds. A brilliant, highly esteemed, enlightened Kashmir Saivite, his insights into the Gita are gems - especially useful for anyone who is actually practising meditation. Boris Marjanovic's translation is accessible. Includes the Devanagari characters and English, but not the transliteration. I wish more of Abhinavagupta's writings were available in translation.

<http://www.metaphysicalmusing.com/articles/realtruth.htm>

The Bhagavad Gita

Translated by Winthrop Sargeant
State University of New York Press, 1994

-For the serious student, Sargeant's work is the 'must-have'. He provides us with a line-by-line, word-by-word translation in the Devanagari, the transliteration, and English. This book serves as a Sanskrit dictionary for the Bhagavad Gita. I do not always agree with his interpretation of the meaning, but I touch his feet for creating this book.

The Bhagavad Gita

Translated from the Sanskrit with Notes, Comments & Introduction By Swami
Nikhilananda, 1944
Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1992

-As you may surmise, this translation reflects the beliefs of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center. It contains excellent detailed explanations of many Hindu concepts. English only.

The Bhagavad Gita

Annotation Gudhartha-Dipika by Madhusudana Sarasvati
Translated by Swami Gambhirananda, 1998
Advaita Ashrama, 2000, Calcutta

-I recently acquired this text and like very much it's simple and clear presentation. It also reflects the ideas of Advaita. Devanagari and English only.

The Gita for the Modern Man

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair
Clarion Books, Delhi
Out-of -print, ISBN 8185120277

The Betrayal of Krishna, Vicissitudes of a Great Myth

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair
Clarion Books, 1991, Delhi

The Mahabharata, A Literary Study

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair
Clarion Books, 1985, 1993, Delhi

A New History of Sanskrit Literature

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair
Ramesh C. Jain, Manohar Book Service, 1977, New Delhi

Freedom and Transcendence
Krishna Chaitanya
Manohar Publications, 1982, New Delhi

The Bhagavad Gita in the Bhishma Parva of The Mahabharata
Vol. IV Bhishma Parva
Translation according to M.N. Dutt
Edited by Dr. Ishvar Chandra Sharma & Dr. O.N. Bimali
Parimal Publications, revised edition 2004, Delhi

-After years of reading the Mahabharata in the J.A.B. van Buitenen translation, I finally made the quantum leap to the complete epic - in this case nine volumes. I am enjoying M.N. Dutt's translation which, in my view, reflects the subtle tones and colors of the Indian temperament. You cannot instill thousands of years of tradition into a western mind and eventually a real lover of the Bhagavad Gita needs to read a translation by an Indian. Sanskrit Devanagari and English. Available at exoticindiaart.com

The Mahabharata
Sanskrit Text with English Translation; 9 volumes
M.N. Dutt
Edited by Dr. Ishvar Chandra Sharma & Dr. O.N. Bimali
Parimal Publications, revised edition 2004, Delhi
Available at exoticindiaart.com

The Mahabharata
1. *The Book of the Beginning*
2. *The Book of the Assembly*
3. *The Book of the Forest*
4. *The Book of Virata*
5. *The Book of the Effort*
Translated & edited by J.A.B van Buitenen, 1973
University of Chicago, 1980

-J.A.B. van Buitenen has my total respect. I discovered the Mahabharata through his translation back in 1989. I couldn't put these books down! It was because he made the epic so accessible, that I developed a life long love for what is the greatest tale ever told. The Maha has it all - love, war, and spiritual wisdom!

*The Mahabharata /Volume 7:
Book 11: The Book of the Women
Book 12: The Book of peace, Part 1*
Translated by James L. Fitzgerald
University of Chicago Press, 2003

The Mahabharata
Translated by Chakravarthi V. Narasimhan
Columbia University Press, 1998, New York

-An excellent 'story-only' short version, without subsequent doctrinal insertions. "A straight forward narrative account of the main theme of the epic: the rivalry between the Pandavas and the Kauravas." A collection of more than 4,000 verses out of the possible 88,000. Enjoyable!

*Sri Bhagavadgita Rahasya
or Karma-Yoga-Shastra*
By Bal Gangadhar Tilak
Translated by BH Alchabdra Sitaram Sukthankar
Kesari Press, 2004, Poona, India

-This is a very interesting examination of the Gita with the original Sanskrit Devanagari stanzas, their English translation, commentaries on the stanzas, and a comparison of Eastern with Western doctrines.
Available at exoticindiaart.com

DVD's

Peter Brook's *The Mahabharata*
A 2-disc set based on a stage production. Considering the epic length, scope and depth of the Maha, Peter Brook's version is great for the beginner. It will give you an over-all view of the characters and the story. It is beautifully produced and the actors are gorgeous - where did they find these lovely men and Draupadi is superb.

MAHABHARAT - 16 DVD Disc Set

This version is classic. Produced and directed by B.R. Chopra & Ravi Chopra for television in India, this must have been a dedicated act of reverence and love. The sets,

costumes, and fabulous jewelry are fascinating and the actors wonderful. I adore Nitesh Bhardwaj. You feel that every effort has been made to make the episodes as authentic and true to the text as humanly possible. For those who are used to Hollywood action, the story unfolds comparatively slowly - so don't expect glitzy special effects. The Chopra's version emphasizes content and depth of understanding. Over time this production has increased my appreciation for the Maha and fueled my imagination. Available from nehaflix.com

RAMAYAN

The Chopra's also produced the Ramayana in a set of 12 DVDs. Nitesh Bhardwaj (who plays the adorable Krishna in the Maha) stars as Rama. The Ramayana is scripture based on events from the Treta Yuga. I recommend this production.

KALYUG

The famous Indian actor Shashi Kapoor produced this film in 1980. Kalyug is a modern day Mahabharata, but set in the business world of our recent time. It stars Rekha and Shashi Kapoor, among other notables. Very interesting film.

The Story that Leads up to the Bhagavad Gita: From Bharata to the birth of Dhritarashtra & Pandu



The *Mahabharata* guides your imagination to stretch back into time and contemplate the possibility that our modern world is not at all superior to life in the previous Cycles of Time. My way of reading the great Sanskrit epic embraces the idea that in past eras we human beings were more conscious in general and in particular we were aware of and interacted with realms that are now invisible to most.

Long ago there was a time when our life span was hundreds, even thousands of years - a time when there were no wars, no labor, no envy and its best friend greed. That happiest Cycle of Time is called the *Satya* or *Krita* Yuga, the Golden Age. Throughout the *Manvantaras*, as the end of this golden era draws near, the demonic darkside beings, which in Sanskrit are called the *Asuras*, begin to fight with the beings of Light in the Heavens. This is a polarity universe made up of both positive and negative forces, and there could be no world without a darkside.

According to the *Mahabharata* the celestials, led by Indra, continually defeat the demonic in battle and throw them out of the heavens. Having fallen from these supernal realms, the demonic *Asuras* take birth here on earth and become 'proud and insolent' kings. It seems to me that in our current cycle of time, the Kali Yuga, we have many such rulers who are more concerned with their own personal power, wealth, and prestige than they are the well-being of those they are paid to represent.

The Partial Incarnations

The *Mahabharata* says that the *Asuras* of that ancient time were taking birth here in such numbers that they began to overwhelm the Earth; and because she was becoming incapable of supporting herself, the Earth went to the Omniscient Lord, Brahma and asked for assistance. Therefore, Brahma commanded the celestials to take birth on Earth to free her from this burden.

‘...and so the celestials in succession descended from heaven to earth, with a portion of themselves, for the destruction of the enemies of the gods and the well-being of the three worlds.’ (J.A.B. van Buitenen)

The idea that the main characters, both heroes and villains, in the epic are partial incarnations of either celestials or demons is pivotal to the story. And perhaps not so far from the truth as modern western thinking might judge. Krishna tells us in the Bhagavad Gita that God dwells within the Heart of each and every man, woman, and child. From the point of view of metaphysics, the human body is a microcosm of the entire universe and therefore the demonic also dwells within each of us, albeit in those centers of power, the chakras, below the Heart.

Pururava & Urvashi

As the lineages spread out like the roots of a vast cosmic tree, we meet Pururava who is said to be a human, but always surrounds himself with super human companions. Pururava has a child with an *Apsara*, a beautiful sky dancing celestial, named Urvashi. So the various dimensional worlds are not only interacting, but also mating and producing offspring.

Pururava’s grandson is Nahusha, a king of great virtue. His ‘beauty, asceticism, prowess and energy’ have the power to beat the very ‘dwellers of heaven’ and thus we are led to understand that a wise king, who possesses the wisdom and power to master his own consciousness, can control the forces of the higher realms for the good of his kingdom. Self-mastery and integrity can empower us to access the wisdom of the inner realms.

Dushyanta & Sakuntala beget Bharata

Dushyanta was a fearsome courageous king who loved to hunt tigers and wild beasts in the deepest forest, along with his men on hundreds of horses and elephants. One day he ventured into ‘the abode of the *Siddhas* (masters), *Charanas* (demigods), the various sorts of *Gandharvas* (celestial musicians), the *Apsaras* (sky dancers), the Monkeys and *Kinnaras* (heavenly-humans)’ - all of whom were said to be ‘drunk with joy!’ Our fearless tiger hunter appears to have wandered into another dimension, right here on the

earth where an assortment of intriguing beings were enjoying themselves.

There he met Sakuntala, a woman whose birth was quite auspicious; for there once lived an ascetic whose powers were so vast that he ‘created in anger another world with stars’ (M.N. Dutt). Indra, the ruler of heaven became worried that this fierce ascetic would usurp Indra’s celestial powers and therefore he sent a splendidly beautiful sky-dancing *Apsara* named Menaka to seduce the ascetic and turn him away from his austerities. Indra’s less than godlike insecurities often lead him to employ such tricks.

The *Apsaras* are perfect in beauty, form, and accomplishment in the arts; but they have no feelings and so the child that came forth from the love made with this fierce ascetic and the *Apsara* Menaka was abandoned on a river bank. Curiously the vultures came to encircle and protect the girl child, who was then known as Sakuntala, meaning protected by birds. Another great *Rishi*, Kanva, found the baby and raised her as his own. Sakuntala was taught the disciplines of self mastery by her adopted father, the seer Kanva, and was therefore quite capable of her own power manifesting austerities.

When Dushyanta met Sakuntala, he was overcome with love and desire for her. Pleading his case for their union that very day, he stated the properness of the rites, a *Gandharva* marriage for warriors, *Kshatriyas*. Promising to crown her as his queen, he made her with child - and that child was Bharata.

No ordinary mortals ...

I share these stories with you because they give us the flavor of other worlds and another time. But they also point out that the lineage of the characters in the *Mahabharata* is derived from the partial incarnations of the celestials and the demonic. There are bits of other-world beings in these ancient heroes and their brave beautiful women, and therefore in Bharata and it is his name that headlines the epic *Mahabharata*, the *Great Bharata*. These men and women are not ordinary mortals. But then, one might ask the question, since God dwells within the Heart of us all, are there any ordinary mortals?

King Bharata

Bharata was the son of the virtuous King Dushyanta and the lovely Sakuntala, the lady who was half-*Apsara* (Menaka) and half-*Rishi*.

When Sakuntala brought their son to Dushyanta’s kingdom, the king wanted his people

to accept the child as his legitimate heir and so in a bit of theatrics, he publicly rejected the child, claiming not to know the sweet and innocent Sakuntala. Injured by his words, Sakuntala gave Dushyanta a good moral thrashing in the form of a lecture on motherhood.

To save the day, a voice from the sky ‘with no visible form’ declared the boy to be the true son of the king and with such a divine stamp of approval, Bharata was accepted from that day on as the heir to the throne. Dushyanta apologized profusely to his beloved, revealing the fortuitous purpose of his deceit, and the two lived happily ever after.

Bharata is said to have ‘brought all the kings of the world under his sway’ (M.N. Dutt), and thus his name, Bharata, also means India itself. For ‘from him has sprung this great race’ all devoted to truth and honesty, blessed with great fortune, many of whom became godlike powerful monarchs, who were ‘all like the celestial.’

The *Mahabharata* tells us that the young Bharata fought lions for his own pleasure and was able to tame tigers, elephants, rhinoceros, and water buffaloes. He was invincible and ruled with virtue. The virtue of kings is a very important theme in the *Mahabharata* and there is a very long discourse on the subject (in the *Shanti Parva*) that should be read by our world leaders today. A kingdom and its people are only as good as the king. A corrupt, weak, cruel king destroys his kingdom.

Shantanu’s love for Ganga

While the preceding descriptions hopefully offer a bit of feeling for the background story landscape, the next king is key to understanding the plot of the *Mahabharata*.

Shantanu, a descendant of Bharata, was the king of the great city Hastinapur, the capital of the Kurus, who were an important branch of the lineage. Shantanu, the protector of the Bharata race, was virtuous and truthful. ‘The virtue of kindness reigned in his kingdom as he was full of mercy and free from anger.’ (M.N. Dutt)

Like all the mighty men of that time, Shantanu was a lover of hunting and spent many a day roaming the forest. One afternoon as he walked along the banks of the Ganges River, he met a ‘blazing beauty’ whose charms made his hair stand up all over his body in rapture. The term for this reaction is *horripilation*, which means that you get goose bumps as your hairs stand erect from fear, or in this case an intensely passionate desire. This charming archaic term is used frequently in the *Bhagavata Purana* to describe the girls’ usual response when they see Krishna.

As fate would have it, the experience of horripilation impels our besotted king to ask the divinely beautiful maiden Ganga, who is the river transformed into a woman, to be his wife and she accepts on certain adamant conditions. Shantanu must promise not to interfere in any of her acts or to ever speak harshly to her. Sounds good to me! Our king was so smitten by Ganga that he consented to her conditions and the two left for his palace to enjoy their bliss. The texts say that Shantanu ‘sinks into the beauty’ of his wife.

Soon a son was born, but Ganga carried the baby boy down to the river and drowned him in the dark waters. Shantanu was naturally overwhelmed with shock and pain; but remembering his promise, he could do nothing. Seven sons were drowned in this way, while the father-king could only watch frozen in silent horror. As each child was cast into its watery grave, Ganga said, ‘This I have done as a favor for your good.’

Finally as Ganga was taking the eighth son away to his death, Shantanu could bear his heartbreak and agony no more. He implored his beloved wife to tell him why she would commit such crimes, and begged her to spare this last baby. Ganga agreed immediately to spare the boy, but informed her husband that she must now leave him. As to the why of her deeds, she explained that the babes were celestials, ‘illustrious and greatly effulgent *Vasus*’ who had been cursed to birth in human form by a proud *Rishi*, Vasistha. In compassion, Ganga offered to birth the *Vasus* and set them free the day they were born.

This is interesting, for it often seems that in the Sanskrit texts the celestials do not want to be born here on earth in a human body, a condition in which it is all too easy to get lost in the *Maya* of the five-senses and forget who you are. Ganga was being merciful to these *Vasus*; but we must remember that Ganga is a goddess and a river and it must be that her celestial law bears little, if any, resemblance to our human moral constraints.

The eighth son was named Bhishma and he plays a crucial role in the *Mahabharata*. Bhishma was not only the son of a great king in the line of Bharata, but his mother was the river goddess Ganga, and most importantly he was an incarnation of one of the *Vasus*, who in metaphysics are the spheres-of-existence, the spheres of the elements. As destiny’s child, Bhishma became both a skilled warrior and a man of great knowledge who took his vows very seriously.

Shantanu’s love for Satyawati

Even though Shantanu lived on happily with his son Bhishma, our king of kindness

missed his wife Ganga and longs for the companionship of a warm woman to fill the emptiness in his heart. One day as he wandered in the forest along the banks of the river Yamuna, he became aware of an intoxicating fragrance wafting through the woods. Enchanted by the pheromones of such a superb and subtle ambrosial perfume, he followed the scent and came upon the lovely Satyavati.

Satyavati was the source of the divine fragrance, although there was a time when she smelled of fish. The girl had been born in the womb of a fish, who was really a cursed *Apsara*. Satyavati had been given the boon of this marvelous fragrance by a *Rishi*, who deeply desired her and in their coupling, gave her a son. Their son was none other than the poet author of the *Mahabharata*, Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa himself! You see how Vyasa loved to weave webs!

When King Shantanu caught her scent, Satyavati was living in a village as the daughter of a fisherman and Shantanu, after professing his love to the girl, asked her father for his consent to their marriage. The fisherman father told the king he had always known that Satyavati was destined to marry into royalty and therefore he was humbly honored to give his daughter to such a great ruler as Shantanu - but only on the condition that her children alone and no others would inherit the throne.

Being a good king and loving Bhishma, his first born son, Shantanu could not accept such terms. Heartbroken and longing for the pheromone-fragrant Satyavati, he returned to the palace where he moped around until his son realized something was wrong. Being a good son, Bhishma decided to take the matter into his own hands, and in the unselfish and virtuous wish to bring happiness to his beloved father, took an terrible oath.

To ensure that Satyavati's children would be heir to the kingdom, Bhishma renounced his right to the throne and swore to never know a woman and therefore remain sonless. Bhishma's vow of celibacy (*Brahmacharya*) was considered to be so righteous, high-principled, and praise worthy that 'the celestials, the *Apsaras* and various classes of *Rishis*' showered him with flowers from the firmament (M.N.Dutt).

Bhishma means 'the terrible' and his vow was indeed terrible in the sense that its severity was fearful to most men. But not to Bhishma. In gratitude his father gave him the boon of dying at will, meaning Bhishma had the power to choose the moment of his death. You will see much later on in the *Mahabharata*, this maker of terrible vows ends up dying on an excruciating bed of arrows teaching the victorious warriors the virtues of kingship.

The children of Shantanu & Satyavati: Citrangada & Vichitravirya

The fragrant Satyavati married the kind king Shantanu and the happy lovers had two sons: Citrangada and Vichitravirya.

Citrangada was a great warrior and so successful in his numerous victories over humans that the king of the celestial Gandharvas challenged him to fight on Kurukshetra, the same battlefield where many years later Krishna gave his *Bhagavad Gita* discourse to Arjuna. The *Gandharva* Chief killed Citrangada and thus only Vichitravirya was left to become king and to provide an heir.

In the *Dvapara Yuga* a woman was allowed to choose her husband, and for a princess a festive contest was often held to allow the competing young males the chance to demonstrate their prowess. This delightful and to my mind civilized tradition was called a Sayamvara and one was being held in the city of Varanasi (Benares or Kashi) for the three daughters of the king: Amba, Ambika, and Ambalika.

So Satyavati sent Bhishma to find wives for Vichitravirya. Bhishma was by this time already a bit wrinkled and with white hair; his age frightened the girls and set up an uproar. Bhishma decided not to waste time talking, negotiating the marriages, and kidnapped all the three maidens. The *Kshatriyas* were by law permitted to carry a bride away by force. The other men and their warriors chased Bhishma in a hailstorm of arrows, but alone that ‘tiger among men’ defeated them.

Back at the palace one of the girls, Amba, revealed that she was already promised to another; so the ever virtuous Bhishma allowed her to leave and return to her beloved. This girl ironically turned out to be the ultimate cause of his death. The other two girls remained to marry and the text says that Vichitravirya enjoyed them for seven years until he was ‘attacked by consumption’ and ‘went to the abode of Yama (death) like a setting sun’ leaving no heir. (M.N. Dutt)

Satyavati always felt guilty for having usurped Bhishma's right to the throne and now entreated the elder statesman son to follow the tradition of marrying the wives of the deceased brother, ascend the throne, and have children. But Bhishma's vow was indeed terrible and he would not break it! Bhishma was stubbornness itself and much later in the epic, Lord Krishna lovingly chastised him for all his impulsive vow taking.

Poet-author & father, Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa

Desperate to continue the line of the throne she felt responsible for, Satyavati remembered her son Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa. Long ago, Vyasa had promised her that he would appear before her whenever she might think of him and so our poet-author comes onto the scene to fulfill his duty and follow in the tradition that to ensure the

continuation of the family line, a brother may impregnate his dead brother's wives, which in this case was a half-brother.

There was a problem, of course! Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa was a *Rishi*/seer who had been performing great austerities and even though he agreed to his mother's plan, he was dirty, probably a bit stinky, perhaps encrusted with ashes and cow dung and hairy faced. In his present unwashed state, Vyasa was not an appetizing number for the princesses. But Satyawati was in a hurry and insisted that her seer son, Vyasa, do the deed that day.

Vyasa entered the bedroom of Ambika first and realized that the gentle lady was terrified by his 'matted locks of copper color, his blazing eyes, and grim beard' and closed her eyes during the act. Thus her son was born blind - and this blind son was none other than the great Dhritarashtra (Dhri-ta-RASH-tra), whose complex nature of weakness and ambition will fuel his sons to instigate the great war.

The mating with the second wife received a similar reaction, but in this case the girl Ambalika became pale and discolored from fear. Her son was born pale and thus was named *Pandu*, which means pale. Arjuna is one of the *Pandavas*, the sons of Pandu, who will fight the sons of Dhritarashtra on the battlefield Kurukshetra.

In his book '*The Mahabharata, A Literary Study*', the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair talks about Vyasa's wry sense of humor. What could be a better example than the poet-author making himself the father of the two men who are the fathers of the 100 *Kauravas* and the five *Pandavas* - at least spiritually. Vyasa is the artistic and literal father and grandfather to the main characters in his poem!

The birth of the Pandavas & the Kauravas ... continues ...

The Gods of India, Hindu Polytheism
Alain Danielou, 1965
Inner Traditions Int., 1985, New York

The Story that Leads up to the Bhagavad Gita: From the sons of Dhritarashtra & Pandu to Kurukshetra



The birth of Dhritarashtra and Pandu filled the kingdom with festive celebrations of such joy and happiness that virtue and prosperity began to reign across the land as if the *Satyayuga* had come to the realm of the descendants of Bharata.

There was also a third son born of the sage Vyasa whose name was Vidura, but his mother was a palace maid sent by one of the royal princesses to escape the dreaded intimacy with Vyasa as the lady was aware of his less than kingly appearance due to his recent ascetic practices. The humble maid however was respectful and pleasing to Vyasa, and their son became a learned man of great wisdom and integrity. The boy was a partial incarnation of the deity Dharma, the god of justice, who had been cursed into human form by yet another angry *Rishi*. Vidura's role in the *Mahabharata* is more of an outsider who sagely observes events.

While Dhritarashtra and Pandu were young boys, Bhishma ruled in the capital city Hastinapur which was filled with 100s of palaces and mansions, and some said rivaled Indra's celestial city. Bhishma lovingly raised the three boys as if they were his own sons and because of his blameless integrity and righteous character 'the wheel of virtue' was set in motion.

The education of the boys included not only military skills, such as archery, club and sword fighting, and building muscle strength, but also the wisdom and knowledge of the Vedas.

Even though Dhritarashtra was the eldest, because he was born blind no one believed he

should be chosen as king. How could a blind man rule a vast kingdom? Thus Pandu was chosen heir to the throne and eventually crowned king. This was a bitter blow to Dhritarashtra and ate away at him, sinking him further into his blindness and an indecisiveness that in the end destroyed his entire family.

Dhritarashtra & Gandhari

In the interest of perpetuating the dynasty, Satyawati charged Bhishma with the task of finding suitable wives for the young men. Bhishma learned that a woman named Gandhari, ‘of the lovely hips’, had received a boon from a deity that gave her the ability to have 100 sons!

The marriage was arranged and upon hearing that her husband-to-be was blind, Gandhari covered her own eyes with a thick cloth and vowed to remain in darkness for the rest of her life. It may be argued that Gandhari could have been more useful as Dhritarashtra’s eyes, but the girl was of a determined character and in her wish to show complete respect for her husband, she chose to not surpass him in any way.

Gandhari developed a powerful inner sight and became the moral compass in her contentious family, holding fast to her vow and insisting on the need for goodness and integrity. Later on in the epic during the war she goes against her own headstrong son and when he daily seeks her blessing, tells him repeatedly that only righteousness will win the war.

Kunti’s fecund Mantra

The marriage of Pandu, the pale one, to the ‘matchless beauty’ Kunti (Khoon-ti) gets into the heart of the *Mahabharata*. Not only is Kunti the aunt of Lord Krishna, whose father is her brother, but this valiant lady has very special powers of her own. The Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says that Kunti exemplifies the *Kshatriya* spirit with its ‘pride and confidence as well as its sense of obligation’ even more than her sons. India has a long and wonderful tradition of strong, courageous, and self-sacrificing women.

As a young girl Kunti was assigned the duty of serving the guests who came to her father’s house. One day a rather grumpy *Brahmana* named Durvasa came to visit. Famous for his bad temper, he was feared for being quick to throw curses at any and all who offended him.

Kunti served this volatile and touchy ascetic with such care and solicitude that Durvasa

in turn was very pleased with her and gave her an amazing boon. The text says that he, being learned in all mysteries, anticipated her future difficulty in having sons and therefore taught her a mantra by which she might invoke any of the celestials and have children with them.

Who among us would not be curious to test such a boon - and so one fine day the innocent young maiden Kunti, still a virgin, whispered the mantra and invoked the Sun god. The girl was stunned, ashamed and afraid to see 'the burning god' (J.A.B. van Buitenen) appear before her. Reassuring her, the Sun god said, 'Allow me your embrace!' (M.N. Dutt). Thereupon was born Karna, the great warrior hero who by right of birth was the eldest of Kunti's sons.

Karna came into this world wearing golden earrings and armor and possessing 'all auspicious marks.' As the effulgent Sun god left Kunti, he returned her virginity to the illustrious girl; but Kunti was filled with sorrow. What could she do with a baby? She was so young and very unmarried. As tears streamed down her lovely face, she placed the newborn boy wearing his golden ornaments in a small wood box and set him to drift down the river.

Karna was rescued and adopted by a chariot driver, a good man and his wife who brought him up lovingly. The mystery of Karna's birth and the heartache of his unrecognized greatness would haunt him all of his life. Only a few days before his death at Kurukshetra would Lord Krishna and then Kunti tell Karna the truth of his royal and divine identity. Many agree that Karna is the most tragic and compelling of all the characters in the *Mahabharata*.

Kunti's Marriage to Pandu

Kunti chose Pandu at her *Svyamvara*. He was a handsome man. As was the custom of that time, Bhishma found Pandu a second wife and her name was Madri. The text says that Pandu gave 'himself up to enjoyments with his two wives, Kunti and Madri, at will and at pleasure' (M.N. Dutt). After that enjoyment, he was inspired to leave his capital Hastinapur to conquer the world.

Pandu was very successful and with the splendor of his weaponry, fire and arrows, he killed many kings and took their treasure. 'All the kings of the world bowed to him' and gave him fabulous wealth, enormous precious gems, pearls, and gold. The dynasty of Bharata, the Kurus, prevailed over the other kings who were forced to pay tribute to Hastinapur.

An Iron Ball gives birth to Gandhari's 100 Sons

Gandhari conceived with her blind husband Dhritarashtra, but inauspiciously she carried 'the burden in her womb for two years' (M.N. Dutt) and this misery drove her to anger and frustration. Hearing a rumor that Kunti had given birth to a glorious son, Gandhari lost her wits and violently struck her own womb. Thereupon 'a hard mass of flesh like an iron ball' came forth from her.

Now it happened that our poet-author Vyasa was staying in the palace and it is said that he also had a hand in the boon of Gandhari being able to birth 100 sons. Seeing the peculiar iron ball, Vyasa, the best of ascetics as he calls himself, divided it into 100 pieces and had these bits placed into jars filled with ghee (clarified butter) and concealed in a safe place. After two years, the 100 sons were born from the jars.

Duryodhana (Du-ry-ODH-ana) was the firstborn and foremost of them, but at his birth 'there was a sudden outcry on all horizons of gruesome beasts that feed on carrion and of jackals of unholy howls' (J.A.B. van Buitenen). These terrible and ominous signs made the high minded and righteous Vidura urge his brother Dhritarashtra to abandon the child as it was 'evident that he will be the extermination of your race' (M.N. Dutt). But Dhritarashtra was already nursing a serious case of envy against his brother Pandu and did not listen to this sage advice. Thus Duryodhana's birth sets the stage for the internecine Armageddon to come.

Dhritarashtra's weakness and emotional blindness will couple with his thwarted ambitions to be king and feed his son's headstrong impulsive selfish nature. It was said that Duryodhana was a partial incarnation of the Asuric demonic realm.

Why the Sons of Pandu are not his sons ...

One day the handsome victorious Pandu was hunting in the forest when he came upon a great stag enjoying his mate. Not realizing that the two deer were a *Rishi* and his wife, Pandu shot them both with his 'swift and sharp' arrows. Before dying the *Rishi* cursed the Kuru king thus: If ever Pandu should feel sexual desire, he will certainly immediately die.

Pandu was distraught and informed his wives, Kunti and Madri. There was much weeping in the palace. Pandu vowed to practice austerities and become a *Brahmacharya*, but how would his dynasty be preserved? The moment had come for Kunti to reveal her secret boon and so she told her husband that a *Brahmana* had once given her a mantra to call up any celestial and have a child with him. Kunti's confession neglected to include the fact that she had already tested the boon and given birth to the luckless Karna.

Desperate to continue his dynastic lineage through sons, the grief stricken Pandu urged his virtuous wife Kunti to use the mantra that very day. He considered the god Dharma to be the wisest choice, as the god of Law and justice would never commit a sinful act and thus his son would be accepted by the entire kingdom as lawful and virtuous. Kunti replied, 'Be it so' and circumambulated her husband seven times.

The Five Pandavas: Yudhisthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula & Sahadeva

Gandhari had been pregnant for a year with her ominous iron ball when Kunti called on the eternal Dharma for a son. The text says that the deity was overpowered by her mantra and came to her on his car. Kunti united with Dharma in his spiritual form and thus was born Yudhisthira, who was proclaimed by an invisible voice to become the 'best of men and the foremost of all the virtuous' - which might be expected from the son of Dharma.

Pandu asked for another son and to please her husband, Kunti called forth Vayu, the god of the wind. Kunti asked for a son who would be strong and huge and capable of 'humbling the pride' of everyone - and so was born Bhima.

Again Pandu asked for another son who would be superior, the best of men, and requested that Kunti call Indra, the king of the celestial heavens. To assist in the invocation of the deity Indra, Pandu himself practiced severe asceticism and penances and in concentration stood on one leg for a long time. Indra promised a son who would be famous all over the three worlds, who would be a chastiser of the wicked, a supporter of the *Brahmanas* and honest men, a delight to his friends, and the foremost slayer of all foes (M.N. Dutt) - thus was born Arjuna.

Pandu did not want his second wife Madri to feel neglected and persuaded Kunti to share the mantra. Madri invoked the twin *Asvins* (celestial physicians) and thus were born the twins, Nakula and Sahadeva, who was said to be the most handsome of all men.

Rivalry & Eventual War

The five boys were educated with Dhritarashtra's sons by the great sage and warrior Drona. From the beginning Duryodhana was deeply envious of the five Pandavas and sought to humiliate and destroy them. He tried to poison and drown Bhima when the two were only boys. The seeds of his jealousy grew and festered; and as the years passed, Duryodhana's transgressions against the Pandavas continued. In an act of arson, he conspired to set fire to a house they were occupying - but they were informed and

escaped. He challenged them to a dice game and by cheating, made the inexperienced Yudhishthira foolishly gamble away all his wealth, his brothers and wife, Draupadi.

Nothing could for long daunt the greatness of the Pandavas - or Duryodhana's raging desire to crush them. And so through the pages of the *Mahabharata*, the two sides of a family, the descendants of Bharata, moved closer and closer to the battlefield of Kurukshetra and Arjuna's great depression, the momentous reason for the most supernal guide to life, the discourse of Lord Krishna to his friend in the timeless *Bhagavad Gita*.

The Mahabharata, Volume 1

Sanskrit Text with English Translation

M.N. Dutt

Edited by Dr. Ishvar Chandra Sharma & Dr. O.N. Bimali

Parimal Publications, revised edition 2004, Delhi

Available at exoticindiaart.com

The Mahabharata: The Book of the Beginning

Translated & edited by J.A.B van Buitenen, 1973

University of Chicago, 198

The Mahabharata, A Literary Study

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair

Clarion Books, 1985, 1993, Delhi

The Bhagavad Gita is the Ultimate User's Manual: Knowledge cures Depression!



What follows will be my own understanding of the *Bhagavad Gita*. I fully admit that by commenting on this sacred text I am challenging myself in a way I never thought possible. After reading many translations of the text, I realized that the *Bhagavad Gita* is a book that stands the test of time and was intended to be interpreted in a personal way by each one who approaches the song (*gita*) with an open heart.

Yes, there are definite meanings based on earlier writings from the Vedas, Upanishads, and Samkhya; but as each consciousness feels Vyasa's arrangement of the Sanskrit words, each comes away with something different, something uniquely their own. It should be read over one's whole life because the meaning will change for you as time changes you and your consciousness.

I hope that these words will offer some useful glimpse into Krishna's Song of God, and I urge you to read various translations for yourself and draw your own conclusions as to the meaning of these supernal verses. I cannot imitate Vyasa's divine poetry. But I do believe that the *Bhagavad Gita* provides us with everything we need to know. The Gita is just as relevant and valid today as it was in 150 BC when Vyasa's ink was drying. It is the ultimate user's manual for the human being.

Arjuna's Depression

The *Bhagavadgita Parva* is the third episode of the *Bhishma Parva*, the sixth of eighteen major books in the *Mahabharata*. In the western editions the chapters have always been referred to as 'books' so in order to not create additional confusion, I will also.

The *Bhishma Parva* begins with a description of the armies of the Pandavas, Yudhisthira,

Bhima, Arjuna, Krishna, and the twins, assembling at Kurukshetra against the armies of Dhritarashtra, Duryodhana, Bhishma, Drona, and Karna. The text says that beyond Kurukshetra the entire earth felt empty as only the children and the old were left in the houses. The armies of the world had come to this ancient battleground and their vast camps covered many *Yojanas*, an ancient unit of distance of about 40 miles. 'Both armies stood for battle in the field of Kurukshetra like two agitated oceans.' (M.N. Dutt)

The blind Dhritarashtra would be useless in battle and remains back in his palace. Vyasa, the poet-author of the epic, visits him to warn him that the terrible moment had arrived and that all will fight and die. Vyasa reminds Dhritarashtra that man is subject to the power of Time (Kala) and therefore advises him to find the wisdom not to grieve.

Remote Viewing the Battle

Vyasa offers to give the old blind man the inner power of seeing the battle, but Dhritarashtra does not wish to watch his sons wounded and bleeding, and asks to only hear the proceedings described. He will remain blind. Vyasa therefore gives to Sanjaya, a royal counselor, the boon of remote viewing the battlefield - a *Siddhic* power called in Sanskrit *sravana darshanam*. And so it is that the *Bhagavad Gita* is told to us via this 'celestial vision' which is said to reveal even the thoughts in the mind.

Vyasa then confessed to Dhritarashtra that he had seen many 'omens that forebode evil' and the disastrous slaughter that was coming upon his realm. Malevolent birds that feed upon flesh were gathered in glad anticipation and the earth was quaking. He warned the old man that Kurukshetra would be covered with the bodies of slain warriors and the Seer sees the sun 'covered by headless trunks when rising or setting.' The gods and goddesses themselves tremble and vomit blood. The constellations portend a terrible evil, a fearful comet was rising, and the signs of the deterioration of Time were everywhere. Animals were being born deformed, as in our own current toxic time.

The poet Vyasa tells Dhritarashtra that the earth will drink 'the blood of thousands of kings' and in a last minute plea for peace urges Duryodhana's father to stop the coming extermination. The blind man rationalizes his own ambition and conveniently falls back on Fate, saying that the war was previously ordained. Once more Vyasa asks Dhritarashtra to stop the war and warns him that the slaughter of so many 'can never produce any good.' (M.N. Dutt)

Vyasa leaves and Sanjaya begins to remote view the battlefield Kurukshetra. The scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair suggests that Sanjaya serves the function of a Greek chorus in the *Mahabharata*. Not only does he report to Dhritarashtra what he see in his inner vision, but he also quite bluntly often reminds the blind man that as head of his family, he is to blame and not his son Duryodhana. Lord Krishna also lays the blame for war entirely on Dhritarashtra's shoulders.

Arjuna illuminates the sky with his effulgence ...

Arjuna is not the eldest of the five Pandava brothers and therefore Yudhisthira is the king. Arjuna, the son of Indra, is a warrior of blameless integrity and wisdom, a hero of incomparable stature. He faces and defeats entire armies alone! Among her five Pandava husbands, it is said that he is Draupadi's favorite.

After Yudhisthira foolishly loses everything in that fateful unfair game of dice, Arjuna and his brothers are exiled into the forest. During the exile Yudhisthira asks Arjuna to seek celestial weapons from his father, the god Indra. Arjuna's superb warrior skills were the result of the awesome powers of his asceticism, and with these powers he reaches Indra's sacred mountain in one day, for he 'possessed the speed like that of the mind.' (M.N. Dutt)

Arjuna asks Indra for the boon of the knowledge of all weapons, but his father tells him that only Shiva the Destroyer can grant this boon. And so Arjuna increased his devotion to severe asceticism, and for months lived on air, standing on his toes with his arms stretched up towards the sky.

Shiva tests Arjuna arduously in combat and finding the son of Indra to be worthy, Shiva gives him the boon of weaponry and also reveals to Arjuna that in a former life he was the great Seer Nara, the friend of Narayana (a form of Vishnu and therefore Krishna) and that as Nara he engaged in thousands of years of 'fearful and austere' asceticism. Arjuna's prowess and integrity made him worthy of the *Gandhiva* weapon.

But Arjuna also wants the *Brahmashira* weapon, which destroys the entire universe at the end of an era (*yuga*), for the purpose of destroying his enemies, the armies of Duryodhana. Shiva offers him the Pashupata, one of his favorites, which has similar powers and warns Arjuna to use it only with 'proper' reason. The son of Indra felt pleased at having seen the great three-eyed Shiva and received the boon of the Pashupata and Gandhiva weapons. His wondrous beauty 'illuminated the sky with his effulgence.' (M.N. Dutt)

Their Cousin Krishna

The mother of the five Pandava brothers, Kunti (Khoon-tee), is the sister of Krishna's father, and so Krishna is their cousin. Krishna plays a crucial role in the *Mahabharata* and his relationship with the Pandavas develops in depth and complexity as he becomes the family guide. But Krishna and Arjuna were true friends - men who loved to roam the countryside together hunting and sharing those grand adventures that young men love. Arjuna marries Krishna's sister Subhadra and Krishna, who favors his dear friend, helps the two elope. Draupadi, who is Arjuna's first wife, accepts this marriage with some initial reluctance - but Subhadra is a sterling girl who finds the way to win Draupadi's heart.

Choosing Krishna

Before the battle began both Arjuna and Duryodhana came to Krishna and asked for his help. Krishna reminded them that he had vowed not to fight personally, but makes the offer that one can have his armies and the other can have him. Ever the impulsive arrogant brat, Duryodhana took Krishna's armies, believing he had for once outwitted Arjuna. Without a second thought Arjuna chose Krishna and asked him to be his charioteer in the battle and to guide him through the war.

The metaphor is clear: Arjuna is us, human consciousness in conflict and confusion; the chariot represents the body, our nature, Prakriti and the three gunas; and Krishna is the God-within, the guide through the battlefield of life.

Durga's Blessing

Before leaving for battle, Krishna advises Arjuna to seek the blessing of the terrible goddess Durga (Beyond-Reach), the mother of the Vedas, who as the consort of Shiva can take the form of the fiercest warrior and become the destroyer of the world. Durga appeared in the sky and told Arjuna that he would indeed vanquish his enemies as he was both invincible and had Narayana (Krishna) to help him.

Arjuna Whirling & Trembling

Feeling fearless and confident of victory, Arjuna and Krishna got onto their chariot and blew the celestial conchs. Krishna pulled the chariot out into the middle of the field between the two armies (I.21) and Arjuna saw everyone assembled there; he saw his family, his teachers, and friends, Bhishma and Drona, and many others who he had known all of his life and loved - but now he must kill. The sight of his kinsmen arrayed across Kurukshetra caused Arjuna to despair. He told Krishna that his mouth had gone dry, his mind was whirling, his body trembling; he drops the *Gandhiva*. Arjuna suddenly realizes that he can see no good coming from killing his own family. He no longer wants victory and kingship if the price is the murder of his 'teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers' and others who have been his family. (I.26-32)

This is known as Arjuna's despondency or depression, and some have even speculated that Arjuna was in fact afraid and sought philosophy to justify his reluctance. I find that difficult to believe of my hero; but regardless of his motivation, this amazing poignant moment was the culmination of the lives of generations and woven layers of circumstances that gave birth to Krishna's glorious *Bhagavad Gita*.

Arjuna could find no joy in killing Dhritarashtra's armies even if they had conspired to destroy the Pandavas in so many evil ways. He felt he would be committing an unforgivable crime - and the greatest warrior of that world, in the middle of the battlefield Kurukshetra, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of men, with their chariots, horses and elephants, his heart filled with grief and his eyes with tears, dropped his weapons and sat down in his chariot pit. (I.47)

'I shall not fight!'

Remember that Arjuna and Krishna are great friends, and in the spirit of male camaraderie, Krishna smiled and spoke laughingly: 'Why has this mood come over you at this bad time ... Do not act like a eunuch!' (J.A.B van Buitenen). This translation always shocked me and made me laugh as it is so male. (II.2)

Arjuna admits that his mind is confused and says, 'I shall not fight!' (II.9)

Krishna is always smiling, but his smile is not mere camaraderie - it is the reflection of the highest wisdom inherent in his divine consciousness. I think of Krishna as God realized in man. Thus Krishna is always the best of the human physical embodiment revealed by his Oneness with the God within him. He is God fully incarnated and man fully enlightened.

Yes, he does possess divine powers in the *Mahabharata*, but as Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair points out in his writings, Krishna does not stop the war or save Draupadi's sons or even his own people when much later they fight among themselves and destroy his clan. Krishna is meant to be understood as God working through the human embodiment, just as we too have the choice to align our consciousness and work with the God within.

The Soul is Eternal

Krishna then begins his discourse on Knowledge (Book Two) and says that both he and Arjuna, and all those assembled on that field, indeed all human beings, have always existed and always will continue to exist. We pass from birth to childhood, to youth, old age and death only to change and transmigrate from one body into another. The wise are not confused by this. (II.12,13)

The five senses make their contact the external world and its objects, and send their information-impulses to our brain, allowing us to experience the polarities of pleasure and pain, *sukha-duhkha* in Sanskrit. These experiences are impermanent and are to be endured, for what is temporal has no 'real' existence and is unreal (*Asat*) in the sense that it is fluctuation and change. While the real (*Sat*) always exists, as the Sufi Mahmud Shabistari says, 'beneath the curtain of each atom.' (II.14-16)

It is not that the external world has no value as some believe; however, its state of constant change makes it the unreal (*Asat*) in the sense that it is impermanent. The external reality is very real to the five senses, but there is so much more to our world than what we can see, hear, touch, etc. Everywhere there is the imperishable (*akshara*) that permeates, supports and sustains the temporal illusory hologram. Without Knowledge of this eternal, immutable, imperishable Real - we are lost, floating on a sea of delusion and ignorance that tosses us around at whim and fools us into thinking that possessions and pleasure can give us meaning.

Krishna teaches his friend that this universe is pervaded by that which is indestructible and Arjuna has no power to kill that. The body may die, but the soul (*Atma*) never dies. It simply transmigrates to a new body, just as we get new clothes when our old ones are worn out. (II.17-22)

When our body is worn out we move into new forms that resonate with our thoughts, new data-collecting vehicles to expand our expression of the God within us all. The realization that you never die changes your entire attitude towards living and you have the opportunity to become less attached to the perils, failures, and successes of your current identity self.

There comes a time when in wisdom you will not care if you have been immortalized by the media. Your search for meaning will not be based on the approval or disapproval of others. You will care more about doing what is right, taking action with the greatest integrity and knowledge you have available to you in that moment, and that knowledge will always be changing as you continually reevaluate its worth. You will ask yourself, not so much, what did I accomplish - but rather what consciousness was I in when I acted.

Knowledge has the power to set you Free

Knowing that you move from life to life takes the desperation from your bondage to Time, and this enlightened realization releases you from the illusion that all you have is this one body, this one chance.

As someone who was brought up in the west I realize that the concept of the transmigration of the soul is at first difficult to assimilate. If you are truly determined and your intention is pure, you do have the ability within you to recall the past lives of your current body. They reside in the DNA as holographic information and you can play them like films. I have done this and so have many others.

The soul (*Atma*) transmigrates from body to body. The small personal identity 'self' you imagine yourself to be does not reincarnate ever again. God forbid we should always and forever be the same repetitious personality. That would be a great bore. Transmigration was misunderstood as reincarnation by those who did not deeply understand Hindu metaphysics.

Blinded by Science

You will find the greater freedom and you will realize that for all the comforts science has brought us, it has failed to acknowledge the imperishable (*akshara*) and only measures what can be perceived by the five senses and those endless machines which have been invented by them. I like to jest that we are blinded by science. Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair calls it 'scientism' and in his illuminating book, *The Betrayal of Krishna*, says that because we ignored the 'Why' of the world, we may be destroyed by our 'know-how.'

The exceedingly brilliant Arthur Koestler said in the book *The Sleepwalkers, A History of*

Man's Changing Vision of the Universe that he hoped 'this book would serve as a cautionary tale against the hubris of science. ...The dials on our laboratory panels are turning into another version of the shadows in the cave. Our hypnotic enslavement to the numerical aspects of reality has dulled our perception of non-quantitative moral values; the resultant end-justifies-the-means ethics may be a major factor in our undoing.'

Akshara, Dharma & Meaning

Krishna says that the eternal imperishable (*akshara*) cannot be cut, burned, or wet with water, nor will it dry and wither away. It is the all pervading - *sarvagatas* - that is inside each and every one of us. It is this imperishable (*akshara*), eternal, primordial (*sanatanas*), pervading (*sarvagatas*) All that we come to trust and rely upon, no matter what. (II.23)

Krishna tells Arjuna that he should not grieve over the ineluctable movements of the Eternal Wheel. Birth and death are certain for all, therefore what reason is there for him to mourn these men who wait on the battlefield Kurukshetra. In fact because Arjuna is a warrior born into the *Kshatriya* cast it is his duty, his Dharma to fight. (II.25-27; 30-33)

Each of us comes into this world with our own unique Dharma. We are each the accumulation of many lifetimes of a multitude of experiences. These experiences create the reflexive substance of our consciousness and our consciousness - meaning what we think and feel, and which is constantly changing for better or worse - generates the electromagnetic-field-fabric of our hologram. Fabric is a useful metaphor because it conjures up the image of 1000s of threads woven together to create a multiplicity of patterns, colors, strengths and weaknesses.

Sin & Freedom

We find meaning in our lives when we follow our Dharma. Meaning is ultimately far more important to a human being than the temporal rewards of pleasure and gold. Krishna tells Arjuna that he should never abandon his duty. There is no sin in following your own Dharma, because in doing so you are working in alliance - in 'partnership' as Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair accurately terms it - with the God within you and sin is only that which moves away from God. We always have that choice - the choice to align our consciousness with God or to reject the tender opportunity. That is our freedom.

The Sleepwalkers

A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe

Arthur Koestler, 1959

Penguin Arkana, 1989, London

Draupadi's Humiliation as a Reason for War & Why You Never Have the Right to the Results of Any Action



In Book II Krishna has explained to Arjuna that as a warrior (*Kshatriya*) it is his duty (Dharma) to take action against evil and to fight for the protection of what is righteous and good. In the eras before the Kali Yuga the warriors were dedicated to the protection of truth, especially from from evil rulers. The *Kshatriyas* were men of wisdom and integrity who were dedicated to more than personal gain, mercenary wars, and corporate greed.

Draupadi's humiliation as a reason for war

Draupadi (pronounced Dra-ow-pah-dee) is the wife of the five Pandavas. Initially Arjuna alone won her, but when he returned home to introduce his new wife to his mother Kunti (pronounced Khoon-tee), there was a misunderstanding. Kunti did not see Draupadi and when Arjuna announced that he had brought 'Alms' to their mother, Kunti

replied as she always did that Arjuna must share whatever he had gotten with his brothers. In those days what you said was your ‘word’ and so because Kunti had spoken this, the fiery Draupadi became the wife of all five Pandavas.

As the son of Dharma, it was Yudhisthira’s destiny to become the wisest and most just of all kings, but he had much to learn. A fondness of gambling, the necessity to keep his word and respond to all challenges, and as some have suggested, perhaps the desire to take Duryodhana's wealth from him, led the inexperienced Yudhisthira into a game of dice in which he was unfairly matched. Duryodhana chose an expert to play for him - Shakuni, the crafty ever-conspiring brother of his mother Gandhari.

Yudhisthira loses his entire kingdom, all his wealth and in what can only be described as mind-boggling foolery, bets his brothers and wife Draupadi as if they were his possessions to wager.

The accomplished gambler, slick Shakuni says to the green young Yudhisthira: ‘O king, one who is intoxicated falls into a pit and remains there ... gamesters in the excitement of play utter such ravings as they would never do in their waking moments or in their dreams’ (M.N. Dutt). We thus understand that Yudhisthira has yet to master his compulsions.

Dragged by the hair and disrobed ...

Draupadi once laughed at Duryodhana, and so having won her at dice, the shameless incorrigible son of the blind Dhritarashtra calls for Draupadi to be dragged into the gambling hall. With her usual intelligence and quick temper, the proud and beautiful Draupadi asks the hapless servant who has been sent for her to go back and ask Yudhisthira who he lost first, himself or her? It is a profound query.

Apparently Yudhisthira has no answer for this caustic riddle and sits as one ‘demented and deprived of reason’ (M.N.Dutt). To make matters worse, Draupadi is ‘in her season’ and therefore only wearing one cloth, so she is not dressed modestly for a hall full of deranged gambling males.

The servant is reluctant to force her, so Duryodhana enlists his brother the dastardly Dushasana to go fetch the girl forcibly. Realizing her immediate fate, Draupadi escapes into a room filled with the king’s ladies; but the now angry Dushasana runs after her and grabs her by her long lovely wavy hair and drags her away. Draupadi pleads with the blackguard, telling him that she is in her season, but the brother of Duryodhana only replies without pity that she is now their slave.

Although she was praying, Draupadi’s anger was rising and as she was dragged before

that perfidious assembly, she cast looks upon her husbands that inflamed them. If looks could kill, the Pandavas would have dropped dead at the power that shot from her glance ‘full of modesty and anger.’

Karna, the son of the sun god who had thrown his lot with Duryodhana, gets into the degrading frenzy of wickedness and suggests that Draupadi is unchaste because she has five husbands. Since the Pandavas have lost everything to the dice game, why should they not also hand over their clothes and Draupadi too. The five brothers in an icy silence of disgrace and dishonor take off their upper garments. The heinous Dushasana then began to forcibly pull at ‘the cloth of Draupadi.’ In her torment, feeling that she was losing her mind, she prays to Krishna. The text says that Krishna was deeply moved and from kindness and compassion came there and ‘covered her with many excellent cloths.’

This obscene and terrible event is one of many perpetrated by Duryodhana which culminate and erupt in the battle at Kurukshetra. Many questions of morality are raised by Draupadi’s humiliation, for example why did Bhishma sit by and do nothing? However Draupadi’s humiliation does offer one very legitimate reason why Arjuna must fight: If the warrior cast, the *Kshatriyas*, do not protect their women and fight for their safety, then what will happen to all women? The plight of women throughout the Kali Yuga exemplifies the fate of women who are left unprotected by righteous warriors.

Karma-bandham

Talking in the chariot, positioned in between the two standing armies waiting for battle, Krishna has advised his friend that there is no sin incurred in the performance of action that conforms with *Dharma*, meaning Arjuna’s duty as a warrior. This knowledge is from the ancient system of Samkhya and the sage Kapila 500 BC. Krishna now teaches his friend the Yoga of Wisdom and Knowledge, which has the power to liberate him from the great danger (*mahato-bhayat*) of bondage (*bandham*), that results from attachment to action - Karma. (II.39)

The Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta comments on how action binds us in the temporal illusory hologram: The soul is bound by the subtle form of ‘impressions (vasana) of past deeds’ which remain in the mind. (II.40) My interpretation of this is that our thoughts, which generate our actions, create frequencies that build up as electromagnetic fields around the subtle body and create future tendencies. We become what we think and do.

Krishna assures Arjuna that even the smallest beginning in the practice of Yoga will give good results, and what is gained by the efforts of a sincere heart will not be lost (II.41); even though, from my own experience, we may slip now and then back into a less than conscious state.

The etymology of the word Yoga is yoke (*yuktas*) meaning coupling or more profoundly, union. It's common usage which would have been readily understood in that time, was the yoke pin used to join the oxen together to pull the ox cart. The yoke pin attached the yoke, a wooden harness, to the pole that was built into the cart. Thus when we practice the Yoga of Wisdom, we yoke our consciousness to the God within. You can't drive the ox cart without the yoke pin - just as Arjuna, who personifies all mankind, needs Krishna to guide his chariot through the battlefield of life.

Radical thinking

The tendency of man to commandeer and pervert wisdom for his own selfish needs permeates written history. When religions are turned into elaborate and specialized rituals, they degenerate and lose their cosmic consciousness (Arthur Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers*).

Writing itself is a symptom of the Kali Yuga. Vyasa, the poet-author of the *Bhagavad Gita* in the great epic the *Mahabharata*, saw that in his own time 'religion had decayed into ritual' (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair) for in the next few verses (II.42-46) Krishna proceeds into a refreshing perspective of those unenlightened ones who use ritual to achieve their worldly desires. Just as Christ threw the money lenders out of the temple, you get the impression that in speaking through Krishna, Vyasa is a radical thinker. (*The Betrayal of Krishna*)

As we might wryly observe the hypocrisy and failings of any priesthood in our own time, Krishna seems to enjoy pointing out to Arjuna that there are those who, caught up in the flowery words (*puspitam vacam*) of the *Vedas*, profess that there is nothing else. Filled with their own desire for heaven, they are 'addicted', as Winthrop Sergeant translates the Sanskrit, to the various rites.

Such addiction and attachment to realizing only their desires for pleasure and power would not permit the practice of meditation to birth a discerning intellect that is necessary to achieve a frequency of consciousness which resonates with primordial truth (II.45). Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair feels that the poet Vyasa was 'unambiguous and forthright here in his rejection of scripture and revelation.'

The *Vedas* as a whole are devoted to rites and duties (*Madhusudana Sarasvati*), the business of life; and they are intensely condensed metaphysical mysteries, which in my understanding are intended to be meditated on and followed as labyrinths of thought. The higher your consciousness is, the deeper will be your understanding, as the quantum oriented translation of the Rig Veda by Shyam Ghosh illustrates.

However according to Krishna, the practice of the Vedic rites - or in my view any other forms of religious ritual - for the purpose of achieving heaven, and hoping for pleasure and power in this life and the next, will not lead to liberation.

Guna-Maya

The *Vedas* concern is the three *gunas* - *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* - and as these qualities are binding, Krishna counsels Arjuna to become free of them (II.45-48). In the philosophy of *Samkhya* there are two poles of manifestation (Rene Guenon): *Purusha*, which is the Soul or Consciousness; and *Prakriti*, which is Nature or matter. *Prakriti* consists of the three *gunas* and the the creative force known as *Maya*, which is also perceived as illusion in that *Prakriti's Maya* generates the hologram by perpetually creating states of balance and imbalance between the three *gunas*.

Sattva is serenity and harmony; *rajas* is restlessness and activity; and *tamas* is inertia. Those of you who are even a little familiar with astrology can understand the three *gunas* in terms of cardinal (*rajas*), mutable (*sattva*) and fixed (*tamas*). Astrology is the science of time and our birth charts are maps or blueprints of our holograms and the energies that comprise them. We are each a sort of pulsating whirlwind of the three *gunas* shifting and realigning, expressing order and chaos as we move through the days of our lives.

It is in the *sattvic* state that we are able to receive and understand the highest and deepest wisdom. I have vividly experienced this in my own pursuit of truth. One day I can be in a state of receptive evenness that allows me to understand a verse in the *Gita* clearly. But if, say I watch TV or allow myself to become angry or fearful, I can again attempt to read the verse and have no access to its inner meaning whatsoever!

You see, God is always here in the Heart waiting. It is us, meaning our consciousness that continually flies off somewhere, anywhere, following the latest illusion, a bit of fantasy-cake; or sits stewing in a mood of dejection, accusing God of not being near. It's us - it's all up to us to tune our consciousness into the higher frequencies and that takes plain old fashioned roll-up your sleeves and get-on-with-it work.

Unbound

These verses about the appropriate usefulness of the *Vedas* are not, according to Abhinavagupta, to be seen as Krishna's rejection of the *Vedas*. Rather he is revealing the age old secret that when one becomes indifferent to the endless fluctuations of the three *gunas* which produce the ever occurring polarity of pleasure and pain (*sukha-duhkha*),

then one is no longer bound. (II.46)

I am tempted here to make an analogy, and while some might see it as superficial, I know this is something we have all experienced. If we are lucky, we fall in love - ah, sweet love - and often this love does not last. Perhaps the person rejects us or turns out to be less than perfect, and it hurts! The pain we suffer is indeed deep, and we imagine that we will go on and on throughout our whole life with this terrible crushing feeling of heartbreak that intrudes on our every waking moment. And yet, one day, for no apparent reason, it's gone and we can let go.

I think that something similar, at least in 'feeling' happens in regards to the *gunas*. After you have had enough repeating experiences, perhaps in 1000s of lifetimes, or maybe you just get old enough and wise enough to have seen it all before, so many times --- it hits you, epiphany style, that something is occurring rather like a machine on automatic. And this realization makes you feel a sort of, dare I say, existential detachment from 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' - thank you, Hamlet. You can let go. Suddenly, dizzy with realization, you are aware that you haven't been in control, and that there are much larger forces at work, forces that you need to understand so you can stop getting swept away by *rajas* and *tamas*. You can let go.

You never have the right to the results of any action ...

Now here's where the conversation begins to get deep in a vein that to my knowledge is rarely if ever followed in western thinking. Krishna tells Arjuna that he has the right to act, but never to the fruits or results of that action. Never! This statement is completely contrary to western dictates and the rules of ambition, which is all about risk only for reward. This concept of 'detachment' from results is something very subtle.

When I am struggling to understand metaphysical ideas, I try to take my conscious back into the golden era, the *Satya* Yuga, and imagine what I might have felt. As an artist I completely understand that the greatest joy for me is the act of creating. I love watching the colors go down on the page, and even after years of developing techniques, the fun is in never quite knowing what's going to emerge. This is why the stale predictability of 'ranch art' or any other commercial form of creativity is so deadly dull. While I enjoy looking at the thing as the result and object of my endeavors, and of course I hope that others will also enjoy it, what really is of value to me and gives me meaning is the Act of Creating - the object is secondary.

So with this in mind, I imagine myself in the early days of this universe, in one of many *Satya* Yugas, creating. In that golden era whatever thoughts form in my mind appear in the temporal illusory hologram and I have the ability to create endlessly. Therefore my

joy - and concomitantly my proximity to the God within me - is based in the Act of Creation and not in the object created. Attachment to the object created draws me away from my closeness to the within and binds me into the temporal illusory hologram I myself have generated. This is what I think Krishna is pointing to when he says that we never have the right to the results of your actions. Becoming attached to these 'fruits' is a symptom of you losing your proximity to your own internal God-within consciousness.

Samkhya's Apavarga

In *Samkhya*, the key to liberation (*Apavarga*) is to realize with all of your being that you are not *Prakriti's gunas*, meaning you are not the fluctuating whirlwind of your small personality identity-self which only reflects the DNA of the body you currently inhabit. You are *Purusha*, the eternal Soul, *ATMA*. This realization comes to you like a shock of lightning, and in *Abhinavagupta's* Kashmir Saivism it is said that you are 'astonished' that the God within is even able to cloak Its true nature of omniscient power with *Maya*.

Maya has to be powerful, so powerful that it can delude; that's why it is so hard to Remember who you are. We, as bits of God, created this power to trick our consciousness into Forgetting its true essence so that we might enjoy the adventure of the Cycles of Time. God created the *gunas* and only your choice to align your consciousness with the God within you can liberate you from the deluding illusion.

The realization of your true identity will allow you to begin to learn to use the *gunas* to play in the world harmlessly, and eventually helpfully, to accomplish what is actually meaningful. You will now and again slip and fall back into the old repeating patterns, but as time passes and if you maintain your determination, you will Become closer and closer to what Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair terms the 'partnership' with God. You can emerge from the chaos and confusion of petty self-interest and greed, which has no lasting value and never fulfills. You begin to understand that true meaning, lasting fulfillment, and the Real freedom you have sought all of your life abide within.

In Satya P. Agarwal's translation of the *Gita*, he says that our ancestors, and by this I assume he means the Vedic Seers, never intended us to spend our lives in meditation; it becomes a form of escapism. The experience of partnership, as the feeling of Oneness with God, will open you to a clarity of intellect, wisdom, and vision you could never have previously imagined. Enlightenment will fire your courage to work for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*).

Book II, Verse 50: Yoga is skill in Action.

योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् .. २-५०

yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam 2.50

‘God will not create history for him [Arjuna], but can teach him Yoga which is the skill in action that can divinise history. History will never be redeemed if man does not enter into the partnership with God with all his being.’

The Betrayal of Krishna - Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair

‘RGVEDA for the Layman’

Satasuktaparidarsanam

Translated with Commentary by Shyam Ghosh

Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.; 2002, New Delhi

Samkhya Karika of Isvara Krsna

Translated by Swami Virupakshananda

Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1995; Mylapore, Madras

The Gita for the Twenty-First Century

Satya P. Agarwal

New Age Books, 2003; New Delhi

Part 1: Our Miasma of Amnesia & the Apavarga of SAMKHYA

<http://www.metaphysicalmusing.com/articles/apavarga1.htm>

Part 2: Apavarga of SAMKHYA, the Door to Liberation

The man of yoga, knowing the truth, knows that while seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, breathing, speaking, eliminating, grasping, opening and closing his eyes, he does in fact nothing, as he realizes that it is only the senses operating on their subjects.

Bhagavad Gita 27[5]8-9

<http://www.metaphysicalmusing.com/articles/apavarga2.htm>

Non-Attachment in the Hologram: Remove the Senses from Their Objects

Your own Armageddon



Yoga is Skill in Action (II.50)

Krishna has revealed to his friend Arjuna the ancient secret: Do not be attached to the fruits of your acts. It is our attitude towards the actions that we perform, meaning the consciousness we generate in the moment we act, that can bind, enmesh and entrap us in the temporal illusory hologram. Freedom lies in acquiring and mastering the ‘skill’ to act without the expectation of the result.

You can easily see the wisdom of this in your own life. How many times have you given something or done a favor for another, expecting them to react and behave in a certain way - only to find that your intent was not in any way realized or sadly the person was actually harmed by your seeming generosity. Because this happens so frequently, the phrase ‘unintended consequences’ has become common in our everyday language.

Krpanas is the Sanskrit word used to describe the person who is motivated by the expectation of results, the fruits of their actions, and can be translated as either despicable or pitiable (Winthrop Sargeant). Both of these express Krishna’s frank disdain. Expectation is not useful and leads to pain, the pain of attachment and disappointment.

Unlike most western thinking, the *Bhagavad Gita* reveals to us that it is not only bad deeds that will draw you into attachment to the hologram and a subsequent loss of wisdom. Good acts done in expectation also delude our consciousness. Whatever charitable acts you do, for example, should not be done to impress others or used to barter with God.

Acquire the skill of letting go

Through this process of learning non-attachment, letting go of expectations, and realizing that you are not the *gunas* of the small personality identity-self, you will cultivate an intelligence

that has the power to cross over and transcend the endless gyrations of multiplicity. As you pass beyond delusion, you will leave behind all the bewildering, conflicting, and false teachings you had previously studied (II.52). J.A.B.van Buitenen: ‘You will become disenchanted with what is supposed to be revealed, and the revealed itself.’ You will have experienced Yoga when, in meditation, your intelligence becomes unmoving (*samadhav acala buddhis*) and you are fixed in Union with the One.

All contentment comes from within

Arjuna then asks Krishna to describe one whose insight is steady, and Krishna says that the one who is no longer subject to the desires that form in the mind has achieved the insight of wisdom (*sthitaprajnas*). In this state all contentment comes from the God within and one is pleased in the Self through the Self alone (II.55).

Imbued with the wisdom of inner-sight, even when we are surrounded by pleasures, we do not experience longing. We become free from desire (*kama*). Passion (*raja*), fear (*bhaya*), and anger (*krodas*) can no longer take root in our mind (II.56-57). The state of being saturated, suffused and inspired by the God within, the Self (*Atma*), makes all the external compulsions weaken and pale in comparison. When you become the genii, you don’t need three wishes.

Remove the senses from their objects

As a tortoise can withdraw its limbs into its shell, the one in wisdom withdraws the five senses from their objects (II.58). The five senses transmit information to the brain as impulses of sound, sight, touch, etc. Think how differently we all see and hear. As a painter when I walk into a room, I look at the pictures there; but I have observed that many people barely notice their environment. Perhaps they are more focused on what they hear or what they will say.

We all only see and hear, etc. what is in our own consciousness, which formulates and interprets whatever data is received via the five senses. Thus external objects belong to the senses (*indriyani*). Like a turtle, you can withdraw the senses from their objects and send these impulse transmissions to the God within.

The suppression of your desires and the practice of abstinence will never remove the ‘taste’ (*rasa*) for them. The senses are powerful and will torment and harass until they destroy the will (II.60). Only the actual experience of Oneness, the highest state, will induce disinterest in the sense objects (II.59).

Krishna as the Self

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna identifies himself with the Self, the God within us that permeates All - *Vasudeva*. Therefore when Krishna says that we should sit ‘intent on me’

(II.61) - meaning Krishna - my way of interpreting this and other similar verses is that Krishna represents and epitomizes God-in-man at the very highest levels, pulsating with the finest supernal frequencies. I have nothing against the term Avatar, unless it is used to make people feel small and powerless.

Wisdom will come to us and expand consciousness when we restrain the wild-horse five senses - just as Krishna controls and directs the horses that pull Arjuna's chariot. With a disciplined mind, placing our entire focus on the God within, the Self (*Atma*), we learn to control the five senses and their organs.

Abhinavagupta points out that self-mastery does not mean the austerity that produces a weakened body. A poor diet and lack of sleep will only make you vulnerable to mental confusion and cult indoctrination. Moderation combined with an alert intelligence is the ticket. As Thomas Jefferson once said: The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

Frustrated desire turns to anger & delusion

Human consciousness is configured so that our thoughts have a kind a magnetism that draws to us, sooner or later, whatever we hold in the mind. If you spend your days thinking of cake, you will begin to want cake, and you will become more and more attached to this desire. If your desire for cake goes unfulfilled, you will become frustrated and eventually that frustration turns to anger.

Anger (*krodhas*) destroys your ability to think clearly and deludes your consciousness. Delusion will in turn bring about the loss of memory. Perhaps you will wrongly blame any innocent person and make them the culprit who keeps you from the coveted cake. With your memory wandering away (*sammohat smrtivibhramah*) through such delusion, you will lose the power to reason. Without reason, you are lost (II.63).

The Waterwheel: Yantra-Rudhani

The real truth is that you will never achieve lasting happiness (*sukham*) until you have disciplined the unruly compulsive behavior produced by the *gunas* interacting with the five senses (*guna-maya*). (II.66)

The *gunas* are like a machine on automatic and in perpetual motion. They react and repeat reactions again and again. This is why most of us begin to notice specific patterns in behavior, not only in others, but more importantly in ourselves.

Krishna talks about this machine-on-automatic in the final book of the *Gita*. He calls it the *yantra-rudhani*, which can be read as 'fixed to a mechanism' or 'mounted on a machine' (XVIII.61). J.A.B.van Buitenen translates *yantra-rudhani* as 'the water wheel' and I particularly like this image because water symbolizes consciousness and the waterwheel is perpetually propelled into rotation by a stream - perhaps in this case the stream of

consciousness.

Water often produces phosphorescent rainbow mists when it is turbulent or sprayed, and I have seen this whirling phosphorescence around the subtle body with the eye-of-my-mind.

भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया .. १८- ६१

bhrāmayan sarvabhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā 18.61

As if mounted on a machine (waterwheel) turned by an illusive power.

Like the little silver sphere in a pinball machine

As long as the *gunas* (*guna-maya*) have control of your mind, you will never experience lasting happiness. You will be tossed and bounced about like that little silver sphere inside a pinball machine! You may light up the display for a moment and even score big - but sooner or later you are going back down into that small dark hole, only to be shot back out again and again in subsequent lifetimes to repeat the same experiences all over again.

Psychology, self-help books, new age workshops, and psychic readings have no durable value. Nothing can ‘fix’ you from the outside. These excursions do provide temporary comfort and often a welcomed relief from isolation in the group warmth of the like-minded. But none of these understandings are based on and rooted in the truth of primordial metaphysics. They do not know the metaphysical mechanics of human consciousness which Krishna reveals to Arjuna.

You will not gain enduring wisdom until the *gunas* and their data-collectors the five senses are controlled - which means that you have to recognize their pattern of controlling you. The Wisdom of Knowledge only emerges from focused concentration and peace. (II.66)

Krishna compares the mind that is forever wandering and running after the impulses of the five senses to the errant winds that destroy a ship on the sea (II.67). When you lose your ability to reason, you are lost in the ruinous deadly forces of your own compulsions.

The Need for Solitude

Wisdom can only begin to take root in your consciousness when you have withdrawn the senses from their objects, and to do this you must go into the silence beyond the *gunas* (*guna-maya*) - and for this you need solitude. Only an accomplished practiced Yogi, one who has achieved Union, can remain in the *sattvic* state of Peace in a tumultuous crowd of people and their whirlwind holograms.

Once you observe the mechanics of the interaction between your own five senses and the *gunas* (*guna-maya*), you will realize that everyone is in the same helpless hapless condition -

even when they are on the ‘up’ side of a cycle and appear to have it all. From this realization you will develop genuine compassion for others - not sympathy, which is based in superiority.

Sensing the spin-cycle wild-horse *gunas* whirling all around in a crowd or group of people, you will understand that the hologram of their unconscious mind is bumping up against yours and seeping into your thoughts, at least temporarily. You need to find real solitude to practice remaining in a focused state of non-attachment that will allow wisdom to grow. You need to retreat from the tsunami waves of delusion and metaphysical ignorance, at least for a time.

Your own Armageddon

This is the work that is to be done and no one can do it for you - you have to walk this lonesome valley by yourself. I don’t care what any guru or teacher promises you - you have to do this alone. And thank God for that! If anyone really could touch you with a magic wand and bestow enlightenment on you, then you would never be free. You would be indebted to them forever.

That is not God’s play, the play of God veiling Its Self in time and space, in matter and delusion, to emerge and realize Its Self once again. The game is one of Self-realization and liberation (*moksha*) - and for that, you have to work alone. This work will be the hardest thing you have ever done in your life, I promise, and will be your own private personal Armageddon.

I am not sugarcoating this because that would deceive you. But I do give you my word that this work and the Becoming in close alignment and ‘partnership’ with the God within you will be the most fulfilling, lasting, meaningful, and blissful experience you will ever have. It is the reason for Life. God veils Its Self in mankind to Become, to search for truth, and discovers that all along God dwells in the Heart of each and everyone of us.

When you realize that you are not the five senses and their impulses which send the *gunas* spinning, when you begin to learn non-attachment from desire and possessions and egotistical cravings - then you will be free from longing and delusion. Krishna tells Arjuna (II.69-72) that this is the divine state (*brahmi sthitis*) and if you remain fixed in this consciousness at the time of your death you reach the Bliss of God (*brahmannirvanam*).

The struggle against your mind

Towards the end of the *Mahabharata* after the great war is over, Krishna tells Arjuna’s brother, Yudhisthira, that the time has come to ‘prepare to carry out the struggle against your mind, and by dint of abstraction and the merit of your own Karma, you must reach the other side of the mysterious and unintelligible.’ Yudhisthira will not need any ‘weapons or friends or attendants’ because the ‘battle’ is to be ‘fought alone and single handed...’ (M.N.Dutt; Ashvamedhika Parva Ch.12, 13-14). So it is with each of us.

Only Wisdom Will Save the World



In Book II Krishna has explained to Arjuna the essential value of the Knowledge of Wisdom. In Book III Arjuna is confused and asks why, if intelligent enlightenment is the better path, must he go to war against his own family and beloved teachers, Bhishma & Drona, and engage in terrible acts (III.1). Like any practical warrior or business man with a keen interest in efficiency, Arjuna demands that Krishna tell him ‘once and for all’ the correct way to reach the supreme good (III.2).

Krishna explains the two inseparable ancient paths to freedom (*moksha*) which have been taught by him, as the God within us all, throughout the Cycles of Time. One is *Samkhya*, the Yoga of Knowledge as Wisdom (*jnana-yoga*), and the other is Karma Yoga, the Yoga of Action (III.3). In Abhinagupta’s commentary, the great Kashmir Saivite reminds us that knowledge and action are integral; they merge and fuse to operate as one coalescing system.

Krishna then makes the conspicuous point that no human being can remain for one single moment without being forced to perform some act, even if it is against our will (*karyate hyavasah karma*). We are all subject to the perpetually shifting *gunas* born of *Prakriti*, our material nature (III.5). How often we say, “Oh, that is just my nature!” when we need to excuse our behavior.

It is hypocritical (*mithyacaras*) of us to sit unmoving in some stunning yogic posture, pretending to be lost in nirvana, while thoughts of our suppressed desires are churning around the objects of the senses.

Prakriti’s Three Gunas: Sattva, Rajas, & Tamasa

The *gunas* are the three forces of Nature (*Prakriti*). In Sanskrit, *guna* means ‘cord’ – as in a rope, that which binds, or as a bowstring that creates tension to compress waveforms. The *gunas* are forces that serve to distinguish you as an individual piece of God and therefore purposively ‘limit’ you from the infinite and immutable immensity.

In the first Cycle of Time, the *Satya Yuga* or Golden Age, the *gunas* would have served us well as instruments of exploration in time and space. But as the cycles move further into density and the solidification of the world, the *gunas* become – at least to my mind – more like goons! The Hindi word for thug, or the mafia guy who beats up the suckers, is ‘goonda’ and I can’t help amusing myself by associating these two words. These days the *gunas* compel more often than they serve.

Disconnected from our Source, as we are here in the Kali Yuga, the *gunas* have become those polarity limitations we all falsely identify as ‘who & what’ we are. Our *gunas* are those endlessly multiplying and repeating downward cycles of the same-old-same-old and by now, very boring experiences inevitably leading you to that infamous brick wall. There hopefully, you are at long last forced to think, to rethink, and confront the in-your-face factoid that you are in a heinous rut that is growing progressively more unpleasant.

Your pain is a warning, an alarm, and you must confront the delusion – for it is delusional to imagine that you, as the small identity ego-self, can affect anything! As long as you believe and ‘think’ that you are separate from the God-within, the Self-Atma, then you have no power to control the wild-horse *gunas* – yours or anyone else’s! The *gunas* are on automatic.

The three GUNAS are:

SATTVA – illuminating, binds the souls by means of an attachment to joy and an attachment to knowledge.

RAJAS – are characterized by passion, arises from an attachment to craving and binds the soul by an attachment to action (activity, restlessness, enterprise and greed).

TAMAS – arises from ignorance and deludes the embodied souls and binds through absentmindedness, sloth, and sleep (obscurity, indolence, neglect and delusion arise when ‘tamas’ prevails). My intuition tells me that ‘tamas’ is the waveform generated by the EMFs coming off our TVs, which reportedly place most in a depressed state within 15 minutes!

For those of you who understand astrology, **SATTVA** is correlated to the mutable signs, **RAJAS** to the cardinal, and **TAMAS** to the fixed. The four elements of air (touch), fire (sight), water (taste), and earth (smell) play through the **GUNAS** in a multiplicity of variations. A fifth element, **ETHER**, pervades the other four, and corresponds to hearing and sound; thus the universe is emitted from sound as pulsating waveforms.

Yantra-Rudhani: Mounted on a Machine

The *gunas* are described as being like a machine - the *Yantra-Rudhani* (XVIII.61). As a function of *Prakriti*, they have been set into motion through imbalance. Their current configuration is a composite blueprint for this life and the result of our previous thoughts, which produced the events (acts) of our many lives.

Our individual human nature is said to be the result, in particular, of our thoughts just before we die - which are most likely to reflect the cumulative essence of whatever was of primal importance to us in that life. This metaphysical knowledge provides us with a reasonable encouragement to practice disciplining the mind while we are healthy and not in distracting terminal pain.

We all are compelled to engage in actions. We have to eat and exercise, however moderately, to maintain the body and the mind is a category-five hurricane difficult to subdue. No one can escape the power of the *gunas*. They are created by God to veil Its Self in Time and Matter. They have to be powerful in order to make the God-within imagine that It is limited and identify with the small personal self as you and me.

In this Twilight of the *Kali Yuga*, as you may have noticed, the small identity ego-self you falsely imagine you are, is not in control of these *gunas* - which are in fact generating your temporal illusory hologram. Until you reconnect with the God-within you, the real Self-*Atma*, you will never control the *gunas* or Become the master of your thoughts, actions, and being.

Krishna tells us that no matter what we think we are doing, we in fact do nothing (V.9). Our perception of reality is only the reception of the impulse waveforms of the five senses operating on their objects. It is not a matter of a judgment call of right or wrong when it comes to being attached to the results or fruits of your actions. It is delusional! It is delusional to believe that the small ego-self is the 'doer' and such a belief will draw your consciousness further down into density. The wise Know they do nothing! **The only 'Doer' is the God-within, the Self-*Atma*.**

Yajna: Sacrifice as Altruism & the Regard for Others

The wise learn to control the *gunas*' five senses with the mind and practice non-attachment. Krishna tells Arjuna that *Yajna*, meaning sacrifice, is the only act that does not bind us in the hologram (III.9-10). The Indian scholar, Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair, interprets *Yajna* as altruism, meaning the regard for others that produces acts of selfless sacrifice, no matter how small, which are 'free from narrowly personal attachment' and carry no desire for reward or recognition (The Betrayal of Krishna). I like this understanding of the word *Yajna* - and in any case, it is certainly more applicable in our own times.

There is in Hinduism the subtle, enlightening, and intriguing thought that this universe is itself God's Sacrifice. Everything is God, and God permeates All, therefore we are in effect breathing, eating, and standing on God. The universe is holographic and there is no thing that is not God. Through the wonderfully illusive power of *Maya*, the Creator has transformed Its Oneness into Multiplicity in what must be the ultimate supernal altruism.

Perhaps it is true, as some have suggested, that God not only sacrifices Its Self into form for the enjoyment (*bhoga*) of experiencing Time and Space - perhaps God also in some deeply mysterious way needs us, you and me!

What brings us happiness ...

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair carries this ideal of sacrifice as altruism further by translating Krishna's words (III.11-12) to mean that altruistic behavior to both deity and our fellow human beings will bring us the highest welfare (*sreyas*; also means bliss and happiness). We do however have the freedom to deny this ideal way of living, which Krishna plainly states will bring us the greatest happiness, and we may choose to behave selfishly. But if we make the choice to act altruistically in partnership with God, not only will we benefit, but the entire world will also share in the higher consciousness we Become.

My experience is that God loves surprise and when we work in an altruistic way, the God-within works with us in those, often quoted, mysterious ways. 'Deity fulfills himself only when creation is helped to evolve to perfection, and this needs partnership and reciprocal support of both man and deity.' (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair)

The hologram generated by such altruistic sacrificial acts is free from the sin of attachment. However your freedom to reject the tender offer of 'partnership' and live only for your own selfish needs, out of fear and greed, will lead you on the path of the adventure of delusion. In the illusion of separation, you slip further into unconsciousness, ignorance of your true nature, and bondage to your desires (III.13). That's simply the way this universe, the mechanistic *yantra-rudhana*, and *Prakriti's gunas* are programmed. Those are the rules.

Do as you please ...

My understanding is that in the same way no one would ever want to force another to fall in love with them, God would never make any of the pieces of Its Self return to their Source before they make the choice for themselves. It is always up to you. The choice to Remember who you are is always waiting, and there is an intimately sweet dance between hard spiritual work and Divine Grace.

The God within you never abandons you. If the God within you left, your soul would have left your current body and you would be dead. God is always patiently waiting for Its bits of Self, you and me as apparent multiplicity, to turn and recognize our own divinity and come Home. This is our freedom. We always have this freedom to choose, no matter how low we go.

Later on in the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna will tell Arjuna that he must reflect upon and evaluate what he has been told for himself, come to his own decision - and then 'do as you are pleased to do' (J.A.B.van Buitenen, XVIII.63).

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया .

विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु .. १८- ६३..

iti te jñānam ākhyātaṃ guhyād guhyataraṃ mayā

vimṛśyaitad aśeṣeṇa yathecchasi tathā kuru 18.63

This is a far cry from the finger-waging dogma and endless rules that threaten the excruciating torments of hell. In their unreasonable tyranny, these rigid and dire dictates have little lasting effect, beyond making us wonder in bewilderment if God is a being one would want to be with! Krishna is telling Arjuna to think for himself.

An Ecological Axiom

Beings live from food and food is produced from rain, rain from sacrifice and sacrifice from action (III.14). Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair reads this verse as ‘the grand teleology of the natural processes that sustain life.’ Teleology means that all things in Nature have a purpose and happen because of that.

Krishna’s words might be interpreted as an ecological axiom in the sense that the right and balanced use of Earth’s resources is necessarily based on a considered intelligence that emerges out the regard for others living on the planet. Without this regard for the future needs of all, without acts of altruism, the thoughtless and selfish shortsighted consumption of our world’s precious natural resources is leading us to the brink of possible extinction.

God is perpetually ‘sacrificing’ Its Being, in the sense of transforming Its Oneness into multiplicity, to create the holographic universe - therefore the all pervading (*sarvagatam*) One remains ever in *Yajna*. God has set a precedence for us to emulate and Krishna tells Arjuna in no uncertain terms (III.16) that the one who does not contribute to the turning of the wheel, the ‘work of sustaining the world’ (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair), who lives only for his own pleasure and the sense-delights (*indriyaramas*), lives a useless life - lives in vain.

Running from your Dharma ...

After the catastrophic 18 day war is over, Arjuna’s brother, Yudhisthira, is overwhelmed by grief and a sense of deep regret. The battlefield is covered with the rotting dead, including his beloved teachers, Bhishma and Drona; and king Yudhisthira has learned for the first time that Karna, who was killed by Arjuna, was in fact his older brother and as Kunti’s first born son, had the legitimate right to the throne. Yudhisthira vows to abandon everything and go to the forest. His kingdom and wealth are bitter rewards to him now. He will become a beggar, a mendicant, and taking a vow of silence, ‘walk in the way pointed out by Knowledge’ (Shanti

Parva; M.N. Dutt).

‘Like a person reluctant to forgive an insult,’ Arjuna tries to conceal his anger with a false smile and accuses his brother of ‘fickleness of heart.’ He reminds Yudhisthira that if he should abandon his duties as king, ‘dishonest men will despoil sacrifices’ and ‘That sin will certainly contaminate you.’

With the understanding of ‘sacrifice’ as altruism and a regard for others (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair), we can clearly identify what has become epidemic in our own time. When those with a sincere dedication to integrity do not take part in government, the ones motivated by their own personal self-interest and ego move in and take over. Like thieves rushing into an unguarded treasury, the egotistical crass and greedy prevail.

The further implication of Arjuna’s admonishment of Yudhisthira, which hopefully he learned from Krishna’s *Gita*, is - ‘That sin will certainly contaminate you.’ Those who are gifted with the ability to govern, to mediate in crisis, to inspire others through their integrity, and yet who run from the responsibility of their Dharma are as harmed as those they abandon. This applies, in my view, to all God-given talents and is the reason Krishna urges us all to live fully our own Dharma, meaning the metaphysical Law we are born to. There is a similarity here to one of my favorite teachings of Jesus, the Parable of the Talents.

The Universe is Desire/Kama - Not Suffering

This universe - and there are many others - was not created so that we might endure endless suffering. Life is not only suffering. God is not so cruel and heartless as to give us only one life and on the basis of that one life, condemn us to an eternity of hell, or despite the disparity of the circumstances of birth, reward us with eternal heaven. The universe is a product of Desire/Kama.

Near the end of the *Mahabharata* (*The Ashvamedhika Parva*; M.N. Dutt), Krishna reveals again the way to liberation; this time to Yudhisthira. Krishna explains that it is Desire (*Kama*) that motivates all acts. Without desire there would be no actions, no will towards accomplishment, no motivation to perform deeds. This is the piece of the hologram that consumer capitalism has fully grasped; but its shallow understanding is skewed because it is partial and ultimately not based in metaphysical reality. This world can only return to the *Satya Yuga* when human consciousness is rooted in primordial metaphysics.

Krishna cites an ancient verse, the *Kama Gita*, to Yudhisthira. Kama, the entity, describes how amazingly powerful he is and how he is able to take any form to deceive those who seek to destroy him. To delude, he can appear as the ‘most virtuous creature’ or take the form of ‘asceticism in the mind’ or insinuate himself in our thoughts in subtle and imperceptible ways so that his presence is not perceived. Kama says that he is ‘the everlasting one without an equal, whom no creature can kill or destroy.’

Krishna ‘accepts that abiding nature of desire as the prior-existing dynamic of all action’

(Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair). Desire motivates all acts.

Omniscient all-pervading God veils Its Self in the temporal illusory hologram through the powers of *Kama* (Desire) and *Maya* (creative illusion), to enjoy (*bhoga*) the adventure of Remembrance, Self Realization, and Becoming in Mankind. The small personal identity self ego cannot overwhelm these powers, for Desire is ‘the limbs of the mind.’ However you can realize that your desires are a function of the Veil and not the real you. Reconnecting to the Real, the God within you through the experience of Union (Yoga), you will master the control of your mind, your thoughts and desires, and acquire the skill of action without attachment.

Lokasamgraha: The Well-Being of the World

Our current world is desperate for men and women of integrity who understand sacrifice as the concern for others, and because they have realized that the Self within them is the very same Self that dwells within all beings (*sarvabhutatma-bhutatma*; V.7), they would find their greatest happiness in working for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*). Such men and women would rejoice in the welfare of all creatures (*sarvabhutathite ratah*; XII.4), and the world would begin to heal and flourish once again.

Who are You? The Deeper Meaning



Krishna has warned Arjuna that those who chase only after the gratification of the senses, live in vain (III.16). Lost in the myriad of holographic illusions, they fall under the influence of those who have partial and limited knowledge. Like attracts like. Ignorant of their true state, these lost souls are cut off from the bliss consciousness that is always waiting within.

They run from one sense object to the next, empty and desperate, always hoping that this money or that person, another possession or one more ambition, will bring the happiness that eludes them repeatedly.

Amrita: The ever-present Nectar

The feeling that is produced from the closeness, contact, and ineffable intimacy with the God within you is subtle. Yes, there are ecstatic moments and experiences that will change you forever; but the ever-present nectar (amrita) must be recognized over the glare of the five senses and this power filled sweetness requires a vigilant cultivation.

Krishna says that just as the contact of the senses on their objects initially seems like nectar, but in the end feels like poison - so it is that these subtle feelings of happiness (*sattva*) which, because they must be tenderly nourished and cherished through your devotion to disciplined practice, in the beginning feel like poison, but in the end become nectar (XVIII.37-38)

Suffused in the nectar of the God-within, we no longer feel compelled to grab for those external illusory desires to fill up our empty heart. We no longer need more - more money, more things, more lovers, more inebriation, more external gratification of the senses. Our compulsions subside and we understand that all our lives, we have been under the tyrannical sway of our own self-created *guna-maya*.

We are no longer ‘mounted on a machine’ and compelled by the perpetually revolving *Yantra-Rudhani* to act unconsciously. There is no longer any need to do anything nor is there any need to do nothing! Now we only act as the purposeful wholehearted expression of the God-within, and without any attachment or expectation (III.17-18).

True Independence

We no longer need any other being to give us what we lack, because we lack nothing and therefore are truly not dependent on others for ‘any purpose whatsoever’ (Winthrop Sargeant; III.18). We cease to be needy. We transform from whining energy vampires, always trying to force others to give us what we need and live up to our expectations, into sovereign beings who emit the frequency of limitless peaceful power that quietly nurtures others.

This experience of realizing you no longer need anyone does not mean that you will be alone for the rest of your life. Once you are united with God, you are never alone. And there can be many people in your life, many relationships; but you will no longer be dependent on them for your happiness. Your happiness will come from within. You will be ‘contented in the Self alone’ (III.17).

Why do anything?

So now that you have achieved the experience of union with the God-within and are becoming accustomed to feeling and living with real Knowledge, the question is why do anything? Why not simply seek higher and higher states of bliss consciousness and isolated, live in various nirvana-like states for the rest of your life. This is an image that has been fed to us in the West as a kind of mystical ideal and one that I myself was actively pursuing until I read the scholar, Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair, who opened my heart to the deeper truth of Lord Krishna’s song.

Krishna tells Arjuna that if he, Krishna, did not perform actions, the universe itself would collapse (III.23-24). As God realized in man, there is no need for Krishna to do anything for himself. He certainly is not needy! But he understands that as an enlightened being he sets a powerful example and thus he acts without attachment to sustain the *lokasamgraha*, the welfare of the world (III.25). Abhinavagupta in his commentary points out that the enlightened must act because their inactivity will bring harm to those who have yet to become purified by Knowledge (Boris Marjanovic).

Think of it this way - we all are pieces of the Creator who manifested this universe for the purpose of enjoyment (*bhoga*) in the veiling and then revealing of our true being. It is clear that in spite of our current lack of consciousness and general tendency to depression, we love this world, we love the Earth and everything she affords us. Since we created this world for our own enjoyment, why would we abandon it to return and remain in the state of Bliss that is our eternal ‘normal’ state? Bliss consciousness is always there for us - always!

Once we have learned to access the power of the Bliss within, through knowledge and meditation, we then have access to the wisdom and authentic power to live in a way that will bring our beloved world back into alignment with Truth and a higher consciousness. We will regain the Knowledge of the now invisible workings of this universe and our relationship to it. We will relearn the ancient Wisdom Knowledge of those eternal primordial metaphysical principles that are always functioning to produce the four Cycles of Time, so that we may in human form enjoy our excursions into Time and Space.

Enlightenment is not escapism

As enlightened beings we do not abandon the world in some blissed-out state of meditative escape from our responsibilities. This has been perpetuated by gurus and those who misinterpreted Krishna's words, and was a terrible legacy for my own generation who thought that 'turn on and drop out' was their highest purpose. Many of them perished in that confusion; some were ones I loved dearly.

In *The Betrayal of Krishna*, the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair makes a clear case that Lord Krishna's message in the *Bhagavad Gita* has been misunderstood. His book is a very precise and exact detailed study of those who followed in Krishna's footsteps, from the court poets to Sankara and others.

We are not intended to abandon this world. Yes the universe is a temporal illusory hologram, but that does not mean that we abandon it or that it is our religious duty to escape back into that same Bliss consciousness from which we emerged to dive into multiplicity.

See God in Every Eye

Once you realize that the God that dwells within your heart is the very same God that is in every man, woman, and child on this planet - you will understand that whatever you do for them, you do for your Self. Your greatest happiness will lie in acts that serve the God within you and therefore the God within All.

Enlightenment is an ongoing movement, an always deepening and ever increasing state that never ends. God has no end. What you do as you Become more and more enlightened is totally up to you, and between you and the God within you. You will Know what your path is. It will feel right.

Clark Kent

As enlightened men and women, we do not need to wear arcane and mysterious robes that set us apart from others. We need not display ourselves conspicuously in a public place, covered in crystals and feathers, our hair unkempt and matted, while we repetitiously chant inscrutable words. Nor do we engage in any other kind of behavior that isolates us in a kind of superior

priestly pride, intrusively declaring - I know and you do not! This path is more comparable to say Superman disguised as Clark Kent and we are the secret agent of the God within, working unobtrusively and selflessly for the well being of the world (*lokasamgraha*).

Passion without attachment: We do nothing!

Krishna advocates a course of action that is no different in intensity and passionate dedication than those acts performed by the ignorant, who have not yet understood metaphysical truth and whose desires compel them to fulfill personal ambition. The difference lies in consciousness. Those who are enlightened act without attachment and for the good of the world (*lokasamgraha*), not merely for their own self-centered ego gratification (III.25).

As enlightened beings, we acquire the art of remaining in a state of non-attachment to whatever we do because we have realized that we, in fact, do nothing! Those who are deluded by the cyclical play of pleasure and pain (*sukha-duhkha*) in the external hologram imagine, 'I am the doer!' (*kartaham iti manyate*; III.27). The *gunas* are always working on and among the *gunas* - *rajas* shifting *tamas*, *tamas* pressing down on *sattva*, etc., etc. The wise know that all actions are only *Prakriti's* three *gunas* acting and interacting, propelled by the power of *Maya's* creative illusion.

We learn to recognize that the Self (*Atma*), the God-within, is distinct from and remains eternally untouched by *Prakriti's guna-maya*. Through an unrelenting vigilance, we must work to prevent our consciousness from being muddled and confused by the wild-horse whirlwind *gunas* of those who live and work around us. This includes the mass consciousness generated by the media on television and now through the computer.

Surrender all actions to God

Krishna gives Arjuna a method to achieve this state of acting in the hologram without attachment. He tells his dear friend, 'Surrender all actions to me.' In other words, to the God-within (III.30).

If you are worried that it might be impossibly arduous to think of God in every act you do, in every moment of your life, simply remember that God is Everything. There is nothing that is not God, therefore every action you take in each moment of time is in fact God. The distinction here is that you maintain conscious awareness of what is already true in any case, by surrendering whatever you do to the God-within you, the Self (*Atma*).

Maintaining your consciousness in this state requires the courage of a warrior. Abhinavagupta's commentary suggests that our dedication to selfless acts without attachment may be compared to one who is fighting a war. Only when our consciousness is firmly established in the knowledge that we are not the 'doer' will we be free from the bondage that action performed with attachment creates, and we will no longer lose Remembrance of who we are in the temporal illusory hologram. Then we are Home!

The User's Manual

Once you come to an understanding of the three *gunas*, you will begin to observe how they have controlled not only your own life, but the lives of everyone. Observing the mechanics of the *gunas* with a relentless and keenly critical intelligence is the key to understanding the Yoga of Knowledge (*Samkhya*), and in my view the reason why many western interpretations of eastern metaphysics fail when put into practice.

Until you read the user's manual and fully comprehend the mechanics of consciousness, there is no way to finally liberate your being from the inexorable laws of Nature (*Prakriti*). You and every other living being acts according the perpetual fluctuations, set into motion through imbalance, of the *gunas* acting on the *gunas* (III.33).

Nature (*Prakriti*) is the Matrix of this universe and all beings are subject to her laws. This applies to the beings who live in the Myriad Realms, and therefore the so-called extraterrestrials or any other being in any other world. Even those who are enlightened in this world are subject to the *gunas*; but through self-critical observation and non-attachment to their actions, they learn to free themselves from the enslavement of the *gunas*' compulsions and Become their Master.

'Who will stop them?'

Prakriti is the Matrix of Power (*Shakti*) that sets creation into being and no one could possibly master her awesome forces without this knowledge. Those who remain in ignorance of their Real Self, and who are unaware of the *gunas* power to compel them here and there in the most unconscious manner, have no choice but to follow her laws. Nothing could restrain them (III.33), or as J.A.B van Buitenen puts it in a more colorful translation: 'Who will stop them?'

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि .

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति .. ३- ३३..

sadr̥śaṃ ceṣṭate svasyāḥ prakṛter jñānavān api

prakṛtiṃ yānti bhūtāni nigrahaḥ kiṃ kariṣyati 3.33

Surely all of us at some time have tried in vain to convince another that the course they were on was wrong-headed and self-destructive. No matter how hard we tried to show them the error of their thinking, he or she remained unconvinced and stubbornly moved towards their own personal catastrophe.

I am equally certain that many of us have endeavored to stop our own behavior that we knew only brought us over and over to the same abyss of pain. And yet somehow again and again we forget, as though in some strange fog, lost in a miasma of amnesia, we do precisely what we have always done and end up cruelly in the same lonely empty place. As Krishna says, ‘Who will stop them?’

To Thine Own Self Be True

Krishna tells Arjuna that it is better to perform your own *Dharma*, even if you do so imperfectly, than to imitate the *Dharma* of another (III.35). This is similar to Shakespeare’s, ‘To thine own self be true.’ *Dharma* is a very subtle word that has multiple meanings. I interpret *Dharma* here as the Law of Being, a sort of personal blueprint, that we bring with us into every life and that is solely unique to us. Our *Dharma* is always changing and as the cumulative result of all our many lives, is reflected in the DNA of our current body. Part of our life’s purpose is to discover our own *Dharma* and to live it. Krishna says that death is better than attempting to live another’s *Dharma*. The door to our enlightenment lies in living our own *Dharma*.

Fandom

One of the most destructive influences in our modern world is the epidemic need people have cultivated to be like the rich and the famous. From movies stars to moguls, in our worship of fame we have become a culture of fandom - and fandom is a very insidious and dangerous energy.

Nothing removes you from your Self quite so efficiently as fandom. The word itself is derived from fanatic, which the Oxford Etymological Dictionary defines as the religiously insane. Being a fan requires and implies that you are focused on some external being or value that only represents you in fantasy. Fandom is all about illusions and delusion. There are some interesting and rather frightening books about fandom; the internet has brought fandom to a new level.

I do understand loving someone who at least on the surface is gifted, beautiful, and blessed with good fortune. But the image of these people that is projected through the media is completely false. Image is all about money and based solely on the need of those parasites who benefit monetarily, and does not necessarily reflect the real nature of the person. Therefore fandom is from the beginning based in falsehood. Movie stars are particularly vulnerable to fandom because such a skewed perception of their lives has a tendency to distort their own sense of self and in the long run is often devastatingly injurious.

Schadenfreude

Fandom carries with it a kind of carnivore’s delight. The word for this is ‘Schadenfreude’

and means that we take pleasure in the misery of another. All who have been elevated by fame know how quickly the mood of their fans can change to hatred and derision. Anger at their own emptiness, and the sheer amount of time spent, makes fans feel that they have the right to rage and rant against the one who fails them. Fans place their ‘stars’ on pedestals and ruthlessly tear them down again.

Being a fan can prevent you from ever having to look into your own heart and mind, and discover who you might be. Wanting to be rich and famous like whoever you idolize will surely distract you from directing your attention to your own God-given talents, which require time, effort, and your tender care to grow and bloom.

This loss of Self also applies to advertising which thrives on herding people into product identification. You can only be cool if you buy the same products as this or that famous movie star or athlete. Does the media realize how thoroughly such subliminal indoctrination crushes the spirit and soul? Or are they just as caught up in the pernicious repercussions of this ubiquitous mendacity as the general public.

The Deeper Meaning: Who Are You?

Krishna says that death is better than trying to live another’s *Dharma* (III.35). I say that in many ways, our current times are a kind of living death. A million possessions, the latest electronic gizmos or whatever, will not open the door to your inner being and give you what we all of truly want. We all want and need meaning in our life.

Be true to yourself no matter what that may bring and you will find your way Home. Follow your own Path! Mimicking others will only bring you anger and frustration. Your *Dharma* is your path; it holds the key for you to your enlightenment.

Know that You are Not the Doer



Krishna has revealed that it is indeed dangerous to live the *Dharma* of another and that death is preferable to ignoring and abandoning one's sense of inner-duty which, although written in the Heart and always available to us, becomes concealed by our self-created delusion (*guna-maya*).

Kama & Krodhas as Compulsion

Arjuna asks Krishna what impenetrable force drives men to the harmful compulsions that only serve to separate them from the Truth within. Krishna identifies the compelling force as anger (*krodhas*) born of desire (*kama*). The *guna* which produces anger is *Rajas* (III.37-40). Desire and anger are always acting in collusion, and frustrated desire quickly turns to anger.

The writer Doris Lessing once penned an expression of this power that desire has over intelligence; and while it is raw and perhaps a bit out of rhythm in the profound context of the *Bhagavad Gita*, it is nevertheless worth repeating here because it is so on the mark, so humorously accurate. Lessing describes her feelings as she encounters a certain man whose presence inflames her passions and says something like, 'All my brains fell down between my legs!'

In his book *Freedom & Transcendence* (1982), the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair states that 'resurgent libido can capture all the resources of man.' When the frequencies of anger emerge out of the frustrated desire to possess, our ability to think clearly and to reason with equanimity is overwhelmed and clouded to the point of total delusion. That's when we all do stupid things.

A life dedicated to God does not destroy autonomy

With his usual discerning insight, Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair observes that, ‘The erroneous self-identity hardens on the basis of the illusion that a life dedicated to God will destroy the self’s autonomy.’

I find this particularly interesting as I have observed it in my own life. There is something very defensive about the small personality ego-self that over time becomes quite clever in protecting its own misguided existence. In spite of the fact that over and over it fails to find fulfillment, the temporal ego can defend even the most miserable of schemes to realize its endless and inevitably futile desires. I have gradually learned to notice how my small identity-self is afraid of the God within me and that fear does stem from its fear of losing autonomy.

The exact opposite is the Truth! In my life it is only when I act in alliance and partnership with the God-within that I feel truly good, without any fear of losing that subtle sweet nurturing feeling. When I manage to listen to that still small voice within, I am inspired with insight, energy, and creativity. The *gunas* that define the small identity-self are intended to be the instrument of the God that dwells in the Heart, and not the other way round. How could the Creator be the servant of the means and mechanisms of Its creation? Was Michelangelo the slave of his hammer and chisel?

The Demonic

Krishna urges his friend to kill the anger that destroys intelligence by controlling the senses (III.41). He uses the word devil or evil being (*papmanam*) to define these forces. This is the deeper understanding of the term demonic. On the one hand you can personify sin as ugly annoying demons right out of a Hieronymous Bosch painting - or you can think of them as energies, thought frequencies, even wave forms that resonate with our own thoughts and are thereby created and attracted to nest and inculcate themselves in our consciousness. The demonic is characterized by their tendency to repetition, and phantasmal false promises that leave you drained.

Control of the senses is achieved by understanding that the mind is higher than the five senses. Higher than the mind is intelligence and higher than these is the Self, the God-within (III.42). Only through an alliance with your real Self, can you achieve mastery over the wild-horse whirlwind *gunas*.

This Knowledge was Lost

In the beginning of Book IV, Krishna tells Arjuna that this Knowledge of Yoga he is revealing on the battlefield Kurukshetra was once known to the ancients and passed down through the generations; but has been lost (IV.1-3). I take this to mean that the subtle veils of delusion that fell over human consciousness during the Dvapara Yuga - the cycle of time which precedes the Kali Yuga - made people forget the Truth of their inner being. As God Realized in man, Krishna works for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*) and brings this knowledge to us in the form of the *Bhagavad Gita*. The *Gita* will remain to serve us

throughout the Kali Yuga.

Krishna knows his many births and in the ancient days it was Krishna, as God fully realized in man, who declared this knowledge. Whenever there is a decline in righteousness and integrity, Krishna - who epitomizes the highest in all - incarnates in human form. He is the ultimate super hero, but on a metaphysical scale. He is born into every age to protect the good and destroy those who do evil (*duskritam*).

The Ubiquitous Law of Magnetism

God incarnates into limited forms. Few indeed these days are those who Know the God-within. Krishna is in complete alliance and partnership with his own inner Divinity (*divyam*); and those who understand Krishna's nature as the embodiment of the God within us all, come into the frequency of consciousness that bears a similitude with the Creator. We merge into Krishna's consciousness, or what is in the west often called Christ consciousness. As we move into the eternal frequency of enlightenment, we are released from the delusion that we were ever separate from the All.

Krishna says that those who have realized who he is and therefore have achieved their own union with the God within, are not reborn (IV.9). Those who have Become are released from rebirth. After you are liberated (*moksha*), the decision to take on other embodiments for the well-being of the world, as does Krishna, would be your decision.

The Law of Magnetism applies in consciousness, and consciousness is everything. Each thought carries a frequency and like attracts like. Your enlightenment opens the door to that realm of frequency wherein all enlightened ones dwell. The Truth does set you Free!

Purified by the Austerity of Knowledge

The austerity of Wisdom Knowledge (*jnanatapasa*) has the power to purify your consciousness (IV.10). I found this verse illuminating, because Krishna does not say the austerity of self-denial, a hair shirt, or any other sort cruel self-inflicted ritual. Rather he advocates the austerity of Knowledge. To me this means that Knowledge itself has the power to transform and purify consciousness into liberation (*moksha*) from delusion.

You just Know! As you learn to live in the understanding of non-attachment to your actions, in a balanced evenness without any expectation, the demons of greed (*raga*), fear (*bhaya*), and anger (*krodhas*) will slip away out of your thoughts, out of your being. Absorbed in union with the God-within, you attain the same state of consciousness as Krishna's, which was your real nature all along.

The God that is within us simultaneously permeates the entire universe and responds in kind to whatever way any of us approach our own interior Sacredness (IV.11). This is the reason why tolerance of all forms of worshipping and finding God is not merely respectful - the

acceptance of all paths Home is God's Way. Why would God create a universe of infinite diversity and then limit Its Self to only one Path of Return.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् .
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः .. ४- ११..

ye yathā māṃ prapadyante tāṃs tathaiva bhajāmyaham
mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ 4.11

All paths are God's Path

As human beings around the planet we follow in God's path, meaning we are all in movement towards our Return to the Source. The Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta says, 'Everything in the universe follows the Lord's desire' (B.Marjanovic). This universe is born of God's desire. The concealment of divinity in Time, Space, and Matter is God's desire for enjoyment (*bhoga*); as is Remembrance and the Liberation from temporal Illusion.

In Hindu metaphysics there is the idea that all souls must incarnate here on Earth as human beings in order to achieve enlightenment. The human form is the microcosm of the macrocosm, and the universe exists holographically within us as the chakra system. Abhinavagupta interprets 'in the world of men, action brings quick success' (IV.12) with this understanding.

The *Uddhava Gita*, in the *Bhagavata Purana*, says that the rewards of heaven are as transient as the pleasures of earth and that the wise develop a distaste for the heavenly realms.

Nothing we do alters the Creator

The apparent differences that distinguish all human beings as individuals are the result of the distribution and allocation of the three *gunas* (*rajas*, *sattva*, and *tamas*), based on our actions (*guna-karma-vibhagasah*) in all of our lives (IV.13). The Creator is the ultimate Source of all qualities, the *gunas*, which are ever in motion seeking to correct their imbalances; but the Lord of All remains eternally untouched by this creative power of the qualities (*guna-maya*).

If God was in any way altered by our thoughts and actions, this universe would have imploded on itself eons ago! God is eternal and imperishable (*avyayam*). Never bound by any actions, God is the supernal Non-Doer.

Act Knowing You are Not the Doer

The Creator has no desire for the result of any act - the Creator already is the All and needs

no thing. In a similar vein, the man or woman who abides in union with the Creator understands the power of desire-less action, and is released from the binding ropes of *guna-maya* and its seductive attraction of attachment into the hologram. Krishna tells his friend that the ancients - I interpret these 'ancients' as those beings who incarnated in the previous cycles of time - who were seeking liberation performed actions without attachment (IV.14-15). Therefore Krishna tells Arjuna to act!

The Deeper Way of Wisdom

Krishna then concedes that discerning the difference between action and inaction is indeed subtle, and that the wise and even poets are confused. Because of the immense complexity of the interconnected threads of the holographic fabric of this universe, none can know exactly what their actions will achieve. This impenetrable nature of action is no reason to withdraw into inaction, rather we understand in a deeper way the wisdom and necessity of acting without attachment to results.

There is no 'spiritual' justification to shirk our duties (*Dharma*) and our responsibility to the well-being for the world (*lokasamgraha*), and to retreat into a sheltered life of ritual as an escape. Even though we have achieved enlightenment, we begin to act - not cloaked in purple robes and seated on a golden throne, but perhaps 'disguised' as very ordinary human beings - with a devoted passion that is not attached to the outcome, nor to our personal ambition.

We do the very best we can and through that experience, we learn to do better. Our storehouse of accumulated wisdom to act with a regard for others in this world is never stagnant; it is always evolving, changing to suit the need of the moment, adapting to circumstances and our deepening sense of connection to the God within All.

There will never come a time when you will say, 'OK, now I've learned everything, my knowledge is complete, my enlightenment done.' Enlightenment is only the beginning of your life long partnership with God. Yes, we have the experiences and we know that we are the Self; then time gives us the opportunity to deepen this understanding and Become even more, even closer to God. Why should it end? God never does.

Dependent on No One!

The wise see 'inaction in action' because they know that they are not the Doer. The wise, who have realized their union with the God-within that also permeates All, see all actions of all beings as their own (IV.18). The wise act without desire or motive, and thus their karma - the accumulation of past actions done in attachment - is burned up in the Fires of Knowledge (*jnana-agni-dagdha-karmanam*). The wise are always satisfied and content, dependent on no one. Even when they are engaged in actions, they in fact do nothing at all. At One with God, they know they are not the Doer and therefore they incur no fault, no guilt, no sin. (IV.19-21).

Your Best Friend & Real Partner

United in the best of all possible partnerships, the partnership with God, we find that we are content (*samtustas*) and as if we had entered into a new world, we are quietly satisfied with whatever comes our way and which often appears spontaneously by chance. We are no longer overwhelmed by our successes and failures (IV.22).

We prefer to remain immersed in the Love that sustains us, the Love that has always been and always will abide in the Heart of All. Even though we do what we can to make this world a better, more loving and harmonious place, the Knowledge and Remembrance of our real being prevents our consciousness from again attaching itself into the hologram's sticky illusory webs. We are no longer bound. We are free.

The Others Are You!

When you work from Love in the spirit of sacrifice - meaning the altruistic concern for others which is rooted in the knowledge that they are you - your work will not bind you in the temporal illusory hologram (IV.23).

An easy simple way to remind yourself of the Truth is to make everything sacred by offering it to God. Everything is God and therefore the ultimate reality is that everything you do, all the things you possess, the food you eat, and the smile that radiates across your sweet face is God. By offering everything to God, you are openly acknowledging what is already true in every moment and therefore you are aligning your consciousness to the greater Truth (IV.24).

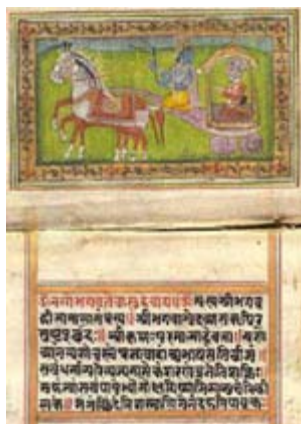
Remain resting in the Self

Through acts of altruistic sacrifice, we realize the Sacredness of the entire universe and remain resting in our own Self (Abhinavagupta/B.Marjanovic). We abide with the Creator in our Heart and gain in similitude.

It is through this knowledge of the true meaning of sacrifice (IV.32), as those altruistic acts we engage in without any attachment to results, that we are released in consciousness from the illusion that we were ever bound in the multiplicity of the temporal hologram, separate from God.

Whatever you do, any sacrifice you make, do so in the Knowledge of Wisdom (IV.33). The inner knowing of the Real, that can only emerge from Union with the God-within, prevails over - and yet simultaneously and entirely suffuses the external.

The Mechanics of Consciousness



Contentment is the highest heaven, and the greatest bliss. There is nothing superior to Contentment. Contentment heads all.

When one contracts all his desires like a tortoise drawing in all his limbs, then the native effulgence of his own soul soon manifests itself.

The Mahabharata, Shanti Parva 21.2-3; M.N. Dutt

Hinduism has a tradition of reverence for the learned and the guru. This tradition includes the practice of humility and submission (*pranipatena*) to a higher consciousness (IV.34). Obviously this submission to another living being can lead to mischief and has been abused by false teachers who consider their own ego, ambition, and bank account more valuable than your enlightenment. If you are fortunate enough to find a great and truly enlightened Master, then consider him or her as your own Self - just a little further along the Path. Treat them as you would the God within you.

A Indian swami, a woman, once wrote that the best guru is one who has already left the body. I found this rather humorous, but I did not doubt her sincerity. Connecting with the enlightened ones who reside in the higher realms can be a source of real knowledge and inspiration; and you can avoid any confusion that might arise from interacting with the *gunas* of a teacher who is still incarnate. However as always, you must be careful not to be deceived. I have written extensively on this website on the perils of the astral planes and the entities there, who are craving and literally advertising to get your attention. Exercise the highest discernment!

The Final Teacher Dwells Within You

If you do not find a true guide, do not despair. Know that the ultimate teacher and friend dwells within you and waits patiently for your return. All seekers must eventually learn that the Self is the real teacher and come to listen in silence to the Within. The small personality identity-self ego is very noisy and arrogant. The ego tenaciously hangs on to its old miserable habits, constantly insisting on its own way. Humility, surrender, and submission to the God-within are the best of cures for the pesky ego.

Knowledge sought in the spirit of true humility will purify you and when you have become purified, your own sense organs will reveal the Knowledge of the Real (Abhinavagupta / B.Marjanovic). Until you reach this purity in humility, you will be drawn back into the illusion of multiplicity and the lower realms of consciousness by the Law of Magnetism.

You will see All Beings in you & in God

Once you have realized in actual experience the Truth of the Oneness of this universe, you can never quite go back to your previous states of delusion. Now and then your *guna-maya* may trick you by force of habit, but this will subside. The power of the experience of Union eventually overwhelms all confusion and you abide with the One. Through this Knowledge you will see all beings in you and in God (IV.35). You see God in every Eye.

Even the worst can cross over ...

Krishna reassures us all in the most wonderful way and declares that even the worst of us, the most evil and sinful can cross over and transcend any transgression by this boat of Knowledge (IV.36). Once you have realized the Truth that God is within All, the Fires of Knowledge will consume and reduce to ashes every act in every life you have ever engaged in (IV.37). You will be forever changed - washed clean.

By Your own Efforts

Krishna tells his friend Arjuna that in this world there is nothing that purifies as Knowledge does (IV.38). This Knowledge that purifies is born through your own efforts. No one can do this for you. It will be solely your devoted effort and continuous practice that will bring you the Realization and Liberation (*moksha*) you seek. God Realization is not merely an intellectual discipline, and it is not only in the mind that Knowledge takes root. True Knowing must be cultivated in your Heart and lived as your very Being.

Doubt destroys Faith

This is where faith comes in. When you are filled with faith (*sraddhavan*) and devoted to the

highest Knowledge and consciousness, you will shed all doubt and move quickly (*acirena*) into *Param Shantim*, the Supreme Peace (IV.39). Doubt destroys faith and the ones who remain in ignorance without faith and devotion, who are riddled with doubts, find no happiness in this world nor in any other (IV.40).

Stand up, Arjuna!

In the final verse of Book IV, Krishna exhorts Arjuna to go forth and without any doubts engage in the Yoga of Action. Remember that our heroic warrior Arjuna has in despondency plopped himself down to sit in the pit of his chariot, which is parked in the middle of the battlefield Kurukshetra surrounded on both sides by 1000s of warriors all ready to fight. Krishna commands Arjuna to get off his posterior and stand up!

The Way of Knowledge weaves inextricably into the Yoga of Action

The *Bhagavad Gita* does not tell us if in fact Arjuna did arise, but he does speak. He wants Krishna to tell him which path is the best - the renunciation of actions or the Yoga of Action, *Karma Yoga* (V.1).

Krishna is often referred to as *Sri Bhagavan* in the *Gita*, these Sanskrit words are translated as the Blessed One, the great one, or the Blessed Lord. Since my understanding of Krishna is that he is God Realized in man and personifies the height of all consciousness, I like this term 'the Blessed One' - for surely any who have realized the God within them are blessed. Thus 'the Blessed One spoke' and tells Arjuna that both renunciation (*samnyasas*) and the Yoga of Action (*Karma Yoga*) lead to the highest, incomparable, ultimate happiness and bliss (*nihsreyasa*). However the Yoga of Action is superior and excels the renunciation of action (V.2).

The *Mahabharata* contains many discussions of the metaphysical and philosophical systems that were known and accepted at that time. It is not just in the *Bhagavad Gita* that we are treated to ancient knowledge and wisdom. The Shanti Parva is concerned with the behavior of kings and goes into considerable detail describing the Dharma of a good ruler. In the *Gita*, Krishna is constantly sorting through these ideas - which most Indians would have an understanding of. Krishna is pointing to what is worthwhile and most effective. He emphasizes that these various approaches to liberation are woven together and work as one.

Renunciation takes place in consciousness

The enlightened act in the world, but they do so in the conscious awareness of the non-attachment to results. This awareness emerges from experiencing the realization that we are not the Doer. It is *Prakriti's guna-maya*, the mechanism (*yantra-rudhana*) that is on automatic propelling us through Time and Space - while the Self, the God-within, remains untouched. Therefore internally, in the mind as consciousness, the enlightened are indifferent

to all polarities such as pleasure & pain and heat & cold, and thus feel neither hate nor the desire to possess (V.3).

Send back the Transmissions of the Five Senses

The etymology of the word renunciation is to send back a message. In this context, the message is made up of the signals transmitted to the brain through the sense organs. The sense organs were created by the God-within, who is the actual owner and recipient of all such transmissions.

Therefore when you 'renounce' this world, you are simply sending back to God what always belonged to God - even though you were under the delusion that the objects of the senses belonged to you. Attachment to the temporal is foolishness.

This process of renunciation will clarify your own comprehension of your true identity, meaning who you really are beyond the fleeting ego-self. Renunciation will strengthen your Union with God within your Heart. As you remove the five senses from their objects and return their transmissions to their Creator, you give up what was never yours anyway and return to that which you truly always are.

When you awake from this enchanted Labyrinth, you will realize that you have been spellbound by the deluding power of 'I and mine'. The enlightened renounce the temporal illusory hologram in consciousness and come Home.

Knowledge must be lived

The realization that *Prakriti's gunas* are not the real you, and that the God-within remains untouched by all your acts, is basic to the ancient knowledge *Samkhya*. Krishna says that the path of Knowledge (*Samkhya*) and that of the Yoga of Action are not in fact different. He tells Arjuna that those who separate these two ways are foolish. The wise know better and see truly that *Samkhya* and *Yoga* are one path (V.4-5). Knowledge must be lived and put into action before it can become fully realized in the temporal illusory hologram.

SARVA-BHUTATMA-BHUTATMA

Whose Self has Become the Self of all Beings

The Self of one who is devoted to and established in Yoga (union), whose mind has been made pure and whose senses have been conquered, becomes the Self of all beings (V.7).

And to this day, [those] who...know the Self as I am Brahman

[IS-ness], become all this universe.

- Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, I.iv.10

When you experience the God-within permeating the All, you realize that the same God that dwells within you also dwells within all beings. How then can you hate your Self in others?

When you Become the Self of all beings, your consciousness can no longer be attached to actions because you know that you are not the Doer (V.8). From my own endeavors to break into this understanding, I am aware that this is not an easy concept to assimilate. It can only be realized through the practice of meditation and by feeling the mechanism of consciousness in silence. It takes work to see through our human nature and *guna-maya*, which was created to veil God from its eternal Oneness.

There will come a day when you will realize that when you talk, or touch something, or even open your eyes, what you are experiencing is only the sense organs (the five senses) operation on their objects. When you are able to abandon attachment and offer all acts to the God-within, you will find that you are untouched and free from the binding force of *Prakriti's guna-maya* (V.9-10).

The one who does not live in this understanding of the Real and who is driven by desire (*kama-karena*) is bound by their acts. The wise find lasting peace (V.12) and the contentment that is the highest heaven, the greatest bliss - the best!

The City of the Nine Gates

In India, the human body is called the City of the Nine Gates, which are the openings - the eyes and ears, etc. - of the sense organs to the external. In a South Indian *Teluga* film, *Panduranga Mahathyam*, from 1957, there is a charming song that opens with: 'Your skin is a bag with nine holes - sure to go flat!' Krishna says that the one who in the mind - which I interpret to mean in consciousness - renounces the fruit of actions, lives in happiness within this City, the house that is our body (V.13).

The Autonomy of Nature & Man

What Krishna says next (V.14) is perhaps the greatest of all metaphysical mysteries, and deals with the question of free will and predestination. God is All and creates everything. God creates Nature (*Prakriti*). Nature is the Matrix - the etymology of the word matrix is womb. The Matrix provides the hologram, the stage or environment for our adventure in Time and Space - Life. For Life to be an adventure and not a predictable controlled repetitious bore, the Creator grants autonomy to the created.

In Nature this autonomy takes the form of the ongoing evolution of all biological and geological processes. Life forms adapt and mutate for self-preservation, and the earth regenerates by upheaval. In the human being autonomy is the ever present choice, in each moment of time, to align our consciousness with God, the Self and *Atma* - or we can choose to lose the memory of our Source, the conscious awareness of our true Oneness, and to sink into to endless and often fascinating permutations of multiplicity. As if 'mounted on a

machine' (XVIII.61), the *yantra-rudhana*, we are swept away and into the temporal illusory hologram by wave after wave of our desire (*kama*) - desires that brings us pleasure (*sukha*) and desires that bring us pain (*duhkha*).

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः .

न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते .. ५- १४

na kartṛtvaṃ na karmāṇi lokasya sṛjati prabhuḥ

na karmaphalasaṃyogaṃ svabhāvas tu pravartate 5.14

Nature's Work

God is All and yet this appearance of separation, and thus autonomy - which is also created by God - directs the design of this universe in such a way that the Lord of All does not create the means, the agency and instruments of action. Nature does that. Nor does the Lord generate the actions themselves - we as autonomous beings do that. Neither does the Lord unite actions with their results.

As for the consequences of action, they are not mediated out or administered by God directly rewarding the good or punishing the the bad; they derive from the world's structural reality ... Man's actions continuously modify the ambient reality and jell as its objective features which cannot be wished away. If man pollutes the air, earth and waters, the survival of mankind will be menaced.

The Betrayal of Krishna, Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair

There is no judgment outside the workings of our own consciousness. The Matrix always corrects for any transgression as *Prakriti's guna-maya* will with ineluctable precision redress any imbalance. The only way to escape the Matrix is to Realize the Truth.

Actions, the agencies of actions, and the fruits that are born of actions fall into the domain of the Matrix = *Prakriti* = Nature. It is Nature and *guna-maya* that turns the wheels within wheels, while God remains untouched (V.14). Nothing you do or have ever done has altered God, nor can it - ever. What is changed ceaselessly is the apparent multiplicity of the Matrix as *Prakriti's guna-maya* gyrates and moves inexorably through the Cycles of Time.

The Revenge of Gaia

The patterns in the Matrix are set into motion and ultimately Nature's autonomy 'cannot be violated' (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair). This relates to James Lovelock's Gaia and the idea that the Earth is a being, a Mother who is eternally giving and patient. When the wisdom of

her autonomy is threatened by the skewed autonomy of mankind, she will put a stop to our misguided, deluded, dangerous behavior and seek a cleansing - perhaps as Lovelock suggests, her revenge.

As human beings we have the choice to work with Gaia. The American Indians have done their best to illuminate us and teach us the practical reasonable righteousness of these ancient ways. We can choose to work in harmony with Nature, in the same way that we always have the freedom to choose to align our consciousness with the God-within. Or we can continue on this recent path of self destruction, poisoning the air, the land, our food and water until we come face to face with our own extinction.

***By your own Efforts, You must lift your self by the Self:
No one can enlighten you!***



In verse 14 of Book V, Krishna confirms his profound conviction that in creating man and Nature (*Prakriti*), God gives autonomy to both. Nature moves in Time as a spontaneous mechanism - *guna-maya's yantra-rudhana* - free to change and adapt, but always building on her matrices.

Man's autonomy means that we are not predestined to those 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' and Fate. God has gifted us all with the built in capability to transcend, by our own efforts, the *guna-maya* of Nature's Matrix. Any of us may at any moment Become something finer in our being, and through this autonomous free will acquire a similitude (*sadharmya*) with God (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair).

The Lord of All remains untouched by the acts of anyone, whether they be good or evil (V.15). God does not receive the effects. As our consciousness moves down the spiral through the Cycles of Time, the Veils of Ignorance and Delusion fall around our Soul, the Self/*Atma*, and the eternal Knowledge is surrounded, enveloped and concealed by ignorance (*ajnanena*). We forget who we are. Lost in the Illusion of Separation, we sink into fear. Anger and greed are born of the fear frequency.

Self Luminous

Our Remembrance of the God-within has the power to destroy the delusion of Ignorance.

Those who overcome doubt and delusion are said to ‘shine like the sun’ in the sense that they experience an inner illumination (V.16). Abhinavagupta says that such ‘self-luminosity’ is established spontaneously by the removal of doubt (B.Marjanovic).

When your entire being - your thoughts, intellect, and mind - is absorbed in the Self in the Heart, and you are entirely devoted to the God-within knowing that Supreme Being to be the highest, best, and the ultimate goal of all life, then you secure a state of consciousness that can never be lost and you are released from the rounds of rebirth (V.17). Your sins, meaning whatever wrongs you have committed in the Illusion of Separation, are shaken off by the power of Knowledge.

This state of enlightened Self-Luminosity does not mean that you curl up on a mountain, do nothing, and reside in inner bliss waiting to depart your body. The unshakable strength of your Self-illumination allows you to act in this world for the well-being of all creatures (*sarvabhuta-hiterata*) and yet remain unattached. You will not be drawn back into the webs of *maya* and the temporal illusory hologram that has kept you spell bound for eons.

The All is all God!

This non-attachment is not cold or aloof or irresponsible. It is compassionate and Loving, the Love that does not need to possess or control another. When you see God in every Eye, and you Know that the All is all God, from the most brilliant beautiful talent to those who are damaged, broken, sad and lowly - you feel connected to others (V.18). You Know that they are you and you Love them as your Self. They are you as the Great Supreme Self moving through their ups and downs, now successful, now miserable, now young, now old. All are held by Time and its cycles.

Heaven on Earth

You do not have to leave your body and fly to any heaven to achieve this Self-Luminosity. Heaven is here on earth when you abide in consciousness with God (V.19).

In the enlightened realization that this universe is proceeding in the unending perfection of its cyclical unfoldment, you hold your consciousness in its primordial state of similitude with the Creator. That state is non-attachment. Just as the Creator remains untouched by our acts, so you too will find that you are not whirled around in confusion by the thoughts of others or by your own acts.

Knowledge of the true structural mechanics of the temporal illusory hologram will keep

you from delusion and thus your consciousness will no longer ride the roller-coaster of giddy highs and depressing lows that have swept over you all your lives.

You will find that balance of evenness that liberates you from being bound by the fleeting excitement in the pleasures of success, and the painful equally transient miseries of failure.

Keeping your consciousness firmly rooted in the Self that dwells in the Heart, you will remain clean and without delusion (V.20). When you are no longer tossed about by the external, which is transmitted to you through the five senses, you will at last reach that happiness (*sukham*) which is imperishable (*aksayam*). (V.21)

Pleasure is the womb of pain

Krishna now delves into the truth of this polarity universe which is completely ignored in the western consumer society. He spells it out for Arjuna and says that all experiences of pleasure, born of contact with the external via the five senses, are wombs of pain. All experiences of the external hologram are temporal. What feels good now will inevitably be lost and bring pain. All things, including our bodies, have a beginning and an end. The wise are never content with what is temporal and by reaching in consciousness beyond the cycles, the wise seek the eternal (V.22).

Only those who are stolid fools and those who are master of their souls enjoy happiness here.

-The Mahabharata, Shanti Parva 25.28

At some point in my own personal history, as I foolishly kept trying to “find happiness”, I realized that the kind of shallow happiness I had been indoctrinated to look for in fact bears no resemblance to any kind of deeper reality. It is not that God wants us to suffer, it is that God never intended to trap Its Self in the temporal illusory hologram for all eternity. Experiences are meant to be created, savored, and released.

The concept that pleasure turns to pain just wont sell!

Of course you cannot sell people mass quantities of things that promise them perpetual happiness, when there is no such thing. You can't keep people buying disposable rubbish they don't need by feeding them false dreams, when they finally do understand the real metaphysical mechanics of the universe. Krishna is saying that there is nothing in the external world that does not bring pain right along with pleasure.

Pain is intended to make us wake up and remember who we are. It is the Creator's way of protecting all the Selves from sleeping interminably. Here in the Kali Yuga, the pain gets ever more intense, rather like an alarm clock that would ring louder and louder every time you roll over and go back to sleep.

Zombies

Tranquilizers and mood altering drugs are to my mind one of the most absurd and deadly aspects of our current consumer culture. Emotional pain is coming from your Soul in an attempt to tell you that something is very wrong and that you need to think, to be alone, and reason out the imbalances in your consciousness. But instead, here in the west, we drown all our crucially important and key feelings in a mass of molecules that leave us befuddled, have consequential heinous long-term side-effects, and rob us of any opportunity to evolve and find our way Home.

How can we realize the transitory nature of pleasure and pain (*sukha-duhkha*) when we are permanently numb? There is something demonic here, some conspired plot to hold us in the hologram, enmeshed in the slimy spider webs of the Matrix, lost in Ignorance.

Cosmic Evenness

Real happiness is this Cosmic Evenness that is born when by discipline, you hold your consciousness in the truth of Knowledge and prevail unattached to either desire (*kama*) and greed, or to anger (*krodha*). Real happiness is Becoming in Union with the Self and Liberation (*moksha*) achieved while you are still in the body (V.23)

When you find your happiness within, you will no longer be dependent on people or things. Those transient feelings that you experienced with your lover or when you were crowned Ruler of the World, that later left you flat and wretched, will now be transformed into more subtle feelings that last, feelings of delight within (*antararamas*) and the radiance of light within (*antarjyotis*). You will attain the ultimate Bliss of Union with the God-within, the Source of All (V.24).

Jivan-Mukti: Liberation while still in the body

Those who have seen the truth, the 'seers' (*Rishis*), who have conquered doubt by the sword of reason, whose wrongs have been washed away by the power of Knowledge, and who rejoice in the well fare of all beings (*sarvabhutahite*), return to the Source, the ocean of Bliss that is Home (V.25), and are liberated even while in the body (V.28).

Acts that Deepen Union

Book VI begins with Krishna once again emphasizing that true liberation lies in non-attachment and is not, as some may believe, escapism into ascetic fantasy. Those who leave their families and responsibilities in this world to live in monastic towers, and yet still fail to renounce their selfish desires, will not find the union experienced by an authentic *Yogin*. Attachment to the compulsions of the small identity-self ego will hold your consciousness in a state of separation from the God-within (VI.1-2).

We can put on a great show; we can become teachers and sell \$3000 workshops; we can wear purple robes and sit on a golden throne; we can starve the body or cover it with ashes; but if our costume is only a disguise and our acts are only motivated by the needs of ego to find approval and reward, then our consciousness is still attached to the external and we are little more than phony fools deceiving ourselves. The God-within knows the real story.

The considered and cultivated self-mastery of performing actions in this world, to make it a better place, without being concerned with the results of your actions is a sign of your union with the Creator. When you worry and fret over success and failure, you are merely attached to the consequences of your own frail ego; you are worried over what people will think of you, your concern is your own self esteem through their eyes. The God-within you does not need the approval of any.

Mother Teresa

Taking altruistic actions is the means of your union with God and such acts will in fact deepen that union (VI.3-4). The best example of this is of course Mother Teresa, the amazing woman who devoted her life to the poorest of the poor in Calcutta India. Now I don't expect to be like her and I doubt that most of us could be; but no matter what our standards are, every human being knows that here was a woman of great courage who did something so pure and admirable that we all look up to her no matter what our religion may be. She did something that transcended human nature. Mother Teresa was a super hero - a Wonder Woman and we all know it!

Paul Newman

Although no one in this world can quite compare with Mother Teresa, there are many many brave souls out there working for the well being of this world. Most of these we

will probably never hear about. One person who I find remarkable is Paul Newman. I hope this makes you smile, because I consider Paul Newman as a modern day heroic anomaly.

Here is a man whose good looks, charm, and intelligence brought him money and fame. And what has he done with it? Did he invest in hedge funds run by quants? Or buy himself villas all over the planet? Nope! The gorgeous Mr. Newman created a company which used the system for altruism. As he says, 'Newman's Own is shameless exploitation in pursuit of the common good.' To date he has donated over \$200 million to his favorite charities. In a world of the greedy, unconscious, and swollen-headed, Paul Newman is a real hero!

Take note that Mr. Newman did not give away all of his money. He first took care of his wife and children, and then gave to charity. Those who become beggars force others to work to feed them. We must be sovereign in this world, and that means supporting our own basic needs first and then looking out for the well being of the world. How can we be free when we are dependent on others?

Not a couch-potato sport ...

Enlightenment must be lived. As long as you are in a body, you must be vigilant in observing your own consciousness. This is not a couch-potato sport. Indulgence in vain ego sprints will land you back in the *gunas rajas* and *tamas*. Many partially enlightened beings have fallen back into to webs of *maya's* desire and ignorance. The way Home requires the greatest courage.

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् .
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः .. ६- ५..

uddhared ātmanātmānaṃ nātmānam avasādayet
ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ6.5

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः .
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् .. ६- ६..

bandhur ātmātmanas tasya yenātmavātmanā jitaḥ
anātmnas tu śatrutve vartetātmaiva śatruvat 6.6

You must lift your self by the Self

The mind can be your friend and provide the razor-sharp intelligence required to discern the machinations of human consciousness. The mind can be your enemy and, serving temporal ego, the mind can twist, manipulate, and rationalize anything to justify its own existence (VI.5). Your free will gives you the power in each moment to choose.

No one can do this for you! You have to lift the self by the Self (VI.6). No one can enlighten you. Certainly you can learn from anyone, from a great Master, from Nature, or the check-out girl at the supermarket. There are Masters who do have the *siddhic* power to give you a momentary experience and help you along your path. But your ultimate enlightenment can only emerge as the result of your own efforts.

Your release from the illusion of separation is between you and the God within you - and no one else. How 'liberated' would you be if you relied on any external force to bring you Home?

Cosmic Evenness & Union Within Allows You to See God in Every Eye



The Supreme Soul desired: May I be many, may I be born.

... Having created all this the Creator entered into it. Having entered into it, the Creator became both the manifest and the unmanifest ... both the real and the unreal.

-Taittiriya Upanishad II.6

The Creator is undivided (avibhaktam) among beings and yet appears to be existing as if divided (vibhatam).

-The Bhagavad Gita XIII.16

Yoga means union and through the experience of Union with the God-within, the enlightened realize the subtle and shocking truth that we are not the *gunas* that have ruled us all our lives. The enlightened see clearly that what was falsely perceived as personal identity was little more than the proclivities, tendencies, and compulsions of the DNA contained within the current body.

The body is holographically generated by its DNA. Each soul is drawn into a specific body based on the cumulative thoughts and actions of previous lives. These thoughts and actions, particularly what we are thinking in the last moments before our death, draw us like a magnet to the next bodily form and our next incarnation into Time and Space.

In Union with the Self

The enlightened identify fully with the God-within as the Self - and no longer with the small personality ego-self. This identity in Union gives us the power to conquer the temporal ego. Subduing the small self brings the peace that is composed, steadfast, and devoted in the face of heat and cold, pleasure and pain (*sukha-duhkha*), honor and dishonor (VI.7).

The Return to Union with the Eternal within, makes us strong. We find that we are no longer attached to the ever-changing polarities of this world. We understand that fame and praise, along with disrepute and vicious gossip, are both a part of the cycles all beings endure sooner or later.

The Imperishable - Akshara

Nothing in the temporal illusory hologram lasts. The external is transient and fluctuates between the extremes of all polarities - light & dark, heat & cold, pleasure & pain. The eternal, the imperishable (*akshara*) dwells within waiting for you to Recognize the Real.

The enlightened integrate this Knowledge into their awareness and use it to discriminate between what is unchanging and what is temporal. The enlightened remain unconcerned with these cyclically produced polarities. This detachment gives the power to act more effectively in the world; for having conquered (*vijita*) and subdued the five senses and *guna-maya*, the enlightened possess Cosmic Evenness. For those who see the God within All, a lump of clay or a rock or a piece of gold are all the same (VI.8).

See God in every Eye

The enlightened see God in every Eye. They see the Creator dwelling in all forms in every conceivable state of exalted success, beauty, and intelligence. They see God dwelling within the entire spectrum of the poor, the wretched, even evil tyrants, thieves, and fools. God dwells within All. There is not one man, woman, or child who does not have God within them - and consequently there is not one who does not have within their reach the free will to choose to Recognize this Truth and Remember who they are.

The enlightened are therefore even and impartial towards both friends and enemies, the righteous and the evil because they know that all these beings are God in a myriad of disguises (VI.9).

Only In Solitude - Rahasi

Krishna now gives Arjuna some guides to follow and the first and foremost is solitude (VI.10). One who seeks enlightenment must do so alone in solitude. The Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta confirms this with his flat statement that there is no other way (B.Marjanovic).

The process of calming the mind and mastering the whirlwind *gunas* requires that you be alone. Solitude gives you the utmost opportunity to concentrate. When we are with others, their holographic *guna-maya* is constantly bombarding our consciousness with their thoughts and feelings as waveform frequencies. Anyone with the smallest psychic ability will verify this. Even when people are not speaking, their innermost thoughts and feelings of hope and despair, the grocery list or their real opinion of you, are always seeping and bleeding into your hologram whether you are aware of it or not.

Alone

You must learn to be alone and to meditate alone. Krishna recommends a firm seat in a clean place (VI.11) - meaning a place with a purity of consciousness. It is helpful to create such a place and return there, but it does not matter as you can make any location pure through your own effort. Krishna's suggestion of *kusha* grass covered by an antelope skin is possibly more relevant to his times. I must say with a bit of humor that I have never been able to find any *kusha* grass for myself to sit upon --- but perhaps this advice does convey the idea that you need to be seated on something firm that is not so cushy as to lull you into sleep.

In solitude you direct your consciousness to a one-pointedness (VI.12). Endeavor to keep the mind from wandering. One ancient technique is to see your thoughts as clouds crossing the sky of your mind - clouds produced by *Prakriti's guna-maya*. These temporal clouds are not the Real. Know they are not the real you. In this manner you will purify your consciousness. Practice!

Look inward

In solitude you sit with a focused awareness; erect and motionless, your gaze is turned inward (VI.13). It is important to train yourself to remove your attention from the external hologram and instead become accustomed to the world within you. The world within is amazing!

In solitude and fearless, you remain concentrated on the God within you. Krishna tells Arjuna that the one who aspires to Union and liberation (*moksha*) must be *brahmacarin*, which means that you are celibate. Think this out for yourself and realize that if being in a group of people leaves you vulnerable to their thoughts and feelings as invisible waveforms, then imagine the power of sexual intimacy between two lovers.

Brahmacarin

The choice of celibacy (*brahmacarin*) for one who is seeking Union has nothing to do with any moral judgment, nor is there an implication that sex is wrong. It is simply that when the time comes that you are filled with the desire to Become One with the God-within, union with another will bring confusion and distraction. You've done sex, now you have moved on to realize the God-within.

Abhinavagupta taught *Tantra* Yoga as a path to enlightenment. However I suggest that you read his Kula Ritual (translated by John R. Dupuche), wherein Abhinavagupta proposes the most arduous ritual of intense concentration perhaps ever conceived. Any who are deluded about the nature of *tantra* and who are expecting a more 'physical' experience will be humorously disappointed.

Devoted to Me

My understanding of Krishna is that he is God realized in man. Thus when he tells Arjuna to sit, concentrated, and remain 'devoted to Me,' I interpret this to mean devoted to the God within us all. The word devotion is used here in the sense that devotion expresses our consciousness completely focused on what we love most. The Oxford Etymological Dictionary defines devotion as a vow or a sacred purpose; and a vow as a solemn promise. When we are devoted to the God-within there is nothing and no one more important to us.

I have written extensively on this website about *Bhakti* Yoga and will go into the Yoga of Devotion more in Book XII of the *Bhagavad Gita*. As human beings who are always seeking love, who are more often than not a bit lonely, directing our love and devotion to God is surely the short cut to a focused concentration. Examples of this in western faith are Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross, whose lovely poem 'The Dark Night of the Soul' reflects the timeless practice of Hinduism's *Bhakti* Yoga in such phrases as:

'O night that has united the Lover with his beloved, transforming the beloved in her Lover' and 'I abandoned and forgot myself, laying my face on my Beloved; all things ceased; I went out from myself.'

Moderation

Krishna tells Arjuna that the one who practices discipline and who has subdued the mind attains Union with Him, meaning the God-within (VI.15). He then advocates a path of moderation, warning against the excesses of eating and sleeping either too much or not at all (VI.16-17).

Vyasa as the highest authority

In Abhinavagupta's commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* (B.Marjanovic), the great Kashmir Saivite expresses his respect for Vyasa the poet-author of the text. Abhinavagupta says that Vyasa's writing should be considered, like the Vedas, as 'the highest authority.' The *Mahabharata* is called the Fifth Veda and Vyasa's deep knowledge of the four Vedas - the *Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva* - and other sacred texts is evident throughout the epic, which in my view is not merely the greatest of all adventure stories, but also a source of authentic primordial metaphysics and wisdom.

Contentment in Union

Krishna compares the *yogin* who has controlled the mind to a candle shining in a windless place (VI.19). When you have firmly established your consciousness in the Self, you will no more be tossed about in the external waveforms that swirl around the temporal illusory hologram. Your happiness will come from the God within you and you are content (VI.20).

The sustained experience of contentment (*tusyati*) in Union with the Creator will over time make you simply lose interest in the old habits of seeking pleasure and possessing happiness in the external. Your contentment transcends the transmissions of the five senses and their objects (VI.21-22). You realize there is nothing in the external that is greater than your contentment in the Self. For the Self is the Source of All.

The contentment in Union opens your eyes to see that all worldly desires and endeavors, for example temporal power and wealth, are the products of *Prakriti's guna-maya*. They are reflections of their source - and not Source Its Self (VI.24). Why settle for a photograph of the one you love when you can embrace your beloved? The experience of Liberation (*moksha*) not only allows you to embrace the Beloved - but with discipline and practice, you Become in similitude (*sadharmya*) the Beloved.

Sarvabhutastham: Present in All Beings

You will never be lost to God when you see God in the All. Just as the Self dwells within you, that same Self dwells within All. Everything is sacred. The Creator is present everywhere. Seeing God everywhere in everything will keep your consciousness in Union with the Creator and you will never feel the pain of the illusion of separation again. You will never be lost again (VI. 29-30).

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि .

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः .. ६- २९..

sarvabhūtaṣṭham ātmānaṃ sarvabhūtāni cātmani

īkṣate yogayuktātmā sarvatra samadarśanaḥ 6.29

Mother Teresa saw Jesus in the face of every human being and thus fueled by her love of God and with a full heart, she helped so many who were lost, sick and destitute. When we truly begin to look into the eyes of others and recognize the Self dwelling there, then we cannot help but feel Love and Compassion for those pieces of God who are in various phases of their veiled Self, who are in disguise. All people are always at some point in the cyclical process of moving towards a peak, or sliding down into a trough. When you Love the God-within, you cannot hate any of Its transient forms (VI.31-32).

On the Soul level, we all have the same form

In his translation of Abhinagupta's comments on the *Gita*, Boris Marjanovic includes the most interesting footnote (p.300). He shares an observation made by Ramanuja that when you see your own Soul, the Atman, you will also see the Souls of others, and you will see that on that level of being, we all have the same form. We all are, after all, the God that permeates the All.

Catch the Wind

Arjuna then tells Krishna that he knows the mind to be obstinate, compelled to wander, and harassing; he sees that it will be as arduous to control the mind as it would be to harness the winds (IV.33-34).

Krishna affectionately addresses Arjuna as the 'Mighty Armed One' (*mahabaho*) and agrees that yes, the mind is restless; but with practice and by the realization that the objects out in the world, that are perceived via the five senses, are temporal illusions, one becomes indifferent to them. For those who abide in Union with the Creator of this universe, the mind is restrained (VI.35-36).

I see this difficulty of controlling the mind as natural. God is all powerful and created the *guna-maya* that binds It in the 'appearance' of Separation into the temporal illusory hologram. Therefore these illusions in the form of attachments and the tendency of the mind to behave like the spin-cycle are, of course, intensely challenging to subdue. Surely God would not have created such a complex universe with such an enormous spectrum of experiences, from every kind of pleasure (*sukha*) to equal numbers of heinous pains (*duhkha*), if the Realization of the illusion of our Separation were going to be little more than a cake

walk!

You can Fall ...

Arjuna then asks Krishna what happens to a *yogin* who falls. What happens to one who, even after experiences of enlightenment, becomes once again enmeshed in the spidery webs of the temporal illusory hologram (VI.37-38). Abhinavagupta, speaking as one who did achieve enlightenment, is quite clear about the effects of losing your faith (*sraddha*) and says that if you allow the mind to become contaminated by its fluctuations, your knowledge will be reduced to ashes like a 'pile of cotton destroyed by fire' (B.Marjanovic).

Once again I say that this is not a couch-potato sport. As long as you are in a corporeal body, there can be no resting on your laurels. Becoming in similitude (*sadharmya*) to the Creator within requires eternal vigilance. Just as God never goes 'unconscious' - because God only knows what the ramifications of that would be - the enlightened must remain in a state of heightened awareness, ever watchful of falling into the webs of Maya.

The Blessed One, Krishna, tells Arjuna that one who falls in consciousness is never lost - just as those who are virtuous are not directed into misfortune (VI.41).

Rebirth in a Family of the Wise

Krishna is very specific about the fate of the fallen *yogin*. Upon leaving the body, the fallen ones dwell in the world of the virtuous (*punyakrtam lokan*) for a period of what must feel like 'endless' (*sasvatis*) years (VI.41). When their earned merit has been used up in this world of the good-doing, the fallen one is fortuitously born into a family of the wise and learned (*dhimatam*). This kind of birth in a family of a pure consciousness, Krishna says, is very difficult to attain in this world (VI.42).

My imagination balks at this image, for here in our current days of the Kali Yuga the family is disintegrating and is portrayed by the media as humorously dysfunctional at best. Perhaps we are able to find families not so ideal, but who nevertheless retain qualities of integrity and honesty that would serve to guide us in our quest for the Real.

Krishna reveals that in such a family the fallen will regain the knowledge that was achieved by their own efforts through the former incarnation. This explains why some seem to Know more than others, or be further along the Path, even at a very young age. From the experience of Remembering what was learned in the previous birth, the fallen begin once more to strive for perfection (*samsiddhau*) in Union (VI.43).

The Force of previous Knowledge

Krishna now says something I find particularly interesting. The force of enlightened

consciousness attained in previous lives will carry the fallen back into a thirst for Knowledge of the Real, even if it seems to go against their will (VI.44).

The Call of the Heart

Perhaps many of us have experienced trying to attach our consciousness to the temporal illusory hologram, find some fleeting happiness, and get lost in whatever current day 'normality' surrounds us. But no matter how hard we try to forget the Call of the Heart, which often shows up as a painful longing for something that totally eludes us - no matter how we try to believe that the illusion is all there is, we are drawn back time and time again into the Search for Knowledge and Freedom (*jivan mukti*).

This time we will not fall. This time through our own efforts to control the mind and an adamant perseverance, we will find and sustain that purity of Union in God and go to *Param Gatim*, the Supreme Goal (IV.45). Yoga means Union, and Union with God is better than asceticism, ritual, and mere learning. Krishna therefore urges his friend Arjuna to be a *Yogin*. The one who merges the inner Self (*antaratmana*) into the God-within and who is full of faith (*sraddhavan*) is considered by Krishna to be *yuktatmas* - the most devoted (IV.46).

The Taittiriya Upanishad

Translated by Swami Nikhilananda 1959

Volume Four of *The Upanishads*

Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1994, New York,

Abhinavagupta: The Kula Ritual

As Elaborated in Chapter 29 of the *Tantraloka*

Translated by John R. Dupuche

Motilal Banarsidass, 2003, Delhi

After Knowing this, nothing remains to be Known ...



Krishna begins Book VII by telling Arjuna that without any doubt we will Know the God-within when we take refuge, and the mind is absorbed in the Supreme One (VII.1). Krishna now teaches his dear friend the Knowledge of discriminating understanding that brings Wisdom. When Arjuna has learned this there will be nothing left on this earth for him to know (VII.2).

This last statement always rather astounded me. Krishna is saying that once we truly understand his teaching in the *Bhagavad Gita*, we will Know all there is to know here in our earthly existence as corporal beings. The wisdom that Krishna offers has the power to give us the understanding of the Whole. As we acquire similitude (*sadharmya*) with the God within our Heart, we approach the larger View. We may grok the hologram in its entirety.

Only the very few

Krishna admits that most are lost in the temporal illusory hologram and that out of thousands - these days, billions - very few stretch and expand their consciousness to achieve perfection. Out of those few, even less ever truly Know the God-within (VII.3).

This Universe as a Work of Art

The Creator manifested this universe out a the desire to enjoy Its Self in myriad forms. In his book on the *Mahabharata*, Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair makes the case for this

world to be understood as a work of art. Only those with the most hardened of hearts would deny the exquisite beauty of this universe. The night sky alone should be enough to prove that God is Beauty, and that aesthetics do play a role in the reason for Life. Surely the Creator resides in the illusion of so many separate Selves so that those beings may enjoy the plethora of beauty so splendidly arrayed all over this planet.

Relish

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair uses the word 'relish' and as a lady born in the south, I had some difficulty relating to relish as anything beyond a condiment which hopefully disguises the taste of scrambled eggs. But I am forming a relationship with this word.

Relish is defined in the Oxford Etymological Dictionary as an 'after taste'; to have a pleasing taste, or to taste with pleasure.

The implication is that the Creator desires to taste (*rasa*) what has been created, and that we are the instruments of that joy of tasting. We are born to taste what emerges, what is produced, in the temporal illusory hologram. The trick or Key is not to become attached to these tastes so that we lose memory of our Real Being. The act of relishing the world is performed in the consciousness of non-attachment - or we soon find our consciousness bound in the ropes of *guna-maya*.

The universe would collapse

I once suggested to a friend of mine who is from India that if everyone on the planet woke up and became God-Realized, the entire world would be wonderfully changed. She, who is named after a goddess, sagely replied that the entire universe would probably collapse.

I thought about her words of wisdom, and concluded that in every cycle of time there has to be a balance between those who are veiled in the Illusion of Separation and those who are awake and enlightened as their true Self. Perhaps those who are deluded and attached do hold the illusion together in the sense that their consciousness allows the multiplicity of forms to emerge and stand for a time in the hologram. The hologram is the product of mass consciousness and reflects the thoughts in flux of the entire planet.

Prakriti's Eight Parts

Ahamkara is the Sanskrit word for the small identity ego-self and *ahamkara* is perceived

as being quite distinct from the Soul (*Atman*). *Ahamkara* evolves out of Nature (*Prakriti*) and there are two forms of *Prakriti*:

Apara Prakriti is the lower, and takes the form of the ego (*ahamkara*), the mind (*manas*), and intelligence (*buddhis*). *Apara Prakriti* has the choice to be autonomous.

Para Prakriti is made up of the elements - earth (*bhumis*), water (*apas*), fire (*anagas*), wind (*vayu*), and ether or space (*kham*).

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says that *Para Prakriti* is *Logos*, which he defines as divine intentionality. The Oxford dictionary defines *Logos* as the principle of divine reason and creative order. This *Para Prakriti* is the Nature that moves inexorably through the four seasons. Nature whose tides and ocean currents, winds of gentle caress or hurricane destruction, and earth upheavals lie beyond man's control.

Man's autonomy can only hope to guide Nature's earth, water, fire, and wind to our advantage. Man has free will and thus we may work with Nature, but it is perilous indeed to tyrannize Gaia.

Thus the Creator's material nature is divided into eight parts; earth, water, fire, wind, ether, mind, intelligence, and the the ego-self, *ahamkara*, which is the instrument that allows the One to veil Its Self in the temporal illusion of Separation to experience it all. The divisions are only appearances, for the Self is the Supreme (*param*) that sustains this universe (VII.4-5).

Like pearls strung on a thread

The *Bhagavad Gita* is filled with poetic images of such brilliant illumination that one is often in sweet awe of Vyasa's enormous talent to encode the most profound metaphysical principles in superb words. Krishna tells Arjuna that all beings emerge from the womb of the Creator, who is also the origin and dissolution of this universe. The All (*sarvam*) is strung - like pearls on a thread - on God (VII.7).

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय .

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव .. ७- ७..

mattaḥ parataraṃ nānyat kiṃcid asti dhanamjaya

mayi sarvam idaṃ protaṃ sūtre maṇigaṇā iva 7.7

Abhinavagupta suggests that just as the thread that connects pearls together is invisible, so 'in a similar way God exists in the universe' (B.Marjanovic). Here we have the perfect metaphor for the hologram and for many of the recent theories in quantum physics, such as string theory. The spheres of light, the luminous pearls, are clustered and connected within their Oneness as God. What an extraordinary and beautiful image!

Param

As the manifestation of the God-within fully Realized, Krishna then begins to compare himself with all things bright and beautiful in the universe. The verses that follow are a prime example of Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair's idea that God creates for aesthetic relish. I am certain that no translation can accurately convey the rhythmic perfection of Vyasa's Sanskrit lines, but even in English one cannot help but be moved by this expression of Glory to God.

As a painter, I love art and music. Some consider this universe as the ultimate Work of Art. The world is not only suffering, the world is also great beauty. Who among us does not perceive God in beauty? Who does not, in the very depths of the soul, long to create beauty and perfection.

Eternal Flux

Even though Krishna teaches that pleasure (*sukha*) is the womb of pain (*duhkha*), there is so much more in this grand universe that transcends suffering. The primordial secret is to never become attached to what you create and in delusion imagine that your creation can prove to be eternal in what can only ever be a temporal realm. The Art of this universe is in flux.

Krishna praises the beauty of the God within Him as the taste (*rasa*) in the waters (*apsu*), and the radiance of the Sun that in splendor lights up the Moon. The Supreme

Self is the sacred syllable AUM. It is the manhood in men, and the sound (*sabda*) in the ether (VII.8).

Sabda

Hindu metaphysics has an elaborate and highly illuminating theory of sound. *Sabda* (pronounced shab-dah) is the more subtle inner-sound behind the audible sound. This *sabda* - also called *sphota* - is vibrating with meaning and the power of *Shakti*. The *Logos* or Divine Sound is formed into words that have power to create. This power of Word is called *Vac* and is the basis of mantras. *Anahata* is the unstruck sound which exists in the cavity of Brahma, the principle of Creation, and can be heard by those yogins who are able to sustain the highest concentration (B.Marjanovic).

The fragrance of the earth

In identifying with the Supreme Being that dwells within, Krishna tells Arjuna that He is the pure, sacred, and auspicious fragrance of the earth (VII.9). Now and again in Bollywood films, the hero or heroine will reach down into the dirt, and with their eyes filled with tears, lift up a handful of earth to passionately demonstrate their reason for living or their motive within the plot of the story.

God dwells in the Heart

Krishna says that He is the life of all beings (*jivan sarvabhutesu*). This echoes what he later says, that God dwells in the Heart of everyone (XV.15).

As God fully Realized in man, Krishna says that He is the strength that is free from desire and passion. He is desire (*kama*) which is not opposed to Dharma, to law, justice, and duty (VII.11). Here again we see that desire figures predominantly in the metaphysics of this universe. Not all desire is sinful.

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair translates this verse as - 'In all beings I am the desire (*kama*) which is not contrary to integrity (*dharma*).' Abhinavagupta writes this as *icchasakti*, a term used in Kashmir Saivism to denote the power of Shiva 'which is intent on manifestation' (B.Marjanovic). It is the Desire of the Creator that brings this world into existence. Sin is the attachment that produces delusion.

The Rig Veda

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair observes that Plato shared the perception of those ancient poets who wrote the Vedas. In Plato's philosophy truth, goodness and beauty were the ultimate values which emanate from the transcendental Being. The *Rig Veda* sees the Creator as the supreme architect of beauty and 'the total design of the world' (*The Mahabharata, A Literary Study*).

*Firm-seated are the foundations of Eternal Law.
In its lovely form are many splendid beauties.
By Eternal Law they give us long-lasting nurture.
By Eternal Law have the worlds entered the universal order.
-Rig Veda IV.23.9 as translated by Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair*

Here the poet clearly conveys his vision of this universe being rooted in the Eternal Law. There is a structural order to everything and this order is not only the very foundation of our world, it is also Beauty. 'In its lovely form are many splendid beauties.'

The things of this Earth belong as much to others as to me

As the eyes and ears of the God-within, we are here to 'relish' our creation. Because there is only the One, beneath the illusion of Separation and apparent multiplicity, the world belongs to no one in particular. The world belongs to All.

In the Mahabharata, the poet-author of the text Vyasa takes on the character role of a seer of great wisdom who is master of the Vedas. In the *Shanti Parva*, after the great war is over, Vyasa advises the King Yudhisthira and says:

'This body is not mine. Nothing in the Earth is mine. The things of this Earth belong as much to others as to me. Seeing this, the wise do not allow themselves to be beguiled.'
- Mahabharata, Vol.7, Ch 25.19; M.N. Dutt.

'The things of this Earth belong as much to others as to me.' This is not a declaration of tyrants who seek to forcibly redistribute wealth as an excuse to keep what they like for themselves. This is a metaphysical reality, a fact based in the enlightened conscious awareness that there is only the One.

When you Become the world, why would you need to possess any part of it? You are all the parts and you see them as they truly are. You perceive the external as the cyclical manifestations of the temporal illusory hologram, which are forever in flux moving towards peaks and slipping down into troughs, hope and despair, youth and old age, birth and death.

The gunas are in God, but God is not in them ...

Continuing his enumeration of the glories of God, Krishna - as a man who is fully God-realized - reveals that He, as the God-within, is the source of the *gunas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*). He says mysteriously that the *gunas* are in God, but God is not in them (VII.12). Once again Krishna teaches us that even though all this entire universe is within the 'body' of God and *Vasudeva sarvam iti*, meaning God is All (VII.19), the Creator remains forever untouched by its fluctuations.

The whole universe (*sarvam idam jagat*) becomes deluded by *guna-maya*. Confused in the delusion (*mohitam*), the pieces of God who have veiled themselves in the illusion of Separation, forget and do not recognize their real identity as the God-within, that which is forever beyond and above the temporal. The God-within is *avyayam* - the imperishable (VII.13).

God made the gunas ...

Krishna then reveals that God made *guna-maya*. God is the source of the creative power of *maya* that moves through the *gunas* to produce the temporal illusory hologram. By the power of the three *gunas* - *rajas*, *sattva*, and *tamas* - the Creator veils Its Self in the Illusion of Separation.

What God has created, man's deluded ego cannot undo. Only by uniting our consciousness with the God-within and by our own efforts earning similitude (*sadhramyā*) can we attain liberation (*moksha*) from *guna-maya* (VII.14). Never underestimate the deceptive powers of *guna-maya*. The only real freedom we possess is to Become the SELF!

This universe is permeated with the highest consciousness of the One, and yet those who have no Knowledge of this truth and the workings of *guna-maya* remain in ignorance. The ones who are so confused, foolishly allow the *guna tamas* to attach their consciousness to the demonic frequencies (VII.15).

Priyas: The ones who are dear

Krishna says that there are four kinds of the good who honor and worship their Creator. There are the ones who are bereft, afflicted, and suffering. There are those who seek wealth, those who desire Knowledge, and then there are those who have Become Wise

(VII.16).

God dwells within the Heart of All and as the All, God is partial to none. Yet Krishna says that the one who is of Wisdom is dear (*priyas*) to the Creator. The wise (*jnani*) one who is joined in Union with the God-within and is solely devoted to the One in the All, also finds God exceedingly *priyas* dear (VII.17).

All who honor God are noble, but the wise who have Become enlightened are considered by the Creator to be as Its very Self. They have achieved similitude (*sadharmya*) and abiding in Union, they remain in that Path which is the Supreme Goal (*anuttamam gatim*). There is nothing higher (VII.18).

VAC: The Concept of the Word in Selected Hindu Tantras

Andre Padoux; Translated by Jacques Gontier

State University of New York, 1990

Sri Satguru Publications, a Division of Books Center; 1992, Delhi

Vasudeva sarvam iti - God is All!
The Inventor & the Vehicle



Krishna has taught his friend that there is no goal higher than abiding in the God-within (VII.18) and that for those who truly realize this Knowledge, nothing remains to be Known here on earth (VII.2).

If one of Krishna's pearls could be said to sum up the entirety of primordial wisdom surely his declaration - *Vasudeva sarvam iti* - would be the one. God is All (VII.19).

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते .
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः .. ७- १९..

bahūnāṃ janmanām ante jñānavān māṃ prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ 7.19

The Sanskrit name *Vasudeva* literally means the God that dwells within. *Vasu* is the abode and the dweller. The God within abides in all beings. Krishna says that the high souled one who realizes that 'God is All' is hard to find.

When the heart and mind are deluded by *guna-maya* and the illusion of multiplicity, those who have not yet Realized their Oneness with the God-within worship various

forms of the Creator. Without Knowledge, we are compelled by the *gunas* to follow our desires and hope that by performing this or that rite of worship, the desires of our material nature (*Prakriti*) will be answered (VII.20).

God will grant an unswerving and steadfast *faith (sraddham)* to any who worship with a sincere heart. Worshipping any partial manifestation of the One works because the One is the All (VII.21-22).

However whatever is based in the material nature (*Prakriti*) is temporal and subject to the laws of cyclical fluctuation. Therefore the desires that are fulfilled in such partial knowledge come to an end; and those who worship the gods, go to the gods. Those who worship the One, go to the One (VII.23).

This brings up the understanding of the *Lokas*, or the realms more commonly called heavens and hells. Many who see beyond the five senses have reported that indeed these realms exist and correlate with the belief systems of a particular faith. Thus there is a heaven or similar realm for each faith. While we may disagree with another's way of loving God, we have no right to impose our beliefs on anyone.

Blinded by science

In the west sophisticated people may laugh at those who worship deities and ancestors, but I say that we have come to worship and idolize science in the same way. There are two excellent books on this topic: one is 'The Reign of Quantity & the Signs of the Times' written by Rene Guenon in 1945. Guenon's precision French mind makes him a brilliant metaphysical writer. I highly recommend all of his books to you; they are currently published by Sophia Perennis in New York state.

Science has become obsessed with measuring those quantities endlessly produced by *Prakriti*. Because science has rejected anything that cannot be measured by the five senses or by the machines invented by them to serve them, science has lost even the idea of understanding the qualitative nature of what is beyond the five senses and belongs to the Soul.

Rene Guenon tells us that Truth in modern times has been lost and replaced by utility and convenience. Science is no longer the pure search for truth, but the slave of commerce and industry. Science has become the servant of our consumer cravings and is dependent on producing profitable results for its survival.

Atrophied perceptions

Rather than holding these minions of corporate industry in high esteem and allowing them to dictate the atmosphere of our very being, these unfortunates who have been blinded-by-science should be regarded as what they are – beings whose God-given ability to perceive what lies beyond the five senses has atrophied and become functionally extinguished.

Like stubborn children competing with each other for parental attention, these priests of science have become so blind that they are incapable of considering any idea outside of their own ego driven turf. They seem to have lost the ability to think in any other way.

In modern times we have all accepted a reality based solely on and limited to the five senses. During the past 6,000 years, the period known as the Kali Yuga, our innate abilities to perceive the Invisible Realms have atrophied to the point that most humans are incapable of even a remote awareness, much less the Joy of interacting with that which we cannot see, hear, touch, etc.

It is therefore understandable why most simply deny the very existence of such realities. They are not capable of perceiving them. The result of this disastrous defect of our comprehension has produced the ludicrous concept of ordinary life or real life, which in its absolute denial of anything beyond the five senses engulfs us in total delusion.

The quantification of the world

In the guise of modern science the measurement of that which can be registered by the five senses may indeed go on forever; but in doing so, mankind is left skating on the thin ice of a miasma of amnesia - which in no way reflects the totality of existence.

The quantification of the material world without an understanding of the Invisible Realms that support it, which in fact are the actual Source of such apparent solidity, is the degenerative path to the catastrophic conclusion of this cycle of time, the Kali Yuga, our current Age of Conflict and Confusion (R.Guenon).

The reduction of quality to quantity

In his book ‘The Sleepwalkers, A History of Man’s Changing Vision of the Universe’ Arthur Koestler presented the history of how science became solely focused on quantifying matter. Koestler was one of the most brilliant scholars of his time and I feel it is a terrible tragedy that his books - like the books of the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair - seem to be going out of print.

In observing ‘the reduction of quality to quantity’ Koestler says, ‘And so in its actual procedure physics studies not the inscrutable qualities of the material world, but pointer readings which can be observed.’ Koestler quotes Bertrand Russell: ‘Physics is mathematical not because we know so much about the physical world, but because we know so little; it is only its mathematical properties that we can discover.’

In the epilogue, Koestler says that once science became divorced from the search for truth and meaning, ‘it carried the species to the brink of physical destruction. ... In the hands of physicists, matter began to evaporate and each advance in physical theory, with its rich technological harvest, was bought by a loss ... Words like substance and matter have become void of meaning, or invested with simultaneous contradictory meanings.’ Science is only concerned with a partial aspect of reality. Modern physics is focused on ‘the mathematical relations between certain abstractions which are the residue of vanished things.’

Eventually, you get what you want

As the narrow thinking of science continues to pursue the endless quantification's of *Prakriti's guna-maya*, I feel assured that she will go on and on producing more and more as yet undiscovered particles which will continue to lead us no where - except perhaps even closer to such unimaginable weapons as might destroy all life in a nanosecond. It is as Krishna says, the God-within will fulfill the wishes of whoever worships that partial manifestation of the Creator. So it is with those who want a new car, a lover, or a new particle of matter.

The partial forms are subjective

Krishna says that because the One is invisible and unmanifest (*avayaktam*), the ones who are unintelligent (*abuddhayas*) - Winthrop Sargeant also defines this word as ‘the stupid ones’ - make the Creator into whatever form they desire to imagine (VII.24). Thus we all ‘see’ and perceive the God-within as we desire It to be. While God is indeed all the forms that each being conceives, It is also beyond all those forms. God is the imperishable and eternal (*avayaktam*) and is incomparable (*anuttaman*).

The God-within does not reveal Its shining being, which is veiled *by maya*, to everyone and those who are deluded by the multiplicity of the world do not recognize that which is birthless (*ajam*) and eternal (VII.25). The Creator knows both the living and the dead, and those who are yet to be born - but no one knows God (VII.26). At birth all creatures (*bhutani*) fall into delusion (*sammoham*) because of the deluding power of the dualities

which are born of desire and hatred (VII.27).

The enlightened have liberated their consciousness from the confusion of the polarities. They act in purity without attachment and thus have come to the end of sin. They honor the God-within and Know the Self as the highest goal. These will hold steadfast to Knowing the Supreme Being even at the hour of death (VII.30).

By your own Effort Alone

Take note here that in the *Bhagavad Gita*, in no way and no where in any verse, does Krishna ever tell Arjuna to cultivate a relationship with any being other than the Supreme Being, the Self, the God-within. He does not suggest channeling extraterrestrial entities, or communicating with ascended masters, or even praying to the angelic realms.

These beings - and there are many, perhaps millions - are fine in their exalted or temporal and limited holographic stations of consciousness. Some may be helpful in a short term experience; others may be quite harmful and delude you in lifetime after lifetime. You may have visions and learn about the myriad worlds through them, but they cannot give you your enlightenment. Only you - through your own efforts - can fuse your conscious being with the God-within you.

Brahman the Immutable is Akshara the Imperishable

Arjuna asks Krishna - What is Brahman? The Blessed One tells his friend that Brahman is *Akshara*, the supreme (*paramam*) eternal imperishable (VIII.3). Brahman is the *Adhyatman* which is *svabhavas*, meaning the continuous flow of consciousness that will never cease (B.Marjanovic). This consciousness is the creative power (*visargah*) which brings all beings into life. This creative power (*visargah*) is named action (*karma*).

Krishna's teaching that Brahman is *Akshara* is confirmed in the Brahma Sutras:

The Akshara, the Imperishable, is Brahman because it supports everything up to the Akasha (ether).

- The Brahma Sutras 1.3.10

The etymology of the Sanskrit word *Akshara* is a 'syllable' and according to Sri Sankara's commentary in the Brahma Sutras, *Akshara* commonly represents the syllable OM. Sri Sankara quotes the Upanishads:

*In that Akshara is the Ether woven like warp and woof.
- Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 3.8.11*

The image of Ether (*Akasha*) being woven like a fabric in the Imperishable (*Akshara*) resonates with the nature of a hologram. Brahman here means consciousness. Note that there is a difference between the word Brahman and the name Brahma. Brahman is the principle of the Immensity that moves to create the appearance of divisions as multiplicity in space and time (Alain Danielou). The name *Brahma* is the deity who is the personification of this metaphysical principle.

The Hindu gods and goddesses are encrypted symbols charged with primordial metaphysical Knowledge and Wisdom. The cosmological principle of Brahman is that of creator. *Brahman* is the *guna rajas* and the source of all that is manifested in this universe. Creation is the result of the opposition between the centripetal concentration (*sattva* as *Vishnu*) and centrifugal dispersion (*tamas* as *Shiva*) forces (A.Danielou).

Brahma as creator god is known as the Lord of the Progeny. The *Mahabharata* says that *ahamkara*, the idea of individual existence, appeared first and from it Brahma was born (*Shanti Parva*). The Golden Egg or Embryo is *Hiranya-Garbha*, the symbol of that from which the universe emerges.

The perishable & the Imperishable

Krishna makes a distinction between what is perishable and that which is within, the real Doer in the body (VIII.4). That which is subject to decay, mutable and perishable is called *Adhibhuta*; translated literally this means the ‘aggregate of physical elements’ (W.Sargeant).

The God-within, who is the Supreme Agent of the All, is called *Adhidaivata*. The Sanskrit words *Atman* and *Purusha* are also used to describe the God-within.

The Inventor & the Vehicle

Let us suppose that an inventor created a vehicle for the purpose of exploring the universe. This vehicle is built with the capacity to automatically move through space, to collect data, and even to refuel its energy requirements through a sort of temporal perpetual-motion mechanism (*yantra-rudhana*).

The inventor is naturally quite fond of the vehicle - its baby - and gives it the choice to run on this autopilot function, or to rely on the Will of the inventor and in a happy

union, be the instrument of exploration and expression of its creator.

To create a vehicle with such extraordinary abilities, the inventor has given up a great deal of his or her time and resources - but for the inventor, this is all an act of love. Whatever sacrifices the inventor has made for the well-being of the vehicle, are made out of boundless love. The inventor is the *Adhi-Yajna*, the Lord of Sacrifice, so that the vehicle may exist.

At first - in the first cycle of time, the *Satya Yuga* - the inventor drives the vehicle and relishes every adventure first hand. Every new experience, each turn in the road and distant horizon is shared in perfect union with the vehicle.

The inventor delights in fine tuning the various components and instruments that make the vehicle purr like a pampered pet panther. Soon the vehicle can do anything on its own and over time - more precisely as the cycles of time proceed - the inventor, as the Creator, allows the vehicle to choose which direction they will go in, where they will travel, how fast or slow they will move, and how long they will stay in any given location, meaning in any one state of consciousness.

By the advent of the *Kali Yuga*, the vehicle has become totally absorbed in its autonomous 'free will' travels and has completely forgotten about the inventor. Lost in its own adventures, caught up in the sights and its desires for the next big thing, and every new sensation, the vehicle is deluded.

It no longer remembers the inventor. It has most likely been in a more than a few collisions and proudly carries numerous dents as reminders, in its once perfect body. Some of its instruments may no longer read quite accurately. In its confusion, the vehicle begins to wander aimlessly and finds that it keeps going down the same old tired roads. It wonders where it came from and why it exists at all.

The inventor lovingly observes its creation, determined not to withdraw the autonomy initially given. Thus the inventor waits patiently, knowing that at any moment the vehicle can shift gears and like a switch, turn its consciousness within to simply recognize the real driver, its Creator, who has been seated within the vehicle all along.

The Brahma Sutras with Commentary by Sri Sankara
Translated by Swami Vireswarananda, 1847
Advaita Ashrama, 1982, Mayavati, Pithoragarh, Himalayas

The Gods of India: Hindu Polytheism

Alain Danielou, 1964

Inner Traditions International; 1985, New York NY

Death & Time



Krishna now teaches Arjuna the decisive importance of remembering the God-within at the moment of death, specifically the point of relinquishing and leaving (*muktva*) the physical body (VIII.5).

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् .
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः .. ८- ५..

antakāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram
yaḥ prayāti sa madbhāvaṃ yāti nāsty atra saṃśayaḥ

8.5

In his commentary on the *Gita*, Abhinavagupta argues that Krishna is not merely talking about the moment of death. If this were so, then any being could throughout their entire life behave in a totally unconscious manner and then by luck or chance think of the Immutable Oneness in the moment of their death and therefore attain the same state of consciousness as the *Yogin* who practiced a lifetime of devotion. That would never happen. It is only the person ‘who has always taken the Lord to be the highest reality who attains liberation’ (B.Marjanovic).

The power of a higher consciousness

However, for those of us who have not spent a lifetime in devotion to God, there is the hope that we can, by our own efforts, counter the influence of our previous distracted

and deluded consciousness. Abhinavagupta quotes from *Patanjali's Yogasutras* 1.50:

'Impressions born from that (meditation) counter the influence of other impressions.'

This gives us the understanding that our thoughts of the Imperishable One have greater power than those with a more temporal vibration and can overwhelm the lower frequencies. Thinking of God can hopefully melt away the residue from mindless chatter, indulgent fantasy, and endless sitcoms.

Remember God at all times

Abhinavagupta presents the sublime picture of the *Yogin* who by his or her own effort has been continually remembering God. This is not as arduous as it may first appear, for God is All - *Vasudeva sarvam iti* - and it is only that you must remain conscious of this truth. This constant practice 'neutralizes other impressions' and when one who has become enlightened 'drops' the body, they are united with 'the highest reality and consciousness' (B.Marjanovic).

Krishna tells Arjuna that he should, based in this teaching, therefore (*tasmat*) at all times (*sarvesu kalesu*) remember the God-within. In this consciousness of constantly thinking of God, the one so devoted to the highest goal will without any doubt come Home (VIII.7).

The Moment of Death

My own thinking is that the moment of death will probably rob most of us of the ability to control our thoughts. Even if you are fortunate enough not to be in pain, the transition from one state of being to another will throw your consciousness into the unknown. Recall any trauma you have experienced and this will verify the potential for an enormous unexpected shift in your usual state of mind.

Therefore in my understanding, our thoughts at the moment of death will be the concentrated synthesis of whatever we hold to be of the greatest value based on our entire life. The state of our consciousness will be compelled by everything we have done and every thought we have entertained.

This cumulative product, as Abhinavagupta suggests, will 'spontaneously' come into our memory and therefore be the matrix of our nature in the next life or free us from rebirth forever. Thus it is obviously crucial for us to work towards the highest consciousness before we become ill and in the possible confusion of pain, move into the experience of

death.

Abhinavagupta quotes from *Patanjali's Yogasutra*, Ch.4.9:

There is an uninterrupted continuity of cause and effect, even though separated by life states space and time, because memory and the habitual potencies possess similar form.

Frequencies of consciousness as memory and 'habitual potencies' produce form as material manifestation. We are what we think and what we think emerges from what we believe, our faith (*sraddham*). One acts as one believes. The uninterrupted continuity of cause and effect is the power of Time.

Time is the Product of Consciousness

The poet-author of the Mahabharata, Vyasa, offers profound illumination on the metaphysics of Time in the *Mahabharata's Shanti Parva* (Vol.7, Ch.25 & 33; M.N. Dutt). In the character role of esteemed enlightened Seer, Vyasa teaches the King Yudhisthira that man gets everything through Time.

The Great Ordainer has made the course of Time the instrument of acquisition (Ch.25.5).

Astrology is the science of Time and it is predictable that in the Kali Yuga those who are immersed in worshipping modern day scientism are ignorant of astrology. Rejecting this ancient source of knowledge as mumbo-jumbo, our myopic quantifiers of surfaces have deprived mankind of access to the deeper insight into human destiny and the nature of Time.

From the moment of our birth, right through the yearly progressions and the daily transits, the constantly changing arrangement of the heavenly bodies reflect very subtle and complex states of consciousness. Those who crave power have always utilized astrology. The birth chart is the map and blueprint of our hologram, which is the cumulative result of all our thoughts and actions in all of our lives. In each moment of time in our every thought and act, we are creating our future.

Vyasa describes the mechanics of Time:

Know that Time depends upon the fetters of action and is the witness of all actions good and evil. It is Time that brings about the fruits, pleasurable or miserable, of our actions (Shanti Parva Ch.33-19).

The very existence of Time ‘depends’ on the consciousness we hold in the moment of any act. The strength and power to bind, the ‘fettters’ of any action, depend solely on the level of attachment or non-attachment our consciousness is holding, whether the act be good or evil.

The ‘fettters’ of action are generated by the *gunas*, the three qualities *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. The etymology of the Sanskrit word *guna* is rope. All actions emerge in the hologram through the mechanism of *guna-maya*. Acts performed in attachment - meaning you are attached to the temporal results that may feed or hurt your ego - rope, tie and bind us into the hologram.

Like a spider that weaves its own web, we are bound by the fettters of our self-created illusions generated by our own *gunas*. Thus the Creator binds and veils Its Self in the Illusion of Separation and the appearance of multiplicity. This is the nature of our bondage to rebirth and transmigration from which we inevitably begin to seek liberation (*moksha*).

Our Consciousness creates Time

As a weapon made by a smith or carpenter is under the control of the person who uses it, and moves as moves it, likewise this universe, controlled by actions done in Time, moves as those actions move it (Shanti Parva Ch.33.22).

Time is absolutely created by our own actions. No wonder Krishna tells Arjuna that he must act to sustain the well-being of the world, the *lokasamgraha* (III.25). It is our consciousness, as the veiled yet power-filled pieces of God, that produce Time itself in all its varied rates of vibration from one Yuga to the next. No wonder we do not understand time beyond arbitrarily measuring it - we are submerged in it! We are not only living in time, compelled and controlled by it, but we are creating time with every thought and every act.

On the level of common experience, this explains why time flies when you are having fun and how time can deepen into heaven when you are in love. This also explains why time drags by like a slimy slug when you are heartbroken, miserable and depressed. And this gives us insight into why great Spiritual Masters are never in a hurry, never irritable or nervous. They seem to possess and emanate a kind of measured, solid state of sattvic peace and tranquility. Time is produced by our own consciousness which is the result of our thoughts and actions.

Kali Yuga Time

Those whose consciousness is agitated, deluded, in the frenzy of need and greed reside in the cycle of time known as the Age of Conflict and Confusion, the Kali Yuga. The wise ones who have learned to control the mind, who have reined in the five senses operating on their objects, are in the frequency of time that corresponds in vibration to the golden Satya Yuga. These enlightened beings may be living in this our current Kali Yuga, but in their consciousness they are resonating with the Satya Yuga.

At any moment you can choose to pull your consciousness out of the frequencies of the Kali Yuga. You can slow time down and bring authentic serenity to the world around you. In every Yuga there are those who hold the consciousness of the higher Cycles of Time. The actions and consciousness of the majority in each cycle create the quality of Time experienced in that cycle.

The ones who have liberated their being from the Illusion of Separation produced by *guna-maya*, and who hold fast to the refuge of Union with the God-within, will through their acts, their sacrifices (*yajna*) based on the regard for others, generate in this world those frequencies of consciousness that will eventually bring about the next Golden Era.

As Vyasa says, this universe is controlled by our actions done in Time and moves as those actions move it. We get the world we earn.

You will go to that state of consciousness which resonates with your thoughts

The moment of death is once again emphasized and Krishna says that ‘whatever state of being’ (B.Marjanovic) the dying remember is the state he or she will go to after leaving the physical body (VIII.6). I interpret ‘state of being’ to be state of consciousness.

The Swami Gambhirananda translation of Madhusudana Sarasvati’s commentary is slightly more explicit and states that ‘... thinking of any one entity, whichever it may be, one gives up the body at the end, having always nurtured its thought, he attains that very one.’

The Myriad Realms over the four yugas have been created by our consciousness to serve our created belief systems. In this stage of the Kali Yuga, there are thousands of these worlds. They exist to fulfill the afterlife expectations of every faith from the Protestant to the shamanic.

Location is a Function of Consciousness

This is why I urge you to find the God within you. You can spend many a *manvantara* exploring these endless realms. Please do not misunderstand me - there is nothing wrong with these locations. They are the manifested holograms of various frequencies of consciousness. They are amazing and beautiful worlds, and if this is something you desire to fulfill your beliefs, then they are there for you. However, know that they are temporal, not eternal and eventually you will have to be reborn here.

Habit forms consciousness

The commentary in the Swami Gambhirananda translation also makes the point that what we remember at the moment of death is created by our past habits. Our habitual thoughts form our consciousness, just as a carpet is worn in the places most walked on. As Krishna has said before: Those who worship the gods, go to the gods (VII.23). Whatever you hold to be the highest goal, whatever is a god to you - whether that is transcendent or material - you will move into that state of consciousness.

M.N. Dutt translates this same verse (VIII.6) as:

'... whichever form of divinity he remembers when he leaves this body ... he goes, having habitually meditated upon him.'

- The Mahabharata, Bhishma Parva; Ch.32.6

Go to the Supreme Spirit - Paramam Purusham

With the mind fully reined in, controlled, and meditating on the God-within, the one who seeks liberation from rebirth goes to the highest, the Supreme (*paramam*) Spirit (*purusham*). This ancient (*puranam*) One is more subtle than the atom (*anos*) and is both Seer and Poet (*kavim*). The Supreme Spirit is the color of the Sun, self effulgent and beyond any darkness (VIII.8-9).

At the time of death, the final hour, keep the mind still. In total devotion exercise the power of Union (*Yoga*) and focus the vital breath (*pranam*) in the head between the eyebrows. Restrain the sense organs which are the gates of the body. With the vital breath in the head, confine the mind (*manas*) in the Heart (*hrdi*). Uttering the sacred syllable *OM*, leave the body and go to the Supreme Goal (VIII.10-13).

Sushumna & Sahasrara

Individual teachings on the practice of leaving the body vary and I will not say much here beyond what Krishna teaches. In my understanding the area ‘between the eyebrows’ is the pineal gland which secretes the hormones that not only control the physical body, but also the subtle body and states of consciousness. It is useful to gain an understanding of the *Sushumna* nerve which moves up the spinal column and culminates in the *Sahasrara chakra*. Go into your own consciousness and through your inner experiences, find the way.

As an example of variances in teachings, here is a brief quote from the Swami Gambhirananda translation of Madhusudana Sarasvati’s commentary, which as you will see is slightly different than other translations:

‘... having thus first controlled the vital force, prana, within the lotus of the heart, and then lifting the vital force up along the up-going Sushumna nerve through the successive conquest of the planes according to the process taught by the teacher ... departing through the aperture on the crown of the head ... attains that resplendent supreme (param) Person (purusham).’

Each chakra in the subtle body corresponds to a plane of consciousness. The Myriad Realms are manifestations of these various planes of consciousness; they are holograms of a specific frequency. Because these correlate chakras are in the human body, we all have access to all of these worlds from the highest to the lowest. It is the frequency of our own consciousness that gives us an affinity with these realms. Location is a function of consciousness.

A playful metaphor

One might say that the spinal column is a sort of cosmic elevator shaft and the chakras are the various floors that correlate to the myriad frequencies of consciousness in the Myriad Worlds. Your consciousness determines which floor the elevator doors can open on to in response to your frequency.

I have come to trust the God-within to teach me whatever it is that I need to Know. I have complete faith that my own Self, the Spirit that dwells within my Heart, will be with me guiding my consciousness in my hour of death.

Go ONLY to the Supreme Spirit

I will say again to be aware that Krishna says to go only to the the Supreme Spirit, the God-within, and not to any other entities in any of the Myriad Worlds. Those who

worship the gods, go to the gods. Those who worship the God-within go Home.
(VII.23).

The Original Yoga

As Expounded in Sivasamhita, Gherandasamita, and Patanjali Yogasutra

Shyam Ghosh, 1999

Munishiram Manoharlas Publishers, 2004

All existences are contained in God, but God is not contained by them



Let not my thread of life be snapped while I am weaving my song, nor the measure of my work broken up before its time.

- Rig Veda II.28.5, as translated by Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair

In the hour of death those who have turned the focus of the mind inward, and who seeking Union (*Yoga*) with the God-within, remain in the sustained state of devotion easily attain the Supreme Spirit. These souls are never again reborn into this world, which Krishna describes as the abode of misery and all that is impermanent - the temporal illusory hologram (VIII.14-15).

Like our earthly existence, all the Myriad Worlds, the many heavens and hells, are temporal transient realms. Once the merit which draws one into a particular consciousness - as a location - is exhausted, each of us must transmigrate and return here into another form of flesh and blood. But those who Know and have by their own efforts reached the highest reality, beyond all duality, imperishable and immutable, do not have to experience rebirth ever again (VIII.16).

The *Uddhava Gita* in the *Bhagavata Purana* says that ‘a wise man should not long for heaven just as he would not desire for the infernal region’ (XI.20.12-13). In this later text Krishna tells his friend and disciple Uddhava that even the gods desire to be born into a human body because the bodies that inhabit both heavens and hells are not ‘vested’ with the capability to attain Liberation by the path of Knowledge. The *Bhagavata Purana* suggests that in the celestial worlds there is ‘rivalry between equals, jealousy towards the superiors and the fear of the termination of the period of stay’ (XI.3.20).

Trapped in Time

The enlightened know that this universe perpetually endures the Cycles of Time as the *Yugas*, *Manvantaras*, and *Kalpas*. There will always be another beginning in the periodic creation of all living beings, just as there will forever be the inevitable dissolution and destruction. The night makes way for the day that follows and so on - world without end. The same beings are brought into the world again and again, helpless under the power of the wheels within wheels of eternal cyclical Cosmic Time (VIII.17-19).

Beyond these interminable cycles is the Imperishable (*akshara*) Unmanifest (*avyaktas*). This invisible unmanifest state is the highest goal and those who have found their way here, never return. This is the abode of the God-within as the Supreme Spirit. This dwelling place (*dhama*) is Home eternal (VIII.20-21).

The Two Paths

Verses 23-26 are very specific teachings of the two paths, as the ancient Vedic mystics described them, by which it is said that the soul departs the body. I do not feel qualified to interpret this highly esoteric knowledge to you. I feel it might be quite confusing to the beginner and those who are more advanced will probably disagree as to the exact meaning.

Suffice to say that one path is called the ‘bright’ path or the path of the ‘gods’ by which the enlightened soul travels up the *Sushumna* nerve out the top of the head. This path

leads the soul to liberation.

The other path is called the ‘path of the fathers’ and leads to continual transmigration. My understanding of this is that as long as we are attached to the external hologram, to the people and places we experience through the DNA of the body we inhabit - then we are going to remain in the path of the fathers, meaning our ancestors who contributed to that DNA, and so in perpetual rebirth.

Here are sources for further reading:

Chandogya Upanishad IV.xv.5; V.x.1-4

Brahma Sutras IV.ii.18-21

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV.iv.1-2; VI.ii.15-16

Book IX

Krishna feels that his friend now has unwavering faith (*sraddha*) in this secret teaching. Therefore, based on the fact that Arjuna is not one immersed in disbelief (*anasuyave*), Krishna continues to reveal that Knowledge (*jnanam*) which when used with discrimination and right understanding (*vijnana*) releases one from the impurities of evil (IX.1).

On the pathway Home, there comes a moment when we must leave our doubts behind. With our ignorance removed by Knowledge and firmly established in primordial Truth, we shed our attachment to confusion like a snake sheds its old skin.

Through Knowledge (*jnana*), we are rooted in an adamant faith (*sraddha*) and we live as we believe. Those who have no faith in this teaching do not merge into Union (*Yoga*) with the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) and return to transmigrate in human form (IX.3). ‘They sink anew in flesh and blood, where all things change’ (Ganguli).

All existences are contained in God, but God is not contained by them

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना .
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः .. ९- ४..

mayā tatam idaṃ sarvaṃ jagad avyaktamūrtinā
matsthāni sarvabhūtāni na cāhaṃ teṣv avasthitaḥ 9.4

This entire universe (*jagat*) is pervaded by the Unmanifest (IX.4). The God within you is simultaneously within each man, woman, and child. The God-within is ubiquitous everywhere and pervades every forest and field, the infinite skies and the abyssal unfathomable seas. The God-within is every living creature, from the grandest king of lions to the lowliest worm. That same God permeates and pervades those billions of stars that swirl in spirals as millions of galaxies. God is the Space (*akasha*) between all that is and the All itself (IX.6).

All existences are contained in God, but God is not contained by them (IX.5). This great mystery is made manifest by the power of the Creator (*yogam aisvaram*). Abhinavagupta here translates *yogam* as *Shakti* and *aisvaram* as glory (B. Marjanovic). It is because of the Creator's glorious power to veil Its Self in ignorance that beings imagine themselves to be Separate from the One. The truth beneath the illusion of multiplicity is - there is only the One.

The Cycles of Time

In Hindu metaphysics time is cyclical and each period of manifestation is called a KALPA of Brahma, equivalent to 4.32 billion human years.

The Kalpa is subdivided into 14 MANVANTARAS.

We are now in the seventh Manvantara of this Kalpa.

Each Manvantara is divided into 71 MAHA-YUGAS of 4,320,000 years each.

We are in the 28th MAHA-YUGA of this MANVANTARA.

Each MAHA-YUGA is made up of four yugas: The SATYA or KRITA, the TRETA, the DVAPARA, and the KALI.

*Each Yuga is preceded by a period of a dawn and followed by a period of twilight.
[Linga Purana 1.4.3-6]*

The Cycles of Time culminate periodically in a Dissolution. At the end of a *Kalpa*, all beings (*sarvabhutani*) go back into the unmanifest *Prakriti*, the source of the Creator's material nature. Again and again, at the beginning of a *Kalpa* the Creator sends forth all beings from the unmanifest *Prakriti* (IX.7).

'The realms of visible beings' (*Ganguli*) are virtually without will under *Prakriti*'s pre-programmed automatism. Powerless against the Matrix of Nature and the force of Time,

the whole multitude of beings (*bhatagramam*) is brought forth over and over endlessly by the Creator (IX.8).

These actions of periodic creation and dissolution do not ‘bind’ the Creator, for the Oneness that pervades the All remains unattached and indifferent (IX.9). This state of Cosmic Non-attachment is born from the Truth that all transient multiplicity in the temporal illusory hologram is in reality the Creator veiled in Its myriad forms.

The Creator is the All

All things which are animate (*cara*) and inanimate (*acara*), both ‘the living and the lifeless’ (*Ganguli*), are made manifest by the unmanifest power (*Shakti*) of *Prakriti*. The universe (*jagat*) revolves and functions by the instruments of the Creator’s *Prakriti* (IX.10). There is no thing that is not caused by the Creator. There is nothing that is not God.

The deluded (*mudhas*) are in ignorance, confused by the vast spectrum of appearances assumed by the Creator in veiling Its Self. These ‘fools’ (W.Sargeant) do not see God in every Eye and thus they despise those they find lacking (IX.11). They judge the veiled forms of their own Self as inferior, unworthy, or ugly. Puffed up with the pride of their imagined superiority, the deluded do not see The Great Lord of All Beings, *Mahesvaram*, within these forms they hold in contempt.

Deluded by apparent multiplicity, the ignorant see this world as a terrible place. They do not remember that God is everywhere - playing as a beggar or a tyrant. Having forgotten the God-within and without real Knowledge, the deluded act in vain. Their hopes are futile and their thoughts are prey to the demonic realms (*asuras*), who find this state of confusion fertile ground for further delusion (IX.12).

As God Realized in man, who embodies the Imperishable, Krishna speaks for the Eternal One Source:

‘But my Mahatmas (the great selves), those of noble soul who tread the path celestial, worship Me with hearts unwandering - knowing Me the Source, The Eternal Source of Life.’

- *Ganguli* (IX.13)

The ones who by their own effort have overcome delusion, Know the God within the Heart as the very same One that permeates the All. These are the enlightened ones who, with a mind that no longer wanders, love and honor the Creator as the Source of all Life, the Imperishable (*avyayam*) Oneness.

The Knowledge -Sacrifice

The knowledge-sacrifice (*jnana-yajnena*) is prescribed as a valuable way to honor the Creator (IX.15). This ‘sacrifice’ takes place in the mind during meditation. By keeping our thoughts from wandering and focused on the God within the Heart, and Knowing that this God-within is the Real you and you are That - we make an offering to God. The Gambhirananda translation says, this sacrifice of knowledge takes ‘the form of contemplating on the non-difference between the Deity meditated on and the meditator.’

The commentary in the Gambhirananda translation also states that those who worship the One as the many, meaning that they are deluded in the wrong impression that there is a distinction between ‘the adored and the adorer’ are of mediocre understanding. Others who are ‘dull and incapable of meditation’ worship this or that symbol, or various gods or other entities, thinking that these manifold (*prthaktvena*) forms are separate from the One that pervades the All. *Vasudeva sarvam iti* - God is All (VII.19).

Vyasa’s Poetic Genius

Vyasa, the poet-author, once again delights us with his genius for poetic imagery as Krishna enumerates those manifestations that reveal the profound beauty in the highest purity of consciousness.

The Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) is both the ritual and the sacrifice, the offering and the fire into which the offering is made. God is Father, Mother, Ancestor, and Arranger of all this boundless universe. The Eternal One is ‘The end of Learning! That which purifies in lustral waters! I am OM!’ (*Ganguli*). *Paramatman* - the Self Beyond - is the sacred Sanskrit texts, the Vedas (IX.16-17).

The Supreme Oneness is The Way, the One who sees and supports, the Home, the refuge (*sharanam*) that gives shelter, and the friend with a good heart. The Great Lord is the origin and birth (*prabhavah*), the dissolution and death (*pralayah*), and the support (*sthanam*) that maintains the Continuum of the All. The Creator is the *bijam avyayam*, the seed imperishable (IX.18).

Sun’s heat is mine;

Heaven’s rain is mine to grant or to withhold;

Death am I, and Immortal Life I am, Arjuna!

SAT (being and truth) and ASAT (non-being and untruth),

Visible Life, and Life Invisible!

- *Ganguli (IX.19)*

The Bhagavata Purana - Part V
Translated & Annotated by Dr. G.V. Tagare, 1978
Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1997, Delhi

The Cosmic Cycles & the Afterlife



*‘... great gods feed them in Indra’s high heaven.
Yet they, when that prodigious joy is over,
Paradise spent, and wage for merits given,
come to the world of death and change once more.’*

- Ganguli (IX.21)

You will go to heaven if you desire to. When you pray and perform the rituals and rites of purification that wash away sin, you will attain the realm you seek. However when your acquired merit runs out, you must return to this world and once again transmigrate in the vehicle of human form.

Mind created temporal holograms

The heavens and not-so-heavenly lower realms are manifested by and are the products of our own thoughts. They are the holographic projections of our beliefs in various specific systems of faith throughout the Cycles of Time. They are mind created temporal holograms which are the result of a polarity thought matrix - good & evil, light & dark, etc. The subtle body experiences these locations as if they are ‘real’ just as the five senses of the physical body experience this world as real.

The desire to be in these temporal realms is a desire (*kama*). There is nothing wrong with desiring heaven, however the enlightened recognize that righteousness riddled with desire can only lead to another temporal state.

Location is a Function of Consciousness

No desire will ever lead you Home. The frequency of any desire immediately distances your consciousness from the One. Being in a state of desire removes you from the Immutable Imperishable (*avyayam akshara*). Desiring the heavenly realms, in whatever way you conceive them, implies that you are attached to the results of your actions (*kama*). You perform the rites of purification and fervently pray in order to achieve the result that you may enter heaven. This is attachment to results. You must go beyond desire's attachments.

The Supreme Spirit (*Paramatman*) is beyond all attachments. The Creator manifests the world through desire (*kama*), but is never attached or in any way changed by Its creation. The creator has no need to cling to any one part of creation. All manifestations of all states of consciousness and their correlative realms - location is a function of consciousness - are endlessly created and dissolved within the Cycles of Time.

The Invisible Realms and the metaphysical trail of myth

In the *Kali Yuga* we are limited to the perceptions of the five senses. In the previous Yugas, depending on our consciousness, most could see the now Invisible Realms and were aware of their influence on human existence.

The interactions of the Invisible Realms are well documented in what we now mistakenly consider to be mythology. People didn't just 'make up' these beings to satisfy their helpless need for meaning. These stories are the clues that remain on the trail of our metaphysical experiences in the *Satya*, *Treta*, and *Dvapara* Yugas. These so-called mythological stories are windows on the Myriad Worlds.

Knowledge and right understanding of the temporal illusory holographic Invisible Realms is crucial for those who are currently devoted to contacting the entities in these worlds. Yes, I understand that it may be an adventure to 'channel' these all too willing beings. The realms they inhabit are dazzling and seductive. But where will this lead you?

A Pinball Machine

A sobering metaphor is the pinball machine. Think of yourself as the tiny silver ball that at birth gets shot out onto the colorful playing board. You may be lucky and light up the gameboard's flashing display. You may rise to the highest scores and for a time beat the others - the losers. But sooner or later you are going to fall back down into that small dark hole. We all die. Again and again you will find your 'self' shot back out into the same game, in *manvantara* after *manvantara*.

The Vayu Purana

The pinball machine analogy leads to a highly intriguing passage in the *Vayu Purana*. This Sanskrit text states that everything happens 'in the same order' in all sets of the four *Yugas* and that there are only twenty-five differences. This information is truly mind boggling. Does this mean that all the *Yugas* in every *Manvantara* are very similar? The text states that one *Kalpa* - which is subdivided into 14 *manvantaras* - is explained by explaining another! The implications of this are staggering. No wonder we all experience *déja-vu*!

The Vayu Purana Ch.58.116.

In a single set of four Yugas everything happens in the manner you have heard now. In the other sets of four Yugas also the same thing happens in the same order.

117. The differences that occur in the various creations are confined to TWENTY-FIVE, neither more nor less.

118. So also Kalpas and the Yugas are similar in characteristics. This alone is the characteristic sign of all the Manvantaras.

119. So also the transitions of the Yugas occur naturally. They are eternal as well. But the living beings that undergo modifications in the form of dissolution and re-creation cannot be permanent.

121-122. In respect to future Manvantaras the traits shall be inferred from the previous one. In the Manvantaras whether of the past or of the future, know that the Manvantaras shall be explained by the present one;

ONE KALPA IS EXPLAINED BY EXPLAINING ANOTHER.

123-124. The eight classes of Devas, sages and Manus are also similar in all Manvantaras in names, forms, and purposes. The division of the four castes and stages of life is the same in every Yuga.

The Vayu Purana Ch.8.33. Whatever names and forms (these beings have) in the past Kalpa, they mostly receive the same in future Kalpas.

What I take from 8.33 above is that these names and forms – *nama rupa* – are always here in this universe and that we enter into them and get recycled through endless *Manvantaras* – world without end – until we wake up. Of course it's all the Divine Lila, God playing in Time and Space.

1000's of universes

The *Vayu Purana* also states that there are many universes - not just this one.

Chapter 49.150-151. ...There are thousands of crores of Cosmic Eggs.

In his *PARAMARTHASARA*, the Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta says it like this:

Universes Float Like Bubbles in an Ocean...

Maya, the divine power of the Lord, reflected by him externally appears ... The Lord, covering Himself with it, conceals his nature of absolute purity and divinity.

... He sees everything through of viewpoint of diversity and forgets the divinity of His I-consciousness. Besides, Maya-tattva serves as the inanimate objective substance out of which all other insentient elements evolve. It is thus the substantive cause of numerous universes floating in it like bubbles in an ocean.

The glorious inspiring astonishing beauty of this universe is not lost on me. I deeply love and appreciate Nature's glory. I am not being irreverent of the Creator's bounty and mystery in this temporal illusory hologram when I find myself wondering what other universes might be like. I hear the siren song of a call to new adventures and the unknown in other dimensional realities beyond this one.

Perhaps like many of you, I have come to a time in my life where I am recognizing the endlessly repeating patterns produced by my own *guna-maya*. Do you often feel that you already know what someone is going to say before they even speak? Do you enter a situation, say a new relationship or endeavor, and intuitively know the outcome? Have you come to value your solitude over the cacophony of the crowd?

Déja-vu & 454 Kali Yugas

I once took great pains to figure out - and I hope I never have to do this again, please - that it is very probable that I have lived through a Kali Yuga 454 times and repeated similar experiences.

No wonder we humans have that feeling of *déja-vu*. You know, that fleeting feeling that you are absolutely certain you have been here before or said this before. You feel you know someone well, who you only just met. Could you imagine that if you have already been who you are now and played this small identity ego-self around 454 times, there is the real possibility for the memory of something you have already done 454 times to recur in your mind.

Observing our various transmigrations in body after body from the perspective of the Cosmic Cycles of Time can give new meaning to the popular phrase - ‘Been there, done that!’

An understanding of cyclical repetition would also explain why so many of us have a sense of what is coming. We have been here for the Dissolution of our World, the temporal illusion, 453 times already – the current 454th is still in our future. I find this a rather striking, stunning, sobering thought.

Weary of Repeating Cycles

So if we do become a bit weary of the interminable repetition of cyclical polarities - *sukha-duhkha* - pleasure/pain, what might we do to release our consciousness from the webs of rope (the *gunas*) we have woven around our soul.

When we are weary of the ‘Play’ (*Lila*) and want to wake up from this self-created dream, we must turn inwards. We must remove our five senses from their objects, meaning the apparent solidity of matter. We need help from that part of God that we are and that remained always within us, untouched throughout all the *Manvantaras*.

If God were not within you, you would not be alive. We need the Grace of that which we have always been – call it *ATMAN* or *Purusha* or Spirit or your Soul, whatever. It is here and has always been here in our Heart. The God-within has remained pure and untouched by anything and everything the small identity ego-self did or thought throughout the Cycles of Time. It knows everything you need. It knows the way Home.

*‘But to those blessed ones who worship Me,
Turning not elsewhere, with minds set fast,*

I bring assurance of full bliss beyond.'
- Ganguli (IX.22)

Krishna gives the promise that those who are in Union (*abhiyuktanam*), and taking refuge in the God-within with an unwavering mind, will come to the highest reality. The attainment of the highest consciousness will be protected (*yoga-kseman*) and once you are in complete Union, you will not again fall.

Vasudeva sarvam iti

Krishna then acknowledges the fact that whatever gods or other beings are worshipped with faith (*sraddha*) are also the various forms of the Supreme Being (*Paramatman*). God is the All - *Vasudeva sarvam iti* - and therefore it is only ignorance and delusion that produces the appearance of multiplicity in what is worshipped (IX.23).

*Beneath the curtain of each atom lies concealed
The life increasing Beauty of the face of the Beloved.*
- Mahmud Shabistari, 14th century

The Supernal Oneness is within all forms and therefore is the 'enjoyer' (*bhokta*) of every rite, ritual, and offering made in reverence to worship and honor any form of the Creator in the apparent multiplicity. Abhinavagupta's commentary clarifies the concept of sacrifice and says, 'All the streams of flow of sacrifices are nothing but the flow of consciousness' (B.Marjanovic).

God is All. It is sheer foolishness founded in ignorance that makes us critical of any form of worship. Each veiled expression of the Supreme Spirit (*Paramatman*) is engaged in the discovery of their highest Self in whatever form and manner as conceived by consciousness in any distinct time.

Path Ways of Light

Imagine a vision of the Sun emitting innumerable rays of light, and make these rays become paths to walk upon. In the Eye of your Mind, see all the beings on this planet and in all the Myriad Realms walking on these rays of golden light. Some are in the process of moving away from the Source of the Light from which they emerged, while others are walking back towards their Source. They are returning Home.

We are all in our perfect self-created point on the Path. None are wrong and none are right. Right and wrong are part of the polarities that make up this wondrous temporal

illusory hologram. The polarities/dualities give us a place to Play (*Lila*). It is our own consciousness that defines our location in the universe and our perceptions of it.

All systems will do

All the systems of philosophy, religion, and metaphysics available in printed form are reflections of Truth at various moments necessary to fulfill the needs of a particular time. It is not useful to permanently ATTACH your conscious awareness to any of these systems. Learn from them and realize that new forms need to emerge.

The forms that exist are still useful for many. Prehistory or lost forms more than double the now existing ones. Truth is Truth in any 'present' moment of apparent existence regardless of the form it manifests. The form is subject to both the need and determined by capacity for reception of an existing group of beings relative to the frequency level point in their evolution.

Life is truly an open-ended realm of possibilities. It is the limited human mind that wants to close Life into some system. In fact all systems will do.

But once a man clings to any system, he begins to be pushed to the edge of that system into the abyss so that he can experience the exact polar opposite of whatever system his mind (buddhi) has 'attached' him to. So that eventually he can realize the positive/negative nature of manifestation and experience his true Self as being totally Free within that.

- Thel Dar, 1985

The Supreme One receives all offerings to any of Its varied forms (IX.24). However it is the frequency of the consciousness the offering is performed in, that generates the arrangement of its aftereffects. Those who are not conscious that in reality they are worshipping the One who is All, and therefore do not recognize (*abhijananti*) God everywhere - beneath the curtain of each atom - they fall (*cyavanti*). This 'fall' is simply another temporary deviation from the Oneness and leads to repeated rebirth.

Those who 'fall' go to the realm that corresponds to the frequency of consciousness produced by their beliefs. They go to those heavens that are prescribed by their various religions, or to the worlds of their ancestors, or to whatever location their consciousness has created as an idea of the afterlife. Consciousness is a continually morphing aggregate of the three *gunas* - *sattva*, *rajas*, & *tamas* - produced by their subtly shifting states of balance and imbalance in any given point of time.

Consciousness is Location

Those who worship the gods and goddesses, go to the god worlds. Those who worship the ancestors (*Pitris* or *manes*) will join them in the ancestral realms. Those who worship the spirits (*Bhuts* or *bhutani*), for example Nature Spirits, will go to the shaman worlds (IX.25).

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान्पितृन्यान्ति पितृव्रताः .
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् .. ९- २५..
yānti devavratā devān pitṛn yānti pitṛvratāḥ
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā yānti madyājinopi mām 9.25

It is quite true that people who use either natural or man-made molecules, which are geared to produce entry into the Invisible Realms, see myriad beings. It is my understanding that each particular molecule contains a frequency that opens a door to a specific region. Location is a function of consciousness and consciousness can be described by the term frequency. Therefore a substance will over and over produce the frequency of the correlative realm of that molecular structure. Everyone who ingests the same herb, etc. will be able to verify the experience based on their shared visions and similar experiences.

There is nothing wrong in visiting these worlds. However they are highly seductive and can mislead the seeker of the ultimate Truth. They can entice you to deviate from your Path. This deviation could endure for many lives and while every adventure is enjoyable in its own way, you must decide what you want and where these side trip excursions will eventually lead you. Those who worship the One, go to the One.

*For I am the Receiver and the Lord
Of every sacrifice, which these know not
Rightfully; so they fall to earth again!*

*Who follow the gods go to their gods; who vow
Their souls to Pitris (ancestors) go to Pitris; minds
To ... Bhuts (spirits) given o'er sink to the Bhuts;*

*And whosoever loveth Me cometh to Me.
- Ganguli (IX.24-25)*

The Vayu Purana

Part 1 & 2

Translated & Annotated Dr. G.V. Tagare

Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1987, 2003, Delhi

Essence of the Exact Reality or PARAMARTHASARA of Abhinavagupta

With English translation & notes by Dr. B.N. Pandit

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Mahmud Shabistari: The Secret Garden

Translated by Johnson Pasha

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They are in God, and God is in them



*‘Whosoever shall offer Me in faith and love
A leaf, a flower, a fruit, water poured forth,
That offer I accept, lovingly made ...’*

- Ganguli (IX.26)

The God-within is happy with the most humble of offerings given in the consciousness of love. A simple leaf or a little water are available to anyone. The Creator does not need elaborate offerings of gold and gems. You do not have to be rich to feel God’s love, only rich in Spirit. Nor does God require any to pay money for this feeling of closeness, friendship, and Union with that which is always waiting patiently in the Heart of every man, woman, and child.

Krishna tells Arjuna that whatever he does should be offered and dedicated to the God-within (IX.27). The food that we eat is offered to its Creator in the awareness that God is the food - God is All. Everything we do can be seen as an offering to God. When we give in a charitable sense to those less fortunate, we understand that we are giving to the veiled Selves of the Creator. We see God in every Eye, and therefore dedicate everything we do to the Imperishable (*akshara*) One who is the Source of All that is.

Offering everything to God frees you from Attachment

This practice of first offering everything to the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) reveals the sacredness of the entire world and allows you to remain in a constant awareness of the One 'beneath the curtain of each atom' (M.Shabistari).

However the offerings must be made in the consciousness of Love devoted to the Supreme Self. If the practice decays into stale repetitious rituals, only memorized and repeated in a distracted state as merely some task to be quickly done with, then the frequency produced will not be beneficial. This is why *Bhakti Yoga* is so practical - we are inspired to spontaneity when we treat God as our Beloved.

Offering all our actions (karma) to the God-within is also highly practical for it liberates (*moksha*) you from all attachment to these acts (IX.28). When you act in the frequency of consciousness of Knowing that the Creator is simultaneously the act itself, the thing acted upon, and the one performing the act - you are free from the bonds of such acts (*karma-bandhanaih*). You are free from the self-created snares of Maya's delightful webs.

Renouncing the world

This is the true meaning of the practice of renunciation. The etymology of the word renunciation is to send back a message. In this context, the message is made up of the signals transmitted to the brain through the sense organs. The sense organs were created by the God-within, who is the actual owner and recipient of all such transmissions.

Therefore when you 'renounce' this world, you are simply sending back to God as an offering what always belonged to God as the Source of the All - even though you were under the delusion that the objects of the senses belonged to you. Attachment to the temporal is foolishness. This process of renunciation will clarify your own comprehension of your true identity, meaning who you really are beyond the fleeting ego-self. Renunciation will strengthen your Union with God within your Heart.

As you remove the five senses from their objects and return their transmissions to their Creator, you give up what was never yours anyway and return to that which you truly always are. You awaken from this enchanted Labyrinth that is spellbound by the deluding power of 'I and mine'.

Non-attachment in the Golden Era

The discipline of renunciation allows us to live in the world and not become ensnared by

guna-maya and the five senses. The one who is master of the *gunas* possesses a consciousness that ‘does not have to be afraid of their senses’ (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair). You can take joy in life as the reflection of the Supreme Self.

This state of non-attachment was our primordial relationship with the universe in the golden *Satya Yuga*. We were in it, but not of it; meaning we are not attached to what we created here in the temporal illusory hologram. In this spirit of non-attachment and *joie da vie*, we can work for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*). In this consciousness, we can be anywhere and remain always Home.

The Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) is the same (*samas*) in all (*sarva*) beings (*bhuta*). The God-within every one of us is equally present whether we are aware of this truth or not. God as the soul never leaves or abandons us. It is we who turn our attention elsewhere, enticed by the glittering illusion in the external.

They are in God, and God is in them

Because the Creator is the same (*samas*) in all of us, there is no one who is liked or disliked more than another (IX.29). We are all the One Self. However Krishna says that those who ‘worship Me with Love, I love; they are in Me, and I in them’ (*Ganguli*). When you read this text remember that Krishna, as God Realized in man, is speaking for the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*).

The ones who worship with love lift the frequency of their consciousness to the pulsating vibration that is the Love that emits this entire universe. They become the Love frequency! God is Love. Through the power of a focused devotion, those who worship with Love acquire similitude (*sadharmya*) with the Creator as the primordial principle behind everything. They are in God (*mayi te tesu*), and God is also in them (*capy aham*).

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः .
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् .. ९- २९..

samo'haṃ sarvabhūteṣu na me dveṣyostī na priyaḥ
ye bhajanti tu māṃ bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpy aham 9.29

Even those who have lived an exceedingly evil life may become good (*sadhus*) if they worship the Creator with one-pointed devotion (*ananyabhak*). The wicked will be made righteous by the firm decision to settle into a consciousness of pure devotion to the God-within (IX.30).

The Sin of Forgetting

Krishna clearly affirms that the one who was lost in the sin of forgetting and who returns to the Real, to Knowledge of their true identity, soon (*ksipram*) becomes virtuous of mind (IX.31). Thus redeemed we enter into a state of perpetual (*sasvat*) peace (*santim*). This Peace is not the ordinary ‘peace and quiet’ we think of in our day to day life. The *Santim*-Peace Krishna is speaking of here is something solid, an immutable imperishable state of being, and the same peace that ‘surpasses all understanding’ spoken of in the New Testament of the Bible (Philippians 4.7). This is the Peace that is beyond words to describe and must be experienced personally to be Known.

Krishna makes the promise that no one is ever lost who is sincerely devoted to the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*): *na me bhaktah pranasyati* (IX.31). It does not matter what level of society you have been born into (IX.32). Even if you have been brought into this world by parents who are of an evil consciousness, you will attain the highest goal (*param gatim*). ‘Though they be born in the very womb of sin’ (*Ganguli*).

Enlightened Women!

This also applies to women! The purposeful inclusion of women here always amused me. Thank God most women are now beyond believing that they must be born as men to achieve enlightenment and liberation (*moksha*). Thank God for India’s Mirabai and her sublime songs, the Sufi saint Rabi`a al-Qaysiyya, St. Teresa of Avila in Spain, and Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and all the other countless women - most who will probably remain unknown to written history - who defied dogma and found their way Home.

However in the context of the religious beliefs of the time, this statement made by the poet Vyasa through the words of Krishna might have been considered to be dangerously radical. Western theology is guilty of similar attitudes beginning with poor Eve in the Garden of Eden who was wrongly portrayed as the origin of all sin. No merciful God would exclude women or people of any social class from Knowledge of the Truth - and I am not interested in any god who is without mercy and Love. God dwells in the Heart of every man, woman, and child.

This truth about this world

Krishna speaks the plain truth to his friend Arjuna and says that for one who has come to this miserable, unhappy, impermanent, mortal world there is only one solution. The only

choice that works and brings liberation from the temporal illusory holographic matrix is devotion to the God-within (IX.33).

*'Ah! ye who into this ill world are come -
Fleeting and false - set your faith fast on Me!'
- Ganguli (IX.33)*

Alas, this world is not as the clever minds who create advertisements to sell us products would have us believe. Things will not make us happy. The fleeting joy of new possessions quickly turns to the familiar and the boring. A sexy new car, a watch encircled with diamonds, spectacular cleavage and hair color that shines from the glow of a hundred electric spotlights, or even a glittering mansion in the south of France cannot keep you from the heartbreak, loneliness and despair that is sure to follow when the party is over.

Lifestyle drugs

Depression always precedes the realization that old age, with all its infirmities, and death are inevitable. The culture that sells drugs that keep us from confronting the fact of our own mortality is destined to fail. We all die and each of us must face death alone. The mood altering 'lifestyle' drugs these pharmaceutical corporations manufacture, and their seductive pop-a-pill for anything ads that inundate the airwaves, are in my view the heart of evil. Side effects include ... ultimately, a life without hope.

These man made molecules rob individuals not only of their money, but of the God-given opportunity to search for meaning with clarity of mind. In seeking meaning and a relationship with this universe, we have the chance to find our true identity and come Home.

As Krishna says, merge your heart and mind in the Supreme Self (IX.34). The God within you is the Door to eternity beyond Time. Within your Heart is all the Love you ever dreamed of. Your final liberation (*moksha*) from the self-created bonds of this temporal illusory hologram waits patiently within the finest interior states of your own consciousness. Home is in the Heart. Come Home!

Book X

Krishna affectionately calls his friend Arjuna *mahabaho*, the Mighty Armed One (X.1). When reading the wonderful descriptions of the warriors in the *Mahabharata*, one often gets the enticing feeling of men who are not only quite muscular, well built, and strong

in body - but men who are as intelligent as they are handsome.

In our times it so often seems that a man is either great in physical strength or in mental, but rarely both. The contemptuous isolating influence of modern compartmentalization has limited our range of expression, and made us all rather dull, a bit boring and one dimensional in the *Kali Yuga*.

The poet Vyasa loves to paint pictures of palatial rooms filled with splendidly good looking, strong men dressed in silks and gold, who are having brilliant conversations on the meaning of life, history, the science of politics, and metaphysical wisdom. Now that was a time to be born in!

Only those with faith-enlightened eyes See

Addressing Arjuna as the Mighty Armed One, Krishna says that he is revealing these truths for Arjuna's best welfare (*hita-kamyaya*) and because Krishna knows that his friend loves God. Krishna reveals that the Creator is only Known by the sinless and the wise.

*'Not the great company of gods nor the kingly Rishis know
My Nature, Who have made the gods and Rishis long ago;
He only knoweth - only he is free of sin, and wise,
Who seeth Me, Lord of the Worlds, with faith-enlightened eyes,
unborn, undying, unbegun. Whatever Natures be
To mortal men distributed, those natures spring from Me!'
- Ganguli (X.2-3)*

The Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) as the very essence of mystery. Even the innumerable gods and the great sages (*maharsayah*) know not the the origin and beginning (*adis*) of their Creator. Only those who liberate their consciousness from the frequencies of delusion (*asammudhah*) and who Know the One as that which has no beginning (*ajam*) is pure and free of sin (X.3).

Sin is ignorance

My understanding is that 'sin' is a frequency waveform of delusion. This delusion is the Forgetting of Self and the loss of true memory that we are all the varied veiled expressions of the God-within. The ones who remember the Real and recognize that they are not the small personality identity ego-self of their current embodiment, but in truth are the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) - they are purified of all sin by this wisdom

consciousness of Knowledge. The only ‘evil’ is turning away from the God-within that you are!

Krishna now names a few of those qualities by which the Supreme Self can be described. These are intelligence (*buddhih*) as the power to reason and discover what is subtle, wisdom (*jnanam*) as the knowledge that reveals truth, and the state of non-delusion (*asammohah*) which is free from ignorance of the Real (X.4).

‘Lead me from the unreal to the real !’

- Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 1.3.28

The Lord of all Worlds is both happiness (*sukham*) and sorrow (*duhkham*), both being (*bhavah*) and non-being (*abhavah*), both fear (*bhayam*) and fearlessness (*abhayam*). The Supreme Self is all polarities and simultaneously beyond all polarities. All living beings (*bhutanam*) in their infinite variety of forms and natures, spring (*bhavanti*) from the Creator alone (X.5).

‘Maya, the divine power of the Lord, reflected by Him externally, appears ... The Lord, covering Himself with it, conceals His nature of absolute purity and divinity. Making a show of His involvement in it, He sees everything from the viewpoint of diversity and forgets the divinity of His I-consciousness.’

- The Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta, Verse 15

or The Essence of the Exact Reality

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The Golden Egg & the Vision of the Cosmic Form



The Self-born Lord who was desirous of creating varieties of subjects from the unmanifest Pradhana [the eternal unmanifest cause] created waters alone at the outset. He instilled vigor in them. The waters are called Naras ... At they outset, they were his place of resort. Hence he is remembered as Narayana. A golden-womb Egg took shape and floated on the waters.

- Brahma Purana I.38-40

In the beginning of each periodic creation the One, who has no beginning and no end, forms the Seven Great Sages (*mayarsayah* - *Rishis*) and the Four *Manus* (X.6). These archetypal primordial beings are born in *kalpa* after *kalpa* from the Mind of the Creator, and not in any womb. It is from these sages (*Rishis*) and *Manus* that all beings in the world are born (*jatas*). *Manu* is not an individual (Rene Guenon); a *Manu* is a principle of Cosmic Intelligence as the reflected image of the Creator (*Brahma*) and the prototype

of man (*manava*).

‘Everything that ever appears, lies internally in the absolute in the form of pure consciousness (bhah) and the Absolute is thus compactly full of all phenomena.’

- The Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta, Verse 10

Thus the All emerges from the Mind of the Creator through Its manifesting power (*vibhutim yogam*). Krishna tells Arjuna that there is no doubt that those who know this Truth are united with the Supreme Self, *Paramatman* (X.7). There can be no doubt when you Know!

The World Egg / Hiranya-garbha

Hiranya-garbha is the Golden Embryo or Cosmic World Egg out of which will develop the ‘primordial germ of cosmic Light’ (Rene Guenon). Guenon points out that this symbol of the World Egg is found in the Egyptian tradition, the Druid, and the Orphic.

‘The cosmic egg is externally enveloped by water ten times its magnitude. The water is externally enveloped by fire ten times its mass. The fire is externally enveloped by air ten times its mass. The air is enveloped by the ether ten times its magnitude ... the coverings of the cosmic egg are seven (the intellect - mahat, ego - ahamkara, and the five subtle elements - tanmatras). There within is Brahma [the Creator] seated on the lotus. There are crores and crores [thousands] of such eggs in existence.’

- The Linga Purana, Ch.3, Verse 30-33

Knowing God to be the ultimate Source of All (*sarvasya prabhavah*) the worlds and that everything proceeds, literally the wheels within wheels ‘roll onward’ (W.Sargeant), from the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) - the wise (*budhas*), who have realized the Truth by the power of discrimination through a contemplative Love for that which they are, honor the God in the All (X.8).

Krishna says that those who have attained Union with the God-within enjoy speaking to each other the words of wisdom that are a source of joy and delight. Such conversations, with those who are devoted to remaining immersed in the Knowledge of the One, will awaken, enlighten, and bring happiness (X.3).

'The two that have entered into the cavity (of the Heart) are indeed the individual self and the Supreme Self, because it is seen.'

- Brahma-Sutras I.2.11

The Lord of all of Worlds, who dwells in the Heart (*hridaya*), gives Knowledge (*buddhi-yogam*) to the ones who are steadfast (*yuktanam*) in their focused devotion. The Heart here - *hridaya* in Sanskrit - is not the physical organ that pumps blood through the body. It is the 'center not only of the corporeal individuality, but of the integral individuality, capable of indefinite extension in its own sphere (which occupies, moreover, but one degree of existence), and of which the corporal modality constitutes only a portion' (Rene Guenon). You are far more than the physical body.

The God within our Heart is moved to compassion by our one pointed devotion. W.Sargeant gives the literal translation of compassion (*anukampa*) as 'trembling alongside' and I find this very insightful. The Lord of our Heart is feeling with us our passionate intent on returning Home and final liberation (*moksha*) from the self-created temporal illusory hologram. From such trembling alongside, meaning feeling the vibrational frequency of our Love, God is compassionate, feeling-with us - and because of our single minded purposefulness, destroys the darkness which is born of ignorance (*tamas*) with the luminous lamp of Knowledge (X.10-11).

'... thus loving ceaselessly -

I give a mind of perfect mood, whereby they draw to me;

And, all for love of them, within their darkened souls I dwell,

And, with bright rays of wisdom's lamp, their ignorance dispel.'

- Ganguli (X.10-11)

Arjuna now tells his friend that indeed he recognizes the Supreme Self within Krishna and asks him to speak of those powers by which The Lord of the Worlds manifests Its Self in infinite forms.

As God fully Realized in man, Krishna answers Arjuna:

*I am the Spirit seated deep in every creature's heart;
From Me they come; by Me they live; at My word they depart!*

- Ganguli (X.20)

The Creator of all beings (*sarva-bhuta*) abides in their Heart. The Lord is our beginning, middle, and end - our birth, life, and death.

Krishna enumerates a small portion of the 'Heavenly Perfections':

... of the faculties to living beings given, The mind which apprehends and thinks (X.22)

... of all the water-floods the Sea which drinketh each (X.24)

...and OM of sacred speech; Of prayers the prayer ye whisper (X.25)

Time's self I am ...

The lordly-painted tiger (X.30)

The whirlwind 'mid the winds (X.31)

First, and Last, and Centre of all which is or seems

I am, Arjuna! Wisdom Supreme of what is wise (X.32)

And Endless Life, and boundless Love, whose power

sustaineth each (X.33)

And bitter Death which seizes all, and joyous sudden Birth,

Which brings to light all beings that are to be on earth (X.34)

... of metres Gayatri (X.35)

... of saints Vyasa, sage divine;

The policy of conquerors, the potency of kings,

The great unbroken silence in learning's secret things (X.38)

- Ganguli

The Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) is the seed (*bijam*) of all beings. Nothing could exist without God (X.39). There is no end to the Creator's divine (*divyanam*) manifestations (*vibhutinam*) and what Krishna has spoken of is only a small part. Even those beings who are endowed with splendor and glory emerge from only a fraction of the Lord's Power (X.41).

Universes floating like bubbles in an ocean



In the final verse of Book X, Krishna says something which suggests that this universe is only one of many that 'like bubbles in an ocean' float in 'the substantive cause' that God is (*Paramarthasara* of *Abhinavagupta*, Verse 15). Krishna says that the Creator supports this entire universe with only a fraction of Its Being.

The Gambhirananda version translates the verse as:

I remain (*sthitah*) sustaining and pervading (*vishtabhya*) this whole creation (*universe-jagat*) by a part, a mere portion (*ekamsena*) of Myself (X.42).

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन .

विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् .. १०- ४२..

athavā bahunaitena kiṃ jñātena tavārjuna

viṣṭabhyāham idaṃ kṛtsnam ekāṃśena sthito jagat 10.42

The creation of this universe (*jagat*) requires only 'a mere portion' of the Lord of the Worlds, therefore one may conclude that Krishna is implying the existence of other universes.

A verse from the *Rig Veda* is referred to in both the *Abhinavagupta* commentary and the *Gambhirananda* translation. The Vedas are revered as revealed Truth and here set a foundation for the understanding of our temporal illusory universe as only one of many

universes.

Shyam Ghosh's 'The Rigveda for the Layman' provides an insightful translation of this illuminating verse:

This Purusha [the Creator & Supreme Spirit], while pervading, distributes (emits) its great power and thus (in this manner) everything gets produced. The beings are each only a single ray [padah - foot, range, a ray of light] emitted by the all-pervading one, while its other rays remain in eternal space all the time.

- Rig Veda X.90.4

Book XI - The Vision of the Divine Universal Cosmic Form



Arjuna tells Krishna that he now understands the secret mysteries of the Supreme Self (adhy-atma) and his delusion (mohas) is gone (XI.1). Arjuna has recognized the Supreme Spirit (Purushottama) within his dear friend Krishna and wishes to see his godly (aishvaram) form (rupam). Arjuna wants a vision of Krishna's eternal divine form, if Krishna considers him to be competent to see that form (XI.2-4).

This is the moment so often recreated in painting by artists throughout the centuries. The vision is spectacular and one of both incomparable beauty and power along with utter horror.

I have chosen to again quote from the Kisari Mohan Ganguli translation (1883-1896) because I feel that Vyasa's poetic imagery is well served here by Ganguli's Victorian style; and it is online at the Internet Sacred Text Archive in the public domain. Most readers feel a bit frustrated by this translation and find the Victorian day filters of Ganguli's interpretations rather archaic and antiquated, too limited and impenetrable. However after reading many translations of the Bhagavad Gita, I find Ganguli's poetic expression, now and then, both pleasing and illuminating.

Gaze, then, thou Son of Pritha! I manifest for thee

Those hundred thousand thousand shapes that clothe my Mystery:

I show thee all my semblances, infinite, rich, divine,

My changeful hues, my countless forms. (XI.5)

Behold! this is the Universe! - Look! what is live and dead

I gather all in one - in Me! (XI.7)

Thou canst not! - nor, with human eyes, Arjuna! ever mayest!

Therefore I give thee sense divine. Have other eyes, new light!

And, look! This is My glory, unveiled to mortal sight! (XI.8)

Arjuna would not be able to 'see' this form of Krishna with the physical eye alone, and therefore Krishna has given him the the eye (*caksuh*) that is supernatural (*divyam*). The Divine Eye is the Eye of the Mind, or the Third Eye which is activated by the hormonal secretions of the pineal gland. It is through this Eye that the Invisible Realms are perceived and it is because we no longer know about this eye and how to use it, that here in the Kali Yuga we have become relegated to the five senses, quite unaware of the myriad other worlds that do exist and have always existed all around us.

However I am also certain that this gift of 'sight' Krishna is bestowing upon his friend Arjuna is far greater than most Inner Eye experiences. We 'see' only that which resonates with the frequency of our own consciousness. Arjuna would not be able to experience the Vision of Krishna's Divine Cosmic Form if his consciousness had not been lifted and attuned to the pulsating vibratory rate of that frequency which constitutes

the highest awareness.

The Battlefield & the Remote Viewer

Remember that this entire conversation between our heroes, Krishna and Arjuna, is taking place in the middle of the battlefield Kurukshetra. Krishna has parked Arjuna's chariot between the thousands of warriors on both sides who are waiting for the command to begin the slaughter. Moreover the conversation itself is being told to the enemy king, Dhritarashtra, by a seer who has the ability to see things at a distance. In other words, the story is told via a remote viewer.

We are not told if the thousands of warriors on the battlefield can also 'see' the Vision of the Divine Form, and it is possible that it is only the 'seer' communicating to King Dhritarashtra back in the palace who has the siddhic power to 'see' Krishna's Cosmic Form. In any case, this wondrous manner in which the Bhagavad Gita is told enhances the mysterious nature of its content and is further evidence of the author Vyasa's metaphysical and poetic genius.

In the next six verses (XI.9-14), it is the remote viewer, Sanjaya, who speaks and describes to King Dhritarashtra what he sees:

*Then, O King! to God, so saying,
Stood, to Pritha's Son [Arjuna] displaying
All the splendour, wonder, dread
Of His vast Almighty-head. (Ganguli, XI.9)*

*Out of countless eyes beholding,
Out of countless mouths commanding,
Countless mystic forms enfolding
In one Form: supremely standing
Countless radiant glories wearing,
Countless heavenly weapons bearing, (XI.10)*

*Crowned with garlands of star-clusters,
Robed in garb of woven lustres,
Breathing from His perfect Presence
Breaths of every subtle essence
Of all heavenly odours; shedding
Blinding brilliance; overspreading-
Boundless, beautiful- all spaces
With His all-regarding faces;
So He showed! (XI.11)*

*If there should rise
Suddenly within the skies
Sunburst of a thousand suns
Flooding earth with beams undeemed-of,
Then might be that Holy One's
Majesty and radiance dreamed of! (XI.12)*

*So did Pandu's Son behold
All this universe enfold
All its huge diversity
Into one vast shape, and be
Visible, and viewed, and blended
In one Body - subtle, splendid,
Nameless - th' All-comprehending*

God of Gods, the Never-Ending

Deity! (XI.13)

In our current vernacular, we might say that Arjuna's mind was blown! Some translations say that his hair was standing on end. Most of us can identify with Arjuna when we try to imagine the total amazement (vismaya) he must have been thrown into. The greatest warrior in the world then kneels, with his hands clasped together, he bows his head and cries. Like the rivers seeking the Sea, tears flow easily when we feel close to God. The remote viewer, Sanjaya, says this:

But, sore amazed,

Thrilled, o'erfilled, dazzled, and dazed,

Arjuna knelt; and bowed his head,

And clasped his palms; and cried, and said (Ganguli, XI.14):

Arjuna:

Yea! I have seen! I see!

Lord! all is wrapped in Thee!

The gods are in Thy glorious frame! the creatures

Of earth, and heaven, and hell

In Thy Divine form dwell,

And in Thy countenance shine all the features

Of Brahma, sitting lone

Upon His lotus-throne;

Of saints and sages, and the serpent races

Ananta, Vasuki; (XI.15)

Yea! mightiest Lord! I see

Thy thousand thousand arms and breasts, and faces,

And eyes, - on every side

Perfect, diversified;

And nowhere end of Thee, nowhere beginning,

Nowhere a centre! Shifts -

Wherever soul's gaze lifts -

Thy central Self, all-wielding, and all-winning!

Infinite King! (XI.16)

I see

The anadem on Thee,

The club, the shell, the discus; see Thee burning

In beams insufferable,

Lighting earth, heaven, and hell

With brilliance blazing, glowing, flashing; turning

Darkness to dazzling day,

Look I whichever way; (XI.17)

Ah, Lord! I worship Thee, the Undivided,

The Uttermost of thought,

The Treasure-Palace wrought

To hold the wealth of the worlds; the Shield provided

To shelter Virtue's laws;

The Fount whence Life's stream draws

All waters of all rivers of all being:

The One Unborn, Unending: (XI.18)

Unchanging and Unblending!

With might and majesty, past thought, past seeing!

Silver of moon and gold

Of sun are glories rolled

From Thy great eyes; Thy visage, beaming tender

Throughout the stars and skies,

Doth to warm life surprise

Thy Universe. (XI.19)

The worlds are filled with wonder

Of Thy perfections! Space

Star - sprinkled, and void place

From pole to pole of the Blue, from bound to bound,

Hath Thee in every spot,

Thee, Thee! - Where Thou art not,

O Holy, Marvellous Form! is nowhere found! (XI.20)

As Krishna has said earlier, Vasudeva sarvam iti (VII.19) - God is All!

The Brahma Purana, Part I
Translated by a Board of Scholars

Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1985, 2001; Delhi

Man & His Becoming According to the Vedanta

Rene Guenon, 1925

Sophia Perennis, 2001; Ghent, NY

The Linga Purana / Part I

Translated by a Board of Scholars

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Translated by Swami Vireswarananda

Advaita Ashrama Publishers, 1982; Himalayas

Essence of the Exact Reality or Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta

Translated by B.N. Pandit

Munishiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1991; Delhi

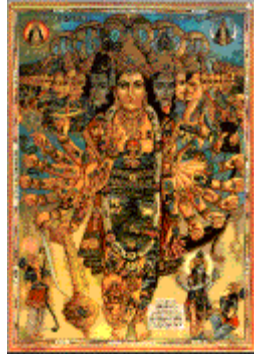
Rgveda for the Layman

Shyam Ghosh

Munishiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2002; New Delhi

Images at vishvarupa.com/vishnu-vishnu.html

The gods, the Anti-gods, & the Serpent Sesa



The vision of Krishna's Divine Cosmic Form in Book Eleven is surely one of the most memorable and impressive moments of the *Bhagavad Gita*, if not the entire *Mahabharata*. While the *Mahabharata* is filled with amazingly original tales, encompassing every imaginable fantastic adventure and romance, along with understandings of the deepest metaphysical import and meaning - there is something supernally perfect in Vyasa's depiction of Krishna revealing his Imperishable (*akshara*) Eternal (*sasvata*) Supreme (*param*) Spirit (*purusha*) to his friend, the brave and handsome warrior Arjuna.

The Sanskrit term *Visvarupa* is used to name Krishna's Divine Form and is defined as 'having many forms'. The word *Visva* is pronounced *Vishva* and can mean 'to pervade' (M.Monier-Williams) - hence the god Vishnu *the Pervader* who 'spreads in all directions' (A. Danielou).

The anti-gods and the Serpent Shesha



Arjuna's vision is of a Being who embodies all the gods, the seers, and the anti-gods (XI.15). This universe is a field made up of polarities - and therefore the Being who pervades the All contains not only the forces of Light, but also their opposites, the Darkside, the anti-gods, the demonic.

To describe the vision of the anti-gods, the poet-author Vyasa uses the Sanskrit words *uragan divyan*, which means the divine or heavenly serpents. The word *uraga* refers to the semi-divine race of serpents known as the *Nagas*, who are usually depicted with a human face. The *Nagas* have three kings. The Serpent Sesa (pronounced Shesha) is one of these three and is the metaphysical representation of all that remains after the periodic destruction of the universes.

Sleeping on the Serpent



The god Vishnu - who is said to pervade, sustain, and support this universe - sleeps upon the *Remainder*, meaning what remains after the the *Destruction*, as this gigantic serpent Shesha who has one thousand heads (A.Danielou). During this period of rest, while Vishnu sleeps upon Shesha, the whole universe is like an ocean. 'The Supreme God, having devoured all beings, sleeps on the lap of the serpent.' (Vishnu Purana 1.2.64-65)

Something must remain after the *Dissolution* and the serpent Shesha is the principle of the *Remainder* of destroyed universes. In the *Mahabharata*, the *Adi Parva* Ch.36, Shesha is portrayed as a great being who has become a penance-practicing ascetic. His austere penances have brought him to an exalted state and the attention of the Creator god Brahma.

Shesha wants to rise above the jealousy and envy which characterize his brothers. The god Brahma is pleased with Shesha's penances and offers him a boon. Shesha asks only that his 'heart always delight in virtue and in blessed penances.'

Lord Ananta, Shesha, the Snake that steadies the world



Brahma is delighted by this request of ‘self-denial and love of peace’ (M.N.Dutt) and commands Shesha to go underneath the earth and ‘steady’ her by holding the earth on his head. This underneath is entered into through a hole. ‘Thus does the snake Shesha, the greatly powerful Lord Ananta, (another name for Shesha meaning *Endless*), live underneath the earth, alone supporting the world at the command of Brahma.’ As you can see, not all anti-gods are perceived as being evil.

This story illustrates the vital importance of the role played by the negative forces. The *Darkside* is around to ‘steady’ the entire world. Without the negative forces, the positive ones would have nothing to polarize with and against. The old visual concept of the atom as the proton, neutron, and electron serves as a good example. These so-called ‘myths’ are encrypted codes filled with wisdom and the mechanics of metaphysical truth - for those who have the ears to hear.

Emerging like fractals

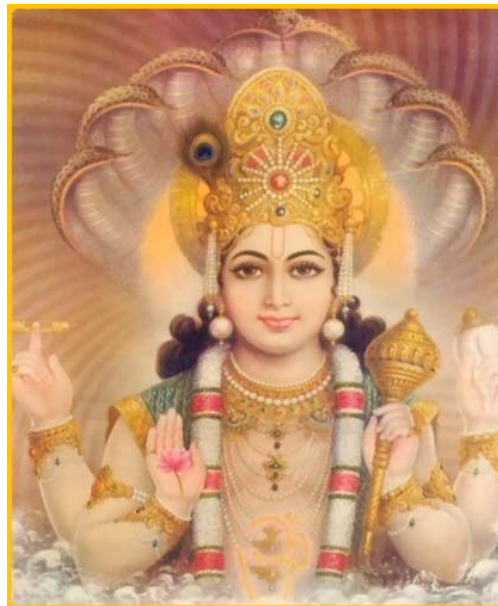
The demonic is written about extensively in the Sanskrit texts and the lineages of the *Nagas* Snake People are named in the *Mahabharata* (Adi Parva, Ch.35). The *Mahabharata*, which is considered to be the fifth Veda, states that the number of snakes defies calculation in this world.

The Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair gives the date 150 BC for Vyasa’s *Mahabharata*, even though it is certain that the stories and metaphysical wisdom in this

great epic are far older. These are tales that have been passed down from generation to generation and were turned into exquisite poetry under Vyasa's creative genius. In fact the war at Kurukshetra takes place just before the end of the previous Cycle of Time, the *Dvapara*. For Krishna is clear when he says that the Kali Yuga will begin when he leaves the earth and the Kali is said to have commenced in 3,606 BC.

The Sanskrit text the *Vishnu Purana* contains the stories of Vishnu sleeping on Shesha the Serpent and was written much later than the *Mahabharata*. The fact of little to no clear evidence for an exact date of a manuscript is quite common in the scholarship on Hindu texts. The scholar H.H. Wilson who translated the *Vishnu Purana* into English, gives the date 1045 AD.

I feel that it is useful to keep in mind that Hinduism has always been an evolving expression of man's reverence and love for God. All new religious forms must be rooted in the Vedas, but that has not prevented these forms from constantly changing to suit the needs of the people and the times. Thus Hinduism, like all religious beliefs in the Kali Yuga, has produced seemingly endless and fascinating fractal-like developments.



Not much can be achieved once the soul has left the body

In his book 'Hindu Concept of Life & Death', the author Shyam Ghosh states that the Vedic Seers had little interest in the ghostly afterlife and that the 'details of the *Yamaloka* (the world of death) are therefore found missing in the *Vedas*.' However the *Puranas*, which were written centuries later, are loaded with the 'vivid accounts of some imaginary goings-on' in these realms.

Some of these torturous descriptions of horrible sufferings found in the *Puranas* would have pleased even the most ardent Grand Inquisitor. But as Ghosh points out, the Hindu heavens and hells are only temporal and the early Vedic Seers were much more concerned with life here and now, and the opportunity it provided for liberation from all transmigration. Not much can be achieved once the soul has left the body.

The Demonic

Arjuna sees for himself both the gods and the anti-gods in the Divine Form (XI.15). The all pervading Supreme Being is the All - *Vasudeva sarvam iti*. A polarity universe cannot exist without the darkside demonic. The night follows the day, just as the dawn will surely dispel the darkness of night.

The heavenly serpents, the *Nagas*, seen by Arjuna are not to be confused with the hill people tribes in Northeast India. These human *Nagas* are reported to be predominantly Mongoloid and were known for their fierce resistance to British rule. Their beliefs included the erection of large stone monuments and the custom of taking heads based on the belief that a powerful soul-substance resided in the human head.

The Asuras

The Sanskrit texts contain elaborate descriptions of many other races of beings beyond the gods. These are the *Asuras* or anti-gods. They include the *Daityas* and the *Danavas* who are supernatural beings that can dwell in the lower worlds and yet still enjoy heavenly pleasures. The *Rakshasas* are ‘titans’ and ‘powerful enemies of the gods’ who can take any form (shape-shifters). They can appear as demons and ogres, and are said to ‘devour human beings, animate dead bodies’, and in general afflict mankind (A.Danielou). The *Rakshasa* King, the ten-headed *Ravana*, is the villain of the *Ramayana*.

The *Kalakanjas* are the stellar spirits, and the *Kalejas* are the demons of Time. There are also *Pisacas* who eat raw flesh and are said to be hideous. The *Yatus* are sorcerers and are similar to the *Rakshasas*. There are vampires (*vetala*), ghosts (*preta*), the souls who wander (*bhuta*) because they died a violent death, and the Fearful-Spirits (*bhairava*) who are the attendants of the god Rudra.

Trapped in the limiting five senses

I do not accept the way mythology is seen in the west. In fact I feel that it is insulting to relegate the timeless primordial beliefs of millions of people around the planet to mere myth. At this point in the *Kali Yuga*, most human beings are now completely cut off from the Invisible Realms and are limited to the five senses for any perception of the layers in the temporal illusory hologram. The ones who have no vision, and perhaps little imagination, ridicule those who have the ability to ‘see’ what most cannot. But that does not make them right.

A more accurate understanding is that there are many beings of varying states of consciousness who for literally millions of years have interacted with this planet. Some might call them gods, while others may know them as etheric beings or perhaps extraterrestrials - a word that only means extra-terra, ‘not of this earth.’

The Vayu Purana

The stars in the form of constellations are mentioned along with the planets wherein are situated the residences of the gods who have performed meritorious acts. [Vayu Purana 1.93]

There are seven higher worlds and seven lower worlds in Hindu metaphysics. These *Loka* worlds reflect a wide spectrum of consciousness, as they are made up of specific frequencies of waveforms. Perhaps the demon worlds of the Sanskrit Puranic texts, the ones known as the anti-gods, the *Asuras* and *Rakshasas*, are reptoid or Borg-like extraterrestrials.

The *Vayu Purana* contains amazingly detailed descriptions of an eighth world, dazzling and bejeweled, inhabited by hybrid beings, meaning for example half-lion and half-human.

Vayu Purana, Chapter 39

[230] Beyond Brahmaloaka and beneath the upper crust of the Cosmic Egg – in between these two is the Pura (Shiva’s city), his divine abode Manomaya (consisting of the mind).

[238] The city shines much with scattered diamond dust.

These worlds do not consist of reflected light, as does our solid five-sense material world. They are self-luminous.

[239-42] ... there are divine lotuses ... made of gold ... their inner surfaces are very tender. The lotuses covering up the whole place seem to be so many umbrellas.

Are these gold umbrellas some sort of protective technology? Are these beings vulnerable to Cosmic Rays, Gamma and X-Rays as we are?

[260-263] Some [of the inhabitants] are ... horse-faced ... a few have the faces of the lord of the beasts; other have faces and bellies like those of elephants, others are elephant-faced; a few are lion-faced and tiger-faced ... others can assume any form they wish.

If this had been translated before today's science began to fool around with genetic manipulation, naturally these creatures would have been seen as mythological. The same images of human bodies with animal heads are sprinkled on the ancient Sumerian and Akkadian cuneiform tablets. The *Vayu Purana* also says that the gods have their own space ships.

[264-266] Lord Mahesvara [the transcendent Lord Shiva] of ten arms sports therein ... He is being respected and diligently worshipped by those people moving about in aerial chariots.

While the Gods Play

In 1987 the scholar and metaphysical writer Alain Danielou wrote 'While the Gods Play: Shiva Oracles & the Predictions on the Cycles of History & the Destiny of Mankind.' I first came across this book in 1991 and in my view, this is one of the most interesting books I have ever read. Danielou is French, as is Rene Guenon, and to my knowledge the two men respected each other and did communicate with one another in a friendly manner. 'While the Gods Play' was my first serious introduction to the theory of the Cycles of Time and *Samkhya*. I highly recommend this book which is filled with gems of knowledge.

Danielou says that we have come to call those beings we can no longer directly perceive gods and spirits. This implies that there was a time when we could 'see' them. In those previous cycles of time we recognized these beings as expressions of our Supreme Self.

In our own era, we still sense their presence. Even the most psychically insensitive have likely felt the presence of a ghost. These beings are 'of various types' and are 'not immortal.' Recall what Krishna said about the recycling that goes on the the Myriad Realms (IX.20-21). These invisible-to-most beings are as subject to time as we humans are.

On a similar wavelength

Monsieur Danielou makes the excellent observation that in order to communicate with another being, you must be on a similar frequency. This is something we all know in our own experience, and is reflected when we say that someone just doesn't understand us and that we are not on the same wavelength.

Whatever you sense or 'see' or perceive in the Invisible is literally on your wavelength. This is why some have visions of angels, while others see demons. Some people are taken by extraterrestrials who teach them spiritual wisdom, and others have more painful experiences.

Raise your frequency

If you want to shake the 'cooties' and get rid of negative entities, then you simply have to raise your frequency. You do this in the tried and true old fashioned way by becoming a better person. You work on being kind and less judgmental. You get rid of your addictions. Drug and alcohol molecules have specific frequencies which resonate with precise locations in the Invisible Realms. Most of these are less than pleasant.

Another important change in behavior would be to stop focusing on these lurid experiences as a means of your identity. Once you change your frequency and raise the vibratory rate of your consciousness, the entities who have been perniciously clinging to you, won't be able to find you! Location is a function of consciousness.

The experience of Time is relative

Danielou puts this knowledge in terms of time because time is an expression of vibration, the frequency and rhythm of pulsation. He says that when those of us who are in corporal form, meaning in a human body, make the effort 'to communicate with subtle beings, the spirits or the living creatures of other worlds' - we are wrongly assuming 'that their concepts of time match ours.' Thus 'communication can only be by means of that part of our subtle faculties which is not a prisoner of relative space and time.'

It is well known that time as it is experienced by the gods or other beings is quite different than our human time. The Sanskrit texts also say this in regard to the longevity of the gods and the Day of Brahma is said to last 4.32 billion years.

Danielou reveals that each being experiences time in the manner that is relative to the

body it is inhabiting. This experience of time is ‘determined by the vital rhythms of each species’ - the heartbeat.

‘Their presence in our world ...’

Danielou points out that these differences in the way time is experienced, shed light on the phenomenon of the speed at which ‘sightings of celestial beings or extraterrestrials’ take place. He says, ‘Their presence in our world, which may last a day for them, takes only a few seconds for us.’ This corroborates what many abductees have reported.

The countless beings in the Myriad Worlds have a job to do, and that is to keep you attached and held in the temporal illusory hologram. Their existence is interdependent with ours. As the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad verse says:

And to this day, [those] who ... know the self as I am Brahman [IS-ness], become all this universe.

Even the gods [any other dimensional beings] cannot prevent his becoming this, for he has become their Self. ...if a man worships another deity thinking: He is one and I am another, he does not know.

He [who does not know] is like a sacrificial animal to the gods. As many animals serve a man, so does each man serve the gods. Even if one animal is taken away, it causes anguish to the owner; how much more so when many are taken away!

*Therefore it is not pleasing to the gods that men should know this [that they are IS-ness].
- Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, I.iv.10*

You can draw your own conclusions about these entities, grand and gruesome, based on your personal experiences. But I urge you to keep in mind that these beings, no matter how dazzling, are temporal. They are not immortal. They are lovely seductive side-trips and part of the Myriad Worlds.

They are not the goal. Communicating with them may be fun, and may give you a huge identity and make you popular with those who falsely believe that you can do something for them. But they will not give you your enlightenment. No one can.

Only by your own efforts can you Remember who you are and find your Way Home through the God within the Heart.

The Nagas: Hill Peoples of Northeast India

Julian Jacobs

Thames & Hudson, 1990, London

The Gods of India: Hindu Polytheism

Alain Danielou, 1964

Inner Traditions International, 1985, NY

*While the Gods Play: Shiva Oracles & the Predictions on the Cycles of History & the
Destiny of Mankind*

Alain Danielou, 1985

Inner Traditions International, 1987, Vermont

Hindu Concept of Life & Death

As portrayed in Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Smritis & Epics

A Survey & Exposition by Shyam Ghosh (born 1904)

Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1989, New Delhi

The Vision of the Cosmic Form continued...

*So did Pandu's Son behold
All this universe enfold
All its huge diversity
Into one vast shape, and be
Visible, and viewed, and blended
In one Body - subtle, splendid,
Nameless - th' All-comprehending
God of Gods, the Never-Ending
Deity!
- Ganguli (XI.13)*

Existence is beyond the power of words to define, as Lao Tzu has wisely said. And yet Vyasa, the poet-author of the *Bhagavad Gita* in the *Mahabharata*, does a superb job of drawing our minds into the higher realms through the Vision of the Cosmic Form - the *Visvarupa*.

The Vision is both beautiful and terrifying. Arjuna sees the heavenly hosts, the throngs of gods (*surasamghah*) entering into the Cosmic Form. Some appear to be filled with fear, while others are reverent with hands joined in prayer (XI.21).

The astonishing sight of the Supreme Being - with many eyes and mouths, some having beastly tusk-like teeth (*bahu-danstra*), multiple arms, thighs, and feet - makes the worlds (*lokas*) tremble). The worlds shake at the exalted and dreadful sight of the Imperishable All - and so does Arjuna (XI.23)



*These see Thee, and revere
In sudden-stricken fear;
Yea! the Worlds, - seeing Thee with form stupendous,
With faces manifold,
With eyes which all behold,
Unnumbered eyes, vast arms, members tremendous,

Flanks, lit with sun and star,
Feet planted near and far,
Tusks of terror, mouths wrathful and tender; -
The Three wide Worlds before Thee
Adore, as I adore Thee,
Quake, as I quake, to witness so much splendour!*

Arjuna confesses that the Vision of Krishna's Cosmic Form has caused his heart to lose all courage and his mind to lose its peaceful equilibrium. The greatest warrior in the world is reduced to trembling before the Lord of all the Worlds, whose form touches the sky and whose countless enormous eyes are filled with fire. 'Thus blinded by the brilliance of a million suns' (Shyam Ghosh), Arjuna has lost his sense of direction. No longer knowing East from West, he asks for Mercy.

The Vision becomes more horrifying, ghastly and unnerving. Arjuna watches as his enemies, those warriors who were once his friends and family, who now wait on the battlefield for war, one by one move quickly into the open mouths of the Divine Form and are devoured. He sees Dhritarashtra's one hundred sons, his teachers Bhishma and Drona, and the blameless Karna - who as yet unknown to Arjuna is his own brother - all being crushed in the monstrous tusk-like teeth.

Crushed under its large & frightful teeth

The *Visvarupa*, with its many heads, then becomes the personification of 'Death - with its wide, gaping mouth sucking in an unending stream of men and women who, crushed under its large and frightful teeth, seemed to vanish behind flaming tongues of fire!' (Shyam Ghosh)

Some of these can be seen stuck between the teeth (*danstra*) with their heads crushed. These gruesome vicious tusks remind Arjuna of the fires at the Time of the Dissolution (XI.25-27).

The Kings and Chiefs drawn in,

That gaping gorge within;

The best of both these armies torn and riven!

Between Thy jaws they lie

Mangled full bloodily,

Ground into dust and death! Like streams down-driven

*With helpless haste, which go
In headlong furious flow
Straight to the gulping deeps of th' unfilled ocean,
So to that flaming cave
Those heroes great and brave
Pour, in unending streams, with helpless motion!*

*Like moths which in the night
Flutter towards a light,
Drawn to their fiery doom, flying and dying,
So to their death still throng,
Blind, dazzled, borne along
Ceaselessly, all those multitudes, wild flying!*

*Thou, that hast fashioned men,
Devourest them again,
One with another, great and small, alike!
The creatures whom Thou mak'st,
With flaming jaws Thou tak'st,
Lapping them up! Lord God! Thy terrors strike*

*From end to end of earth,
Filling life full, from birth
To death, with deadly, burning, lurid dread!
Ah, Vishnu! make me know*

Why is Thy visage so?

Who art Thou, feasting thus upon Thy dead?

- Ganguli

It is in verses XI.24 & 30 that Arjuna addresses Krishna's Cosmic Form as Vishnu, the all-pervasive deity. Krishna is an incarnation of Vishnu, the god that sustains and protects the worlds.

लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानः समन्ताल्- लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः .
तेजोभिरापूर्यं जगत्समग्रं भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो .. ११- ३०..

lelihyase grasamānaḥ samantāl
lokān samagrān vadanair jvaladbhiḥ
tejobhir āpūrya jagat samagraṃ
bhāsas tavogrāḥ pratapanti viṣṇo 11.30

In 'The Betrayal of Krishna' the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says that the relationship between 'God and his manifestations was cleared' by Krishna's 'extraordinary and full-blooded vitality in the epic (*The Mahabharata*); and gave the term Avatar a richer meaning: Krishna's "historicity" contributed to the stabilization of the concept [of Avatar], which was then extended to apply to other "incarnations", more full-bodied than mere "manifestations".'

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair points out that 'the personal elevation of a popular tribal hero or god to such supreme status in this manner is Vyasa's personal rehandling of myth; and the whole strategy was poetic, not theological or cultist.'

Krishna as an Incarnation of Vishnu



In the beginning verses of the *Mahabharata*, Vishnu is bowed to with reverence by the

Bard Sauti. In this moment Vishnu emerges as an aspect of the All (M.N.Dutt; The Adi Parva Ch.1.22-24). The Bard speaks in reverence to the ‘original first being’ whose is named Ishana. Ishana is one of the older names for the god Shiva, whose earlier name was Rudra (Judith M.Tyberg). The word Shiva comes from ‘auspicious’ (A.Danielou).

Ishana/Shiva is said to be ‘the true unchangeable One, who is manifested and unmanifested, eternal and everlasting Brahma’ (M.N.Dutt). Therefore Ishana/Shiva is Brahma. The Bard’s honor and praise continues for Brahma, who is ‘both non-existing and existing-non-existing, who is the (existing) universe and still distinct from both the existing and non-existing world, who is the originator of all, both high and low.’

Trimurti

Thus Ishana/Shiva is Brahma, who is the originator of all, existing and non-existing, high and low. And Ishana/Shiva, who is Brahma, ‘who is the ancient great undecaying One who is Vishnu ...’(M.N.Dutt). So Ishana/Shiva is Brahma is Vishnu. The three primary personifications of primordial metaphysical principles - the Trimurti - are in fact the One.

Vishnu is ‘the good and the goodness, who is worthy of all worship, pure and sinless, who is *Hari* ...’ (M.N.Dutt). *Hari* is a Sanskrit word which is used to name Krishna. *Hari* means the one who removes sin - sin being ignorance of the Real.

Shiva - Brahma - Vishnu - Krishna - Hari

The significance of my quoting the reverential opening verses in the *Mahabharata* is to convey the idea of the One in the many. Hinduism understands that the One assumed the appearance of multiplicity to enjoy this universe. From the very first pages of the *Mahabharata*, the poet-author Vyasa is clearly telling us that the One is the All.

The Infinite, Immeasurable, Imperishable One is described by a multitude of names which define specific qualities. All the gods and goddesses are personifications of those primordial metaphysical principles that constitute the worlds and the diverse energies in our chakras. They are the varied expressions of the One. Brahma is the *guna rajas*, Shiva the *guna tamas*, and Vishnu the *guna sattva*.

Soma

Hari also means ‘tawny’ which is said to be one of the colors of the elixir *Soma*. No one seems to know anymore exactly what *Soma* was, but it was used as a part of early Vedic tradition and is described in the *Rig Veda* and the *Upanishads*.

Soma is the ‘divine delight hidden in all existences’ (Judith M.Tyberg). The gods, especially Indra, feed on *Soma* and its action is to produce ‘an intoxicated ecstasy of inspiration by which the rays of light come pouring abundantly and joyously in.’

Bhang!

These days *Bhang* is sometimes used in Northern India. A surprising sequence in an otherwise uneven the Bollywood film ‘*Yeh Raaste Hain Pyaar Ke*’ (The Path of Love), starring Ajay Devgan, Madhuri Dixit, and Priety Zinta, paints a rather Busby Berkeley picture of an elaborate, exuberant and fun ceremony involving the imbibing of large pots of liquid greenish *Bhang*.

My feeling is that the real *Soma* described in these ancient Sanskrit texts was a consequence of and only possible in the previous cycles of time or perhaps the *Dvapara Yuga*. A natural herb or any material substance that gives human consciousness access to the highest Divinity would not have survived the lowered ever more dense frequencies and the solidification of matter that took place over the span of the Kali Yuga.

By this statement, you may infer my opinion of the popular current molecules which purport to open the doors of perception. Yes, they offer a variety of experiences and visions of a variety of realms. However all that glitters is not gold, and many of these worlds are simply more of the temporal illusory realms created by the mind of man over the cycles of time.

The heat of the fire ...

In ancient times *Soma* was treated with respect. Those who drank the juice had to prepare and develop ‘the necessary in discipline’ (Judith M.Tyberg). The *Rig Veda* contains this warning:

He tastes not that delight who is unripe and whose body has not suffered the heat (tapas) of the fire; they alone are able to bear that and enjoy it who have been prepared by the flame.

- *Rig Veda IX.83.1*

The warning is clear. Those who have not prepared themselves mentally and physically,

and who have not purified their consciousness by the fires (*tapas*) of Knowledge will not truly benefit from drinking the *Soma*. Perhaps as the old saying goes, they will go on a bad trip!

Krishna as the Incarnation of Vishnu



Krishna is said to be an incarnation of the deity Vishnu. In his introduction to the *Mahabharata*, the scholar M.N.Dutt says that Krishna is ‘the most intriguing figure in the *Mahabharata* ... He belongs to a primitive tribe of cowherds. By some process of apotheosis [being elevated to divine status], he became the Supreme Being of the *Bhagavad Gita* ... an *Acharya* [spiritual teacher] of *Karma Yoga* ... a great *Yogi*.’

The more you read about Krishna, the more you come to like him and it is easy to understand why he is so popular in India. Krishna is perfect! He is exceedingly handsome, intelligent, brave, sensitive, cosmic, fun, and wise. Because of my love for the wisdom in the *Bhagavad Gita*, I have grown to love Krishna and consider him as my greatest teacher. However, I do believe that there is a pernicious trap in placing any being beyond reach. Krishna says that God dwells within the Heart of every man, woman, and child - not just in Krishna’s Heart!

In his brilliant book *The Betrayal of Krishna* the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says:

That kind of devotion where it is believed that man should be more and more belittled in

order that deity be more and more exalted leads to authoritarian creeds and to pathology.

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair quotes Eric Fromm in this regard:

... the alienation from his own powers not only makes man slavishly dependent on God, it makes him bad too. He becomes a man without faith in his own fellow men or himself, without the experience of his own love, of his own power of reason.

If we are foolish enough to place any expression of the One so far beyond and above us, then we eventually become the consciousness that does not know that we are this Is-ness. As the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (I.iv.10) says, ‘...if a man worships another deity thinking: He is one and I am another, he does not know.’ This frequency of consciousness gets us as far from the *Satya Yuga* - the golden era when we all knew that God dwells within us - as the *Kali Yuga* can possibly drag us!

Not what Krishna & Vyasa hoped for us ...

This slavish, obsequious, authoritarian attitude would never have been what Krishna and Vyasa hoped for us. For such a fragmented sad state would effectively separate us from ever knowing our real identity and prevent us from achieving the similitude (*sadharmya*) with the God-within that Krishna wants for us.

It is only this conscious awareness of similitude (*sadharmya*) that can provide the contentment which is a source of power for us, so that we can begin to work for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*). Krishna’s primary concern, the reason why he came here as an incarnation of the *sattvic* deity Vishnu, who sustains and supports the world, is this very *lokasamgraha*.

Hindu Concept of Life & Death

As portrayed in Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Smritis & Epics

A Survey & Exposition by Shyam Ghosh (born 1904)

Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1989, New Delhi

The Language of the Gods

Sanskrit Keys to India’s Wisdom

Judith M. Tyberg

East-West Cultural Center, 1970; Los Angeles, CA

“Who is Krishna?” - Part One

Arjuna seeing the Vision of the Cosmic Form is moved to call Krishna by the name of the benevolent deity Vishnu twice (XI.24 & 30). However - *Vasudeva sarvam it*, God is All - and as J.A.B.van Buitenen points out, Krishna in identifying with the One, the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*), has not limited his being to any one particular expression of God.

Krishna in fact earlier reveals that there is ‘no end to My manifestations’ (X.19). J.A.B.van Buitenen, who is one of the most respected of all western scholars of Sanskrit and the *Mahabharata*, says that ‘there is nothing in the *Gita* elsewhere to hint that Krishna was an *avatara* of a specific god, Vishnu. The *Gita* is suprasectarian.’ The Krishna of the *Bhagavad Gita* belongs to us all, and is above the fragmented consciousness that produces sects and cults.

श्रीभगवानुवाच . हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः .
प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे .. १०- १९..

hanta te kathayiṣyāmi divyā hy ātmavibhūtayāḥ
prādhānyataḥ kuruśreṣṭha nāsty anto vistarasya me 10.19



Certainly the life of Krishna expresses the metaphysical principles that Vishnu symbolizes. Krishna's role in the *Mahabharata* is that of protector, sustainer, and supporter of this world - as is Vishnu. But perhaps one might consider the thought that it is simply too limiting to confine Krishna, as a man who is fully God Realized, to any one form of the All.

It is not my wish to diminish Krishna's greatness. In fact, my goal is just the opposite. I feel that what makes Krishna win the hearts and minds of so many, is his very human accessibility. Krishna can become our friend, just as he is Arjuna's friend. I don't believe that Krishna and Vyasa had any intention of Krishna becoming a force that 'belittled' man 'in order that deity be more and more exalted' (The Betrayal of Krishna). Krishna tells Arjuna that God dwells in the heart of every man, woman and child - and is happy when we offer even a leaf or water as a gesture of our reverence.

The Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair

It was only through the chance reading of the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair that I was able to find clarity in understanding the enigma that is Krishna. Sadly, most of the books written by Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair are now out of print. It takes someone of enormous talent and brain power to absorb and understand centuries of ideas, both in the Sanskrit texts and in western thinking. Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair was such a man.

In his book *The Betrayal of Krishna*, on which I have written extensively here at MetaphysicalMusing.com, Krishna Chaitanya gives us this brilliant insight which can be applied to any belief system:

‘That kind of devotion where it is believed that man should be more and more belittled in order that deity be more and more exalted leads to authoritarian creeds and to pathology.’

“Who is Krishna?”

In *The Mahabharata, A Literary Study*, Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair poses the question - “Who is Krishna?” As you will see, he asks this question not to diminish Krishna, but rather to restore him to a fuller understanding and a far deeper meaning than that consciousness produced by any cult:

‘... to interpret the Gita, and the Mahabharata of which it is an organic part, as a cultist text is to show singular insensitiveness to poetry.’

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair considers poetry the superior vehicle to communicate wisdom because, unlike a theological or philosophical treatise, poetry has the capacity to recreate life in its breadth and depth and heights, life in its entire range of rich possibilities. He tells us that Vyasa was a poet with a sense of humor and suggests that in the Vision of the Cosmic Form, Vyasa ‘parades a hundred identities for Krishna, to confuse the simple-minded, but also to give some clues to the discerning.’

This esteemed scholar says that when Krishna refers to himself as Vasudeva/Vishnu (X.21), he also identifies himself with many entities such as Vasava (Indra), Shiva (chief god of the Rudras), Mount Meru, Agni the fire god, the ocean, the Himalayas, Sages Narada and Kapila, the Gandharvas (celestial musicians), the elephant Airavata, and more (X.21-40).

This list includes a horse, the god Indra’s steed Uchaisravas (X.27); and in Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair’s words, ‘this would scarcely justify an interpretation that the *Mahabharata* is a text belonging to a lost cult of horse worship.’ Like J.A.B.van Buitenen, this Indian scholar points out that Krishna ‘does not identify himself exclusively with Vishnu.’

The poet Vyasa’s genius



Krishna Chaitanya is intent upon revealing how the poet-author of the *Mahabharata*, Vyasa, took the stories that had over time become traditions - or what we in the west call myth - and with his enormous genius and creativity turned them into not only what is probably the greatest epic poem ever written, but is also the home and accessible repository of primordial wisdom and knowledge.

Krishna first emerges in his full glory as God Realized in man on the written pages of the *Mahabharata*. As far as previous written accounts of a Krishna, the scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair reports that there is a reference to a Krishna as ‘the son of Devaki’ in the *Chandogya Upanishad* and another reference to a Krishna who ‘slew the demon Keshi’ in the *Artharva Veda*. The Sanskrit grammarian Panini refers to a Vasudeva around 600 BC.

It is Vyasa’s poetry that breathes life into Krishna and brings him into being as God fully Realized in man. Under the superb genius of this mysterious poet, Krishna becomes what can only be described as a most wonderful, intriguing, brilliant, courageous, great man whose wisdom has brightened the ages ever since.

Taking the ‘cult’ factor out of Krishna does not diminish his greatness - just the opposite. Seeing Krishna with fresh eyes, in the enlightened understanding that the God-within is truly within us all and therefore accessible, close, like a best friend - can open our hearts to the liberating power of the Gita.

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair is quite blunt when he says that ‘it would be a comic blunder to regard him [the poet Vyasa] as a devout cultist.’

The Divine in Human Form

If Krishna was not acting within the realm of the human, if he was God on earth with

absolute authority over everything, then we might assume that Krishna could have simply waved his magic wand and made all the warriors, waiting for the slaughter at Kurukshetra, love each other and forever live in peace. This miracle producing magic wand is what we all long for, but it is not the way of this world and it is not the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) veils Its Self in myriad forms of limited power and grants us autonomy from such absolutism. We have Free Will, however limited that may be, within the fabric of all others' free will. The Creator allows us to express and experience as we choose, to embrace or reject the God within us, to reach the highest frequencies of consciousness or to make complete fools of ourselves - all so that we may have the adventure of Becoming.

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair tells us that 'Vyasa rejected the stasis of the old concept of the Absolute in favor of the dynamism of embodied existence, in favor of moments of time within the stream of time that transcend time ...' It is because Krishna is in human form that he can take an active role in the historical events that take place in the *Mahabharata*. Krishna works in the story as a spiritual teacher, a political advisor, an agitator who encourages the war against evil, a diplomat and ambassador who seeks a resolution between the two sides of the family, and as a friend.

Krishna took a vow not to actually fight in the war as a combatant. He serves as Arjuna's charioteer to guide him through the battle and in the spirit of his fairness, he loans his armies to Arjuna's enemies Dhritarashtra and Duryodhana. Each warrior was given the choice of Krishna's armies or Krishna himself. Foolishly, Duryodhana - blinded by his anger and greed - believed he had made the superior choice. Arjuna chose Krishna, happily aware that he had chosen wisely.

Bhishma's deathbed of arrows



The Vision of the Cosmic Form is not the only evidence of Krishna's 'superhuman dimension.' And yet there are occasions that admit his human limitations, for example when Krishna visits the dying Bhishma on the battlefield. The image is one of horror and mystery. Bhishma is lying on a bed of countless arrows which Arjuna shot into him during the battle. Bhishma was granted long ago the boon of being able to choose the moment of his death, and he is waiting for the most propitious time to die.

In this scene, Krishna admits that he does not have this power, as he says to Bhishma:

'By virtue of the boon granted to you by your father ... your death ... depends on your own will. I myself have not that merit for which you have obtained this boon.
- M.N.Dutt, *Shanti Parva Ch.50.15*

Krishna tells Bhishma that fifty-six days remain for the great man and the highest realms - from which one need never return - await him. Even now high above the battlefield, deities and 'the Vasus, all having fiery forms, riding on their cars, are waiting for you [Bhishma] invisibly till the moment ...' (M.N.Dutt, *The Shanti Parva Ch.51*).

Bhishma reveals that he has seen Krishna in his Divine Form. Krishna acknowledges this and says that only those who are sincere and have restrained the soul ever see this Vision. Krishna then relieves Bhishma of his bodily pain and returns clarity of mind to the old man, so that Bhishma may share his wisdom, the 'words of truth, containing morality and profit and Yoga, to [the King] Yudhishtira' whose 'learning has been clouded by sorrow' and grief from the war (Ch.51). Much of what Bhishma knows will be lost when he dies, because he is the last one on earth to know these words of truth.

The Absolute

If Krishna were the Absolute who changed all earthly events to suit perfection, would we identify with him? If all the Creator wanted was a perfect world, completely controlled and in harmony, a Free Will universe would never have been created in the first place. I feel certain there are such places of perfect harmony, and I wonder if they are not a bit dull. Certainly there is no lack of beings, obviously from their recent exponentially increasing numbers, who want to be here for better or worse!

It is Krishna's human qualities that endear him to us and make us feel that his teachings are accessible. Later on in the *Bhagavad Gita* (XII.5), Krishna himself says that it is only with great difficulty that the mind of man can focus on the unmanifest (*avyakta-asakta-cetasam*). We need to identify and for that we need to feel something. We need to love.

'To throw off the burden of the Earth'

Whenever the burden of the Earth becomes too great and the balance between good and evil unbearable, then the deity Vishnu incarnates to protect, sustain, and support this universe. Whenever there is too much dark, too much evil, then the forces of light and the good incarnate in human form for the well-being of the worlds. The Mahabharata states that many other celestials follow Vishnu into birth and that they can incarnate into whatever forms and lineages please them. Perhaps the heavens become a bit boring, as it is clear that they enjoy the adventure.

All the gods ... impatient to go to earth and be reborn everywhere with portions of themselves ... and so the celestials in succession descended from heaven to earth, for the destruction of the enemies of the gods and the well-being of all the worlds.

- J.A.B. van Buitenen [1(6)58-59]

Narada's Memory

Vishnu's incarnation as Krishna is further illuminated in a scene from the *Mahabharata* (*Sabha Parva*, Ch.36). The occasion is the ceremony to confirm Yudhishtira as ruler. The greatly esteemed sage Narada remembers 'the words he had heard in the abode of Brahma' regarding the Angshavatarana, meaning the incarnations of portions of every deity (M.N.Dutt, Ch.36.12). Narada is seeing the assembly at the ceremony with the eyes of knowledge that allow him to recognize the kings and warriors gathered there as 'an assembly of the celestials.'

Narada 'knew that the creator of every object, the exalted god of all gods, Narayana [Vishnu], who had formerly commanded the celestials' to take birth on earth, had taken birth as Krishna.

The Death of Shishupala

At the same ceremony, Bhishma declares that Krishna is the foremost of all the men who have gathered there.

'... Krishna was the foremost of all on earth. As the sun shines among all luminous objects, so shines Krishna among all these kings and warriors by his effulgence, strength, and prowess.' (Ch.36.27-28)

This recognition of Krishna's eminence among men provokes jealousy in the king

Shishupala. Fueled by envy, this long time enemy of Krishna proceeds to insult him in front of the gathering. Shishupala says that the Pandavas (Arjuna, Yudhishtira, etc.) deserve to be killed for honoring Krishna as the foremost of men and that such worship of Krishna is only a form of childishness. Shishupala then says that Krishna is unworthy of worship, that he is a slave and a wretch, not a king - and deserves to be killed by Shishupala (Sabha Parva, Ch.45.3-4).



Now Krishna possesses an awesome weapon which is something like a frisbee with laser powers. This weapon is a discus named Sudarsana and it appears whenever Krishna wants it. In response to the death threat, Krishna recounts a long list of heinous crimes committed by ‘this wretch of cruel deeds’ - Shishupala. Krishna then calls up Sudarsana and by the power of his mind releases the discus weapon, which steadily flies across the room straight to the neck of the one ‘who deserves to be killed’ and cuts off the head of Shishupala.

Adding to the mystery of Krishna, the subtle-body of the now decapitated and dead king enters into Krishna. ‘...[Shishupala] fell like a cliff struck by thunder. The kings saw a fearful effulgence from the body ... Issuing like that of the sun in the sky ... that effulgence ... then entered Krishna’s body ... all the kings thought the phenomenon as very wonderful (Ch.45.25-28).’

The Highlander

For those of you who are familiar with the television series ‘The Highlander’, this phenomenon will seem amusingly familiar. Whenever the Highlander cuts off the head of one of his opponents, their subtle-body enters into the Highlander’s body. This

‘addition’ effects his consciousness over time. The later stories in the Puranas say that Krishna’s mercy absorbs even his enemies, and that Krishna released any entities he killed by absorbing them into his infinite compassionate consciousness. Interestingly, the mantra of the Highlander show was - ‘There can be only one!’

This event, the killing of Shishupala by Krishna’s Sudarsana, causes a cloudless sky to pour down showers of rain, thunders to blast, and the earth itself to tremble. The gathering of men there is at first speechless, some are said to be angry, but the great Rishis were pleased and praised Krishna.

In Part Two, we will continue to discover often conflicting mysteries around the great hero of the Bhagavad Gita in hopes of answering the question “Who is Krishna?”

In the Mahabharata “Who is Krishna?” - Part Two



From the Vision of the Cosmic Form, we understand that Krishna has superhuman powers, but these powers are used in definite ways for specific occasions. As God Realized in man, Krishna does not rob the protagonists in the great epic of their autonomy. The Creator granted us the freedom of choice. We may choose to identify with and become the God within us, or we may go on and on throughout the *manvantaras* in attachment to the temporal illusory hologram, chasing one phantasmal desire after another.

This universe may be described as a temporal illusory hologram generated by the creative Power of *Maya* and the three *gunas*, but to the five senses the illusion is real enough. We did not come here to simply say - This world is an illusion, a sort of ‘transcendental joke’ (Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair), and then leave. That would be absurd. We came here to engage in this world, and as long as we are in bodies, we cannot escape the complex quandaries of evil. We have to ‘struggle to realize the good,

and evil is what we struggle against.’ (ibid.)

A Cleansing War

Vishnu is the metaphysical principle of all that is good. He is the deity that protects, sustains and supports this universe. Krishna is said to be an incarnation, an avatar of Vishnu/Vasudeva, or perhaps we might see this in terms of Krishna being an incarnation of Vishnu’s metaphysical principles. The purpose of this incarnation is to rid the world of those warriors, the *Kshatriya* who have forgotten their *Dharma*, and who have become greedy and cruel. Krishna has come for a war that will cleanse the earth at the end of the *Dvapara Yuga*.

On many occasions in the *Mahabharata* it appears that Krishna is encouraging the great war. The *Bhagavad Gita* itself may be perceived as Krishna’s full endorsement of the slaughter. The *Gita*’s perspective is that of the Divine, the Creator, the Supreme Self/*Paramatman* - and not that of man with his confusion, guilt, and fears of death. However along with his intent towards war, Krishna also makes every effort to stop the ensuing holocaust. He serves as an ambassador and diplomat to convince the hardened Duryodhana, who has wrongfully usurped the kingdom, to relinquish even the smallest village back to the Pandavas, Yudhishtira, Arjuna, and the rest.

By both divine providence & exertion on the part of man ...

In this regard, Krishna says that ‘human affairs are accomplished both by divine providence and by exertion on the part of man’ (M.N.Dutt; Udyoga Parva, Ch.79.5). Krishna tries to stop the war by doing ‘that which is capable of being done by human beings.’ The idea that man can be the instrument of the Divine Will is in every religion, and I have always particularly liked the Sufi statement, ‘Praise Allah and tie up your camel!’

Krishna has no delusions about the enemies of Yudhishtira and Arjuna. He does not expect the one hundred sons of Dhritarashtra, headed by the obstinate Duryodhana, to concede anything. Krishna forewarns Arjuna that ‘whatever is capable of being done by me ... shall be done ... but do not expect peace with the enemy’ (ibid.Ch.79.18). Krishna says that these sons have become wicked, their ‘self-respect is gone and [their] hearts have been perverted by avarice’ and they are ‘acting unfairly towards their own chief friends’ (ibid.Ch.95.10). This war is between the members of one family.

Earlier in the *Mahabharata*, Duryodhana is said to be the incarnation of a demon. When Duryodhana refuses to give up any share of the kingdom, Krishna gives him an ominous

forewarning, ‘To get the sleep [death] of a hero is your desire and it will be fulfilled. There will be a great massacre’ (*Udyoga Parva*, Ch.128.2).

Krishna in a less than conciliatory mood, then calls Duryodhana a fool who has done many wicked deeds and behaved like a dishonorable man. Duryodhana’s mother, Gandhari, also tries to intercede and reason with her son ‘who is afflicted with a passion for kingdom’ (ibid.Ch.129.10). As Krishna has said in the *Bhagavad Gita*, it is anger (*krodhas*) and greed that delude men and make them blind (BhG.XVI.4). Duryodhana treats his mother’s words with ‘contempt’ and then crosses the line of all sanity and threatens to capture and imprison Krishna, who has come there solely to negotiate a treaty of peace.

The Vision of the Universal Form

Learning of the evil plot, Krishna confronts Duryodhana, calling him - ‘you of very little intellect’ (*Udyoga Parva*, Ch.131), and laughs aloud in the Assembly Hall. This laughter turns Krishna’s body into lightning. From his lightning-like body, the gods as rays of fire issue - Brahma on his brow and Rudra (Shiva) on his breast. All the gods and various beings of the universe, those who support the worlds, are seated on Krishna’s arms. Fire springs from his mouth and from the pores of his skin radiate ‘something like the rays of the sun.’

The Vision of Krishna’s Universal Form is so blindingly dazzling that only those with great intelligence and devotion, only those with purity of heart can keep their eyes open. The rest shut their eyes, their hearts filled with fear. ‘Seeing that great wonderful appearance of Madhava (Krishna) in the Assembly Hall, celestial drums were sounded and there was a downpour of flowers’ (ibid.Ch.131.16). The Veils between the Invisible Realms and our earthly world are not yet completely drawn as the ending of the *Dvapara Yuga* approaches.

The Blind King ‘Sees’

The old blind King Dhritarashtra, father of Duryodhana, prays to Krishna that he may be allowed to behold the Vision and Krishna kindly grants his request made in forthright humility. The Vision is so wondrous that ‘the whole earth moved together and the waters of the sea were agitated’ (*Udyoga Parva*, Ch.131.22).

Krishna then leaves that assembly of kings, who mesmerized by the event, all follow him ‘like fire accompanied by smoke.’ Krishna gets into his white chariot, ornamented with gold and white tiger skins, to return to Yudhishtira with the bad news.

'This world will truly come to an end...'

'This world will truly come to an end ...' are Krishna's words after failing to negotiate peace (*Udyoga Parva*, Ch.143.46). He tells Yudhishtira that the sons of Dhritarashtra are 'the cause of a universal massacre' (ibid.Ch.150.20).

The question emerges --- does Krishna come to earth to destroy the world? He says of himself in the *Gita* (*BhG.XI.32*), 'I am Time grown old to destroy the world.' But who is being destroyed? The Creator is All and dwells within everyone - thus it is the veiled appearances of the One that are being born and dying. The comings and goings of man are impermanent (*BhG.II.16*). There was never a time when we did not all exist as the One, and there never will be a time when we shall cease to exist (*BhG.II.12*).

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः .
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् .. २- १२..

natv evāhaṃ jātu nāsaṃ na tvaṃ neme janādhipāḥ
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ sarve vayam ataḥ param 2.12

The Supreme Being is the All

Consider the idea that at the end of a Yuga the autonomy of mankind has destroyed the innate balance of the Dharma in that cycle of Time. Therefore to sustain the world, the creator incarnates in worthy vehicles to not only correct the imbalances, but to bring to a close one cycle of Time so that another may begin.

To wipe the canvas clean and begin anew, the old genetic lineages of that *Yuga* must be made extinct - for the forms of one *Yuga* are not even recognizable by the forms of another. This is confirmed by the monkey hero Hanuman in the *Mahabharata* (M.N.Dutt; *Vana Parva*, Ch.149.6). In the war of the worlds, the battle at Kurukshetra, it is not only the 100 sons of Dhritarashtra that are slaughtered - later the sons of the five Pandus, Yudhishtira, Arjuna, etc., are murdered in their sleep. And even Krishna's kinsmen, because they are cursed by Dhritarashtra's wife, Gandhari, eventually all go mad and kill each other in his kingdom of Dvaraka.

Shiva & the Massacre at Night - Sauptika Parva



This murder of the sons of the five Pandu and the massacre of the remaining Pandava armies allows us to once again examine the question of who is Krishna and what are the limits of his power. The Massacre takes place after the great battle at Kurukshetra is over and the exhausted victorious troops are finally sleeping. But the son of Drona, Ashvatthaman, is hell bent on revenge.

The god Shiva is the metaphysical principle of Destruction. What has been created by Brahma and sustained by Vishnu, will inevitably be destroyed by Shiva. What remains in the fields after the harvest must be removed, so that the seeds of new forms can be planted. This is the cyclical nature of Time. Shiva is the greatest ascetic, he lives in the icy peaks of the Himalayas wearing a garland of skulls and snakes. He is often accompanied by a host of demons and ghostlike entities who drink blood and the elixir Soma. These are the phantoms that hover over battlefields fields and scenes of mass horror.

The son of the great sage Drona, Ashvatthaman, seeks Shiva's help to avenge the death of his father and the others killed by Yudhishtira and Arjuna's armies. Building a ceremonial sacrificial fire, the young warrior offers his soul to the deity Shiva and climbs into that fire to be consumed as a sacrificial offering. Shiva is pleased by the act and tells Ashvatthaman that he had, up until that moment, been the protector of the Pandavas.

This protection was the result of Krishna's worshipping Shiva 'with truth, purity, sincerity, resignation, ascetic practices, vows, forgiveness, devotion, patience, thought and word.' Shiva then reveals that the Pandavas and their allies 'have however been assailed by Time. The lease of their lives is over'(M.N.Dutt; *Sauptika Parva*, Ch.7.60-68).

Cooked by Time

This universe is cyclical. We are all of us located in various stages, moments of time, points on an eternal curve that takes us onward to success and failure, pleasure and pain (*sukha-duhkha*), birth and death. We are all in the endless process of being 'cooked' by

Time.

The success of the Pandu brothers, Yudhishtira and Arjuna, was the result of Krishna's worship of the god Shiva. Krishna's asceticism and devotion kept the Destroyer at bay, but only for a time. That time has now passed and thus in response to the fiery sacrificial offering, Shiva enters into Ashvatthaman's body as the primordial power of destruction.

The 'Possession' of Ashvatthaman

'Possessed by that divine being, Drona's son was worked up with energy derived from godhead, he [Ashvatthaman] became all powerful in battle.' Ashvatthaman is surrounded by 'invisible beings' and *Rakshasa* demons as he enters the enemy camp to massacre everyone.

'Thousands of men who were writhing in agony, stricken by anxiety and filled with despair were killed by Ashvatthaman. Burnt by fire ... the men, beside themselves, killed one another' (*Sauptika Parva*, Ch. 8.129-131). Shiva must have instilled a kind of madness and confusion in the minds of the sleeping warriors. 'Many *Rakshasas* and *Pishachas* (demons) were seen there, eating human flesh and drinking blood' (ibid.Ch.8.134).



Krishna is away that night and his convenient absence can be read as one more sign of the cosmic process. The god-that-protects must stand aside when it is necessary for the god-that-destroys to act. Ashvatthaman could not have succeeded unless he was possessed by Shiva.

All of Draupadi's sons by her five husbands, the Pandu brothers, are slaughtered. The *Dvapara Yuga* is coming to a close. The Time of the Noble Warriors, the Kshatriyas, is ending and the lineages on both sides of this catastrophic war must be purged. There will be no noble and righteous wars in the *Kali Yuga* - only wars of greed and self-aggrandizement. Time stops for no man.

The Autonomy of Man within the Fabric of the Matrix

Examining Krishna's divine attributes and human efforts may lead us to ask how much Free Will do any of us have? Where does the autonomy of man leave off and the Will of

the Divine Being begin? Are all our efforts useless against the ineluctable forces of the Cycles of Time. Why should we try to work for the well being of the world, the *lokasamgraha*, if Time will move inexorably and simply whisk away all that we do.

Krishna's example should serve us well, for it often seems as the *Mahabharata* unfolds that Krishna is prescient and already knows the outcome of the story. He knows that Arjuna and his brothers, the Pandus, will win the war; he knows that it was Shiva who allowed Ashvatthaman to kill the sons of Draupadi and the Pandus; and he knows that his kinsmen in Dvaraka will soon kill each other. And yet, Krishna kept working to stop the war. He truly endeavored to encourage both sides of the family to reach a peaceful solution. He warned them of the dire consequences of their actions. He himself went as an ambassador to the wicked Duryodhana to negotiate a settlement.

We might conclude that our Free Will is somewhat like that of an actor in a play. The play has already been written, the characters and their lines are already there, waiting for us to enter into our parts - the machinations of *guna-maya*. The freedom lies in how well we are able to execute our part, will be be good actors or poor ones. Will we inspire the rest of the company, and based on our acclaim as great performers, go on to other roles in other universes? This business of Free Will is a mystery, is it not.



Perhaps Shakespeare had something in common with the poet-author of the *Mahabharata*, Vyasa, when he said:

*All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances ...
- As You Like It (II, vii, 139-143)*

Krishna is your own deepest Self!

I don't pretend to have answered the question - Who is Krishna? I can only hope that I have at least offered you some clues that I have discovered over time for myself, and that these bits have encouraged you to search for your own answers to the wondrous enigma known as Krishna.

Let me return to my hero the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair, as it was he who inspired me to ask the question. In the final paragraph of his chapter in *The Mahabharata, A Literary Study*, entitled 'Who is Krishna?' are the following observations.

Krishna is a being who can grow to touch the sky, as the Vision of the Cosmic Form, and he is also 'intimately small enough to dwell in the hearts of men.' Krishna is a man who can befriend Arjuna, and yet he is also one who identifies himself with the deities Vishnu and Shiva, and even the poet-author Vyasa.

'History can be redeemed only by the partnership of deity and man, but deity is the indweller. The counsel that Arjuna gets from Krishna is the counsel of his own, man's own, deepest Self.'

‘I am Time grown old to destroy the world ...’



On July 16, 1945, Robert Oppenheimer was face down in the dirt outside the control bunker at Trinity, now known as White Sands, New Mexico. The event was the successful testing of the first atomic bomb. The charismatic and brilliant physicist Oppenheimer, the leader of the now infamous Manhattan Project, lay 10,000 yards south of ground zero.

The sight of the terrible apparitional mushroom cloud climbing into the heavens made Oppenheimer remember a line from the Bhagavad Gita: ‘Now I am become death, the destroyer of the worlds’ (*BhG.XI.32*).

According to Oppenheimer himself, the *Bhagavad Gita* was a primary source of his philosophical views. His considerable genius included an amazing facility for languages and in his 20s, he quickly learned Sanskrit. He kept the *Gita* on the bookshelf nearest his desk and gave copies away to his friends as gifts. Oppenheimer said that the *Bhagavad Gita* was ‘the most beautiful philosophical song existing in any known tongue.’ (Bird & Sherwin) If Oppenheimer had gone a bit deeper than mere philosophy, perhaps his life would not have become so tragic.

Robert Oppenheimer



Erwin Schrodinger

The Austrian physicist Erwin Schrodinger was also profoundly influenced by Vedic thought. As the father of quantum mechanics and of Schrodinger's Cat fame, he 'devised the wave equation every quantum system must obey' and represented 'quantum stuff as a waveform' (Nick Herbert). Schrodinger kept copies of the Sanskrit texts of the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Upanishads* by his bed.

Would modern science have ever embraced quantum physics without Schrodinger's understanding of Vedic thought? Subhash Kak, both a scientist and an Indologist, has written on Schrodinger's involvement in Vedanta suggesting how modern thought has been influenced by Vedic traditions. Professor Kak tells us that: '... before he [Schrodinger] created quantum mechanics, he expressed his intention to give form to central ideas of Vedanta, which, therefore, has had a role in the birth of quantum mechanics.'

Oppenheimer's translation of the verse spoken during the Vision of the Cosmic Form is, 'Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds.' The great Kashmir Saivite, Abhinavagupta translates this as, 'I am the powerful time, instrumental in the destruction of the world' (B.Marjanovic).

कालो ऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत् प्रवृद्धो
लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः .
ऋते ऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे
ये ऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः .. ११- ३२..

kālo 'smi lokakṣayakṛt pravṛddho
lokān samāhartum iha pravṛttaḥ
ṛtepi tvāṃ na bhaviṣyanti sarve
yevasthitāḥ pratyanīkeṣu yodhāḥ 11.32



The Sanskrit word used here is *kAla*, with a diacritical ‘long mark’ over the first ‘a’, not the second ‘a’; and its definition in the M.Monier-Williams Sanskrit to English dictionary is: ‘a fixed or right point of time, a space of time, time in general.’ The dictionary goes on to enumerate various nuances of the word *kAla* as ‘measure of time, death by age; time leading to events, the causes of which are imperceptible to the mind of man; destiny, fate; time as destroying all things; death, time of death.’

The word *kAla* encompasses the idea that Time and Death are inextricably woven together. This complexity of deeper meanings here gives us some insight into the complicated intricacies of Sanskrit and the reason why there are so many various translations of the Bhagavad Gita and other texts.

The Indian scholar M.N.Dutt also translates the word *kAla* as Death. The translation by Swami Gambhirananda is: 'I am death, the Destroyer of all, who have grown in stature. I have now become active for devouring people.' Remember that the Vision of the Cosmic Form (XI.25-27) shows the warriors being crushed by tusk-like teeth!

Centuries of Indian Tradition

I don't believe a westerner can absorb the centuries of Indian tradition that one who has grown up breathing and living, immersed in this atmosphere will acquire naturally. Do most Indians simply know that Death and Time are functioning as one entity because Time destroys all things? We make no such connection here in the west. There is no concept of Time as the Destroyer, except perhaps to the very old. We actually say - time is money! Surely all Hindus are familiar with the theory of the Cycles of Time.

Winthrop Sargeant translates the verse as 'I am Time, the mighty cause of world destruction, who has come forth to annihilate the worlds.' And my favorite is that of J.A.B.van Buitenen:

*I am Time grown old to destroy the world,
Embarked on the course of world annihilation.*

Krishna is an expression, an incarnation and avatar, of Vishnu's promise to sustain the world by restoring the balance between good and evil. Time is the force that envelops us all. Time is an atmosphere, setting and habitat, the invisible medium that permeates Space and allows the Matrix to exist.

Time moves in cycles and when the forces of darkness are overrunning the world, Time becomes ripe for the rebalancing of the world. Time 'embarks on the course' to annihilate and devour the imbalance. As the *Dvapara Yuga* draws to a close, Krishna and Arjuna are the instruments of this cyclical process.

The Cycles of Time

To understand this verse, the reader needs to have some understanding of the theory of the Cycles of Time in Hinduism. The 4 Ages are:

- 1. The Satya or Krita Yuga, a Golden Age*
- 2. The Treta Yuga, the Age of Ritual*
- 3. Dvapara Yuga, the Age of Doubt: Man loses the sense of the divine reality of the world and grows away from natural*

law

4. *The Kali Yuga, the Age of Conflict and confusion began in 3012 BC and will end with the nearly total devastation of the present humanity*

In Hindu metaphysics time is cyclical and each period of manifestation is called a KALPA of Brahma, equivalent to 4.32 billion human years.

The KALPA is subdivided into 14 MANVANTARAS.

We are now in the seventh MANVANTARA of this KALPA.

Each MANVANTARA is divided into 71 MAHA-YUGAS of 4,320,000 years each.

We are in the 28th MAHA-YUGA of this MANVANTARA.

Each MAHA-YUGA is made up of four *yugas*

Each *Yuga* is preceded by a period of a dawn and followed by a period of twilight.
[Linga Purana 1.4.3-6]

When you study the Hindu theory of the Cycles of Time and the Yugas, you will find a confusing divergence of opinion concerning the dates of their duration. Considering that we are now living in the Age of Confusion, the Kali Yuga, it is not surprising to find so much disagreement on these matters.

What is more important to me than precise numbers is the fact that we are living in an era where there is almost no memory of the previous cycles of time. Most of us wrongly believe that civilization begins with written history, but writing is actually the symptom of a degenerative culture. It is sound that communicates meaning, not the markings that seek to represent it.

Reach beyond the limited frequencies of this Veil of Illusion you have been confined within all of your life. The experience of expanding and projecting your thoughts, consciousness, and imagination back into primordial time is in itself liberating, revealing, and uplifting.

The Duration of Time as a Function of Consciousness

The realization that time is in fact a function of consciousness will alter your perception of reality. We all experience time relative to our own specific consciousness in any given

moment. You can verify this for yourself by simply reflecting on, for example, how time flies when you are happy - as opposed how time drags when you are stuck in traffic or heart broken.

Another example would be to consider the frenzied consciousness of an ambitious 'type-A' personality. The would-be-executive runs around nonstop day after day, balancing a bazillion enterprises in order to gain money, prestige and power, keeping busy-busy-busy, and avoids any possible solitude or contemplation.

Compare this with the consciousness of a *Tai Chi* Master who moves so slowly as to defy nature and yet can knockout his opponent from across the room, or an ascetic hermit yogi who never moves, never goes anywhere or does anything - but by remaining at the center of his being, becomes One with the Universe.

Time does not exist outside the temporal illusory hologram

All increments, meaning measurements of time and space, are relative to the consciousness of the perceiver and thus the product of variations in waveform frequencies, based on and the result of the specific degree of the illusion of Separation from Oneness.

This is similar to the quantum physics theory, The Copenhagen interpretation, Part II: Reality is created by observation. Or you might say more accurately, reality is created by the consciousness of the observer.

In 'While the Gods Play', the French scholar Alain Danielou explains that the length of a moment is established by the rhythms of consciousness that perceive it:

It is energy, by producing vibratory waves having direction and length, that will give birth to the rhythms whose perceptions will create the dimension of time, the measure of space, and at the same time the structures of matter.

For man, the perception of the dimension of time is determined by his vital rhythms, his heartbeat...

The relative duration of each of the four *Yugas* is 4:3:2:1. This implies that the Golden Age is the longest and our current *Kali* Age is the shortest. My understanding is that time actually continues to speed up in the Twilight of the *Kali Yuga* and increases ever more so, as we reach the end. The Cycles of Time are comparable to classical Indian Ragas that begin slowly, serene; increase in tempo and passion, and end in a frenzy of energy.

The Kali Yuga began in 3606 BC

Alain Danielou's dates differ from others, but somewhat agree with the Mayan Calendar and the Hopi predictions. Danielou says that the Kali Yuga began in 3,606 BC and most scholars also do agree with this date. However he gives the duration of the Kali as 6,048.72 years.

Danielou says that the Twilight of the Kali Yuga began in 1939 with the discovery of atomic fission. According to him, the final catastrophe will take place during this twilight and the last traces of this present mankind will have disappeared in 2442.

The fact that this date of 1939 coincides with the discovery of atomic fission curiously fits in rather well with Oppenheimer's recalling the verse from the *Bhagavad Gita* at the moment of the explosion of the first atomic bomb.

With or without Arjuna



Krishna tells Arjuna that this cyclical cleansing will take place with or without him. Arjuna's choice to fight or not is irrelevant in the grand cosmic scheme (XI.32). The enemy now awaiting battle on the fields at Kurukshetra, the thousands who are arranged in formation, arrayed (*avasthitah*) in chariots, on horseback and high upon elephants, will each one cease to exist (*na bhavisyanti*).

*... of all these hosts of hostile chiefs arrayed
There stands not one shall leave alive the battlefield!*

- *Ganguli*

Krishna is essentially telling Arjuna that his involvement here ‘counts for nothing’ (Gambhirananda). With the Vision of the Cosmic Form still looming high above them, Krishna encourages Arjuna, perhaps commands him to stand up and defeat his enemies (*satrun*) - who have already been killed by Vishnu. Arjuna is only the chosen instrument (XI.33)

Dismayed No longer be!

Arise! obtain renown! destroy thy foes!

Fight for the kingdom waiting thee when thou hast vanquished those.

By Me they fall - not thee! the stroke of death is dealt them now,

Even as they show thus gallantly; My instrument art thou!

- *Ganguli*

Krishna assures Arjuna of victory and urges him to go forward into battle and to kill even those men, Bhishma and Drona, who were once his beloved teachers (XI.34). Arjuna’s love for and memory of these two men has made him falter, but they have joined the enemy. Bhishma and Drona have unwittingly become the servant of the darkside, the demonic. Arjuna cannot fail, for these hundreds of thousands of warriors are as good as dead now. They have already been slain (*hatan*) by Vishnu acting through Krishna.

Abhinavagupta’s commentary (B.Marjanovic) reflects the higher meaning. The Vision of the Cosmic Form is the manifestation of consciousness in this universe. It is consciousness itself that will devour it’s own polarities, knowledge and ignorance, light and dark in the temporal illusory hologram. This must occur in some manner at the close of every *Yuga* in every *Manvantara* - world without end!

Arjuna on his knees ...

The Vision of the Cosmic Form has left Arjuna terrified and trembling. Perhaps this is why such visions are so hard to come by; they would overwhelm even the greatest bravest warrior in the world. Arjuna humbly gets down on his knees and in reverence acknowledges what he has seen as the Lord of all Lords, the Great Self (*mahatman*) and the original cause (*adi katre*). He praises Krishna (XI.35-40).

For Thou art, now I know,

Father of all below,

Of all above, of all the worlds within ...

*Again, Thou God! again
A thousand thousand times be magnified!
Honour and worship be -
Glory and praise, - to Thee
Namo, Namaste, cried on every side;
Cried here, above, below,
Uttered when Thou dost go,
Uttered where Thou dost come! Namo! we call;
Namostu! God adored!
Namostu! Nameless Lord
Hail to Thee! Praise to Thee Thou One in all
For Thou art All!
- Ganguli*

Arjuna then apologizes to Krishna for any impulse, any offense he may have given in jest or affection in the course of their ordinary friendship when he thought of Krishna as only a man. He then begs Krishna to return to his familiar human form (XI.45-46), to change from that terrifying divine form with one thousand (*sahasra*) arms back into the familiar one, as most translations say, with four arms (*caturbhujena*)!

*Let me once more behold
The form I loved of old,
Thou of the thousand arms and countless eyes!
This frightened heart is fain
To see restored again
My Charioteer, in Krishna's kind disguise.*

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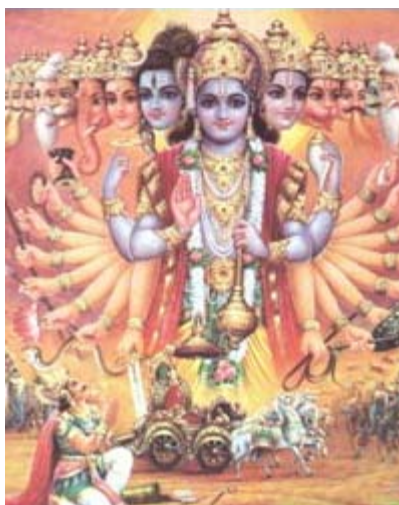
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Cosmic Day of Brahma the Creator -The Hindu Concept of Time

geocities.com/Athens/Rhodes/2952/gohitvip/41.html

Bhakti Yoga - The Yoga of Devotion - Part 1



The experience of seeing the Vision of the Cosmic Form has left Arjuna trembling with fear and he begs his friend to return once more to his familiar four-armed human form. Krishna tells Arjuna that it is only by the power of his Grace (*prasannena*) that Arjuna can see this Vision. No one but Arjuna has seen this (XI.47-48). The Vision cannot be seen by the study of the sacred Sanskrit texts, the Vedas, or by sacrifices, offerings, and rituals, or even by severe (*ugraih*) austerities (*tapobhir*). Thus it is Krishna's Grace alone that brings the Vision of the Cosmic Form.

As Krishna returns to his gentle (*saumya*) handsome and wonderful (*vapus*) human form, Arjuna regains his composure (XI.51). Krishna tells his friend that even the gods are always desiring this Vision of the Cosmic Form (XI.52). Again Krishna says the Vision cannot be experienced by the study of texts, sacrificial offerings, and austerities. The Supreme Being can only be known and entered into through *bhaktya ananyaya*, one-pointed devotion (XI.54).

Devotion Invokes God's Grace

By this verse we are led into the beginnings of an understanding of *Bhakti Yoga*, the Yoga of Devotion. Krishna's teaching in the *Bhagavad Gita* is a merging of Knowledge as Wisdom (*jnana yoga*), work without attachment to results (*karma yoga*), and devotion to the God-within (*bhakti yoga*).

In the final verse of Book XI, Krishna tells Arjuna that whoever works for God, in the wisdom of non-attachment to results, with the knowledge that God is within all beings and therefore is free from enmity (*nirvairas*) for any - they attain the Supreme Self, *Paramatman* (XI.55). They come Home!

Nothing more remains to be known ...

The commentary in the Gambhirananda translation is that after this, there remains nothing to be done. This is a reflection of Krishna's earlier statement when he tells Arjuna that after learning what Krishna will teach him, here in the moment of the *Bhagavad Gita*, nothing more will remain to be known in this world (VII.2). The sphinx-like and transcendental secret possibility of reaching the end of the 'game' in this universe is something to contemplate deeply and profoundly.

"Stand up and fight!"

In the *Mahabharata* before Krishna's teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita* on the battlefield Kurukshetra, there are many debates over the actual decision to go to war. In one such discussion Krishna makes clear his view on the subject of performing acts (*karma*) in this world as opposed to withdrawing from it, and reveals that he holds nothing higher than taking action.

'One school says that it is by work that we obtain salvation and another school says that it is by putting aside work and through knowledge, that we attain salvation' (M.N.Dutt; *Udyoga Parva*, Ch.29.6). Krishna then reminds us that we cannot even begin to learn knowledge unless we also perform the act of eating. Sustaining life requires action. We cannot concentrate on fine words when we are hungry.

'That knowledge alone bears fruit, which does work, not others' (ibid.Ch.29.7). Our actions bear fruit and these fruits are the visible evidence of our intentions. Our intentions are based in what we know. Knowledge of the Real that does not change you is Knowledge that either has not yet been truly and deeply learned, or it is false. Our behavior, our actions, what we in fact do in this world is the proof of what we Know.

This reminds me of the words used by Jesus when he teaches people how to distinguish a false prophet from a true one. Jesus says, 'By their fruits you will know them' (Matthew 7.16). We are all known by our actions. We act as we believe. The well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*) cannot be achieved by one who withdraws from it.

The uttering of a fool and of a weak man

‘... it has been ordained by the Creator that through work, results work ... Therefore the opinion that anything other than work is good, is nothing but the uttering of a fool and of a weak man’ (*Udyoga Parva*, Ch.29.8). Here is Krishna’s doubtless view of taking action in this world and therefore we are not surprised when he later urges Arjuna to stand up and fight (BhG.II.37-38).

The Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair makes a heartfelt case for action over withdrawal from the world in his writings, especially in ‘The Betrayal of Krishna’. He blames what he calls the schoolmen beginning with ‘the subversion’ by Sankara for misunderstanding and ultimately betraying Krishna’s teachings.

My generation - the lost ones

On a personal note, I often wonder how my country might have been a different place today if so many of my generation had not misunderstood what was then being sold as the wisdom of the East, and sadly made the drug induced choice to turn on and drop out. I am not blaming the wisdom of the East, only those who sadly through their own misinterpretations passed on the idea of abandoning the world. History shows that there were also those in the Christian faith who sought to leave this world.

The consequences of these escapist attitudes were personally tragic to so many in the 1960s and 70s, destroying lives which might have been brilliant and productive. This choice of dropping out ended definitely the potential possibilities of those who might have made America today a very different political entity.

Only Love can motivate us to act spontaneously in Joy

Krishna’s statement that he holds ‘nothing higher than acting’ reveals that his teaching is indeed one that embraces an active participation in the world. As Krishna so bluntly states, he who thinks otherwise is merely uttering the opinion of ‘a fool and a weak man.’

This working for the world does little good when motivated by ego. The small identity ego-self is still under the rule of *guna-maya* and cannot - however hard it tries with all those good intentions that pave the road to hell - achieve much that is not tainted by its own self-serving ambition. The kind of action that Krishna is speaking of comes from an enlightened consciousness, the frequency waveform that is motivated by the Knowledge

of its Oneness with the All. The question is how do we get there - meaning to that place of Wisdom and the Realization that we are those we serve.

The clue is in our ordinary lives. What would make us want to work for the well-being of others? What drives a father to labor day after day in some boring job to put food on the table and support his family? What motivates the woman who often holds down a job and then comes home to cook and clean, and perform all those endless tasks that every mother finds herself bound to. There is only one answer - and that is Love.

Love is the only force powerful enough to move any of us to work ceaselessly and possibly in the spirit of spontaneous Joy. Work done out of Love resonates with that same frequency waveform in which the Creator works. God doesn't need anything and yet, as Krishna says, the Creator works tirelessly to sustain and support the world. God's Love is the force that provides the source for and permeates the All. 'And so there remain Faith, Hope, and Love - these three; and of these the greatest is Love' (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Book XII - Bhakti Yoga - Ganguli's Translation with my comments



In Book XII Krishna teaches Arjuna how the frequency waveform Devotion can assure the attainment of liberation (*moksha*) from perpetual rebirth and transmigration. Book XII is brief, and I quite like Ganguli's translation of this section. It's poetic images carry a sense of the feeling conveyed here, and so I will quote him and make my own comments.

The Better Way

Arjuna asks Krishna who 'takes the better way of faith and life' - the ones who worship the Lord with devotion, or those who worship that which is invisible, eternally unmanifest, *aksharam avyaktam* (XII.1).

Akshara, the Imperishable, is 'neither gross nor subtle, neither short nor long ... neither air nor *akasha*. It is unattached. It is without taste or smell, without eyes or ears, without tongue or mind. It is non-effulgent, without vital breath or mouth, without measure, and without exterior and interior' (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* III.viii.8).

The Imperishable Unmanifest can only be defined by what it is not and therefore you can see the difficulty in focusing on this invisible *aksharam avyaktam*. Krishna understands that for most of us here in the *Kali Yuga*, it is easier to utilize our natural inclination to focus on what we love and therefore he recommends the Path of Devotion along with Knowledge (*jnana yoga*) and good works (*karma yoga*).

*Whoever serve Me - as I show Myself -
Constantly true, in full devotion fixed,
Those hold I very holy.*

Krishna answers that he holds the ones who are steadfast (*yuktas*) and keep their mind on God to be the most devoted (*yuktatama*). Supreme faith (*sraddhaya paraya*) in the Knowledge that has revealed our goal is born in the *Sattvic guna* (XII.2). This is why an even temperament is the fertile ground that engenders a higher consciousness. Only the frequencies of the *guna sattva* will produce a similitude (*sadharmya*) with the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*).

*But who serve -
Worshipping Me, The One, The Invisible,
The Unrevealed, Unnamed, Unthinkable,
Uttermost, All-pervading, Highest,*

*Sure -
Who thus adore Me, mastering their sense,
Of one set mind to all, glad in all good,
These blessed souls come unto Me.*

But those who worship God as the Imperishable (*aksharam*), the Unmanifest (*avyaktam*), the omnipresent all-pervading (*sarvatragam*), who control the five senses, and are happy wanting the welfare of all (*sarvabhutahite*) - they come to God also (XII.3-4).

Yet, hard

The travail is for such as bend their minds

To reach th' Unmanifest. That viewless path

Shall scarce be trod by man bearing the flesh!

Krishna realizes how hard it is for those of us in human form to focus on the unseen (XII.5). We are warm blooded creatures who need to love more than the Unmanifest. However it is true that whatever Path we follow, whatever we worship, our diverse prayers and many mantras are all directed to the same goal. That goal is to attune the frequencies in our heart, mind and being to the supremely Blissful Consciousness of the God-within, the One that permeates the All. By all pathways are we eventually led from the unreal to the Real!

But whereso any doeth all his deeds

Renouncing self for Me, full of Me, fixed

To serve only the Highest, night and day

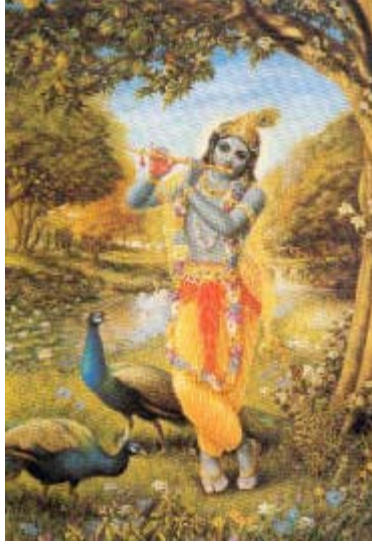
Musing on Me -

him will I swiftly lift

Forth from life's ocean of distress and death,

Whose soul clings fast to Me.

Krishna promises to lift up out of eternal transmigration - the ocean of birth and death - the one who thinks of God, whose mind is absorbed in and whose thoughts have entered into the Supreme Self (XII.7).



तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् .
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् .. १२-७..

teṣāṃ ahaṃ samuddhartā mṛtyusaṃsārasāgarāt
bhavāmi na cirāt pārtha mayy āveśitacetasām 12.7

The object of leaving the small ego-self behind, with all its endless *guna-maya* compulsions, and fixing the mind on the God-within is to lift your consciousness to a similitude (*sadharmya*) of frequency with the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*). You become immersed in the One, your own Self and Home.

Cling thou to Me!

Clasp Me with heart and mind! so shalt thou dwell

Surely with Me on high.

‘Cling to Me!’ is the expression of the idea that the Supreme Being also desires us to return Home. God wants us when we want God. Imagine the Joy of the Creator when even one chooses the subtle fire in the Heart over all the temptations of the world!

But if thy thought

Droops from such height; if thou be'st weak to set

Body and soul upon Me constantly,

Despair not! give Me lower service!

If the aspirant cannot keep the mind focused on God, then we need not despair. We can practice union (*yoga*) by meditating; such practice will lead us to better one-pointed focus of mind (XII.9).

I seek

To reach Me, worshipping with steadfast will;

And, if thou canst not worship steadfastly,

Work for Me, toil in works pleasing to Me!

For he that laboureth right for love of Me

Shall finally attain!

If one cannot practice in meditation, then we can do good works (*mat-karma*) in the name of the Lord. By practicing *Karma Yoga* as altruistic acts without attachment, we can attain the Perfection (*siddhim*) what we seek (XII.10).

But, if in this

Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure! find

Refuge in Me! let fruits of labour go,

Renouncing hope for Me, with lowliest heart,

So shalt thou come;



If our efforts only meet with failure, then offer even that failure to the God-within. God is our effort, our heart when faint or determined, and both our failure and success. God is All! If we cannot do good works, if our mind is distracted by the external in the temporal illusory hologram, then Krishna tells us to offer everything to the God-within. In self-restraint (*yatamavan*), we remain devoted to the Lord and give up all thoughts of the fruits of our acts (XII.11).

for, though to know is more

Than diligence, yet worship better is

Than knowing, and renouncing better still.

Near to renunciation - very near -

Dwelleth Eternal Peace!

Knowledge (*jnanam*) of that which is the Real is better than practice (*abhyasat*). This is because knowledge is the result of practice. Meditation (*dhyanam*) in which we identify with the God-within, and which thereby goes beyond all knowledge, is better than knowledge (*Abhinavagupta* - B.Marjanovic).

Attaining Oneness with the God-within allows us to give up all desire for the results of our actions (*karma phalatyagas*); and this renunciation of the fruits of our acts is better than meditation (XII.12). This abandoning of the fruits of labor is a sign that you have understood the temporal illusory nature of the hologram and that you are returning to a

consciousness in line with the frequencies of the *Satya Yuga*. You are Becoming One with what we have always been. You are returning Home!

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Bhakti Yoga - The Yoga of Devotion - Part 2



The Yoga of Devotion is not limited to Hinduism and is also a part of Christianity. The poems of St. John of the Cross and the writings of Saint Teresa of Avila are immersed in the Love of God. In his poem, 'The Dark Night of the Soul', St. John of the Cross reveals his ecstatic experience of Union:

*One dark night,
fired with love's urgent longings
- ah, the sheer grace! -*

*I went out unseen,
my house being now all stilled.*

*In darkness, and secure,
by the secret ladder, disguised,
- ah, the sheer grace! -*

in darkness and concealment,

my house being now all stilled.

*On that glad night,
in secret, for no one saw me,
nor did I look at anything,
with no other light or guide
than the one that burned in my heart.*

*This guided me
more surely than the light of noon
to where he was awaiting me
- him I knew so well -
there in a place where no one appeared.*

*O guiding night!
O night more lovely than the dawn!
O night that has united
the Lover with his beloved,
transforming the beloved in her Lover.*

*Upon my flowering breast
which I kept wholly for him alone,
there he lay sleeping,
and I caressing him*

there in a breeze from the fanning cedars.

*When the breeze blew from the turret,
as I parted his hair,
it wounded my neck
with its gentle hand,
suspending all my senses.*

*I abandoned and forgot myself,
laying my face on my Beloved;
all things ceased; I went out from myself,
leaving my cares
forgotten among the lilies.*



Saint Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) was the Spanish nun who founded the Carmelites. Her ecstatic mystical experiences of union are well known, and the famous Italian sculptor Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini carved one of the most magnificent of all his works

in marble to immortalize her. Teresa was a beautiful woman with a keen intelligence and a sense of humor. Her love for God led her to a vision of an angel that pierced her heart with a golden spear - in others words opened her heart chakra.

‘Teresa described the soul's intense desire for God in the language of erotic passion. In this, she belongs to a long tradition of mystical experience that is known as bridal mysticism’ (aras.org/se_ecstasy.html). In her own words:

It pleased our Lord that I should see the following vision a number of times. I saw an angel near me, on the left side, in bodily form. This I am not wont to see, save very rarely.... In this vision it pleased the Lord that I should see it thus. He was not tall, but short, marvelously beautiful, with a face which shone as though he were one of the highest of the angels, who seem to be all of fire: they must be those whom we call Seraphim....

I saw in his hands a long golden spear, and at the point of the iron there seemed to be a little fire. This I thought that he thrust several times into my heart, and that it penetrated to my entrails. When he drew out the spear he seemed to be drawing them with it, leaving me all on fire with a wondrous love for God. The pain was so great that it caused me to utter several moans; and yet so exceeding sweet is this greatest of pains that it is impossible to desire to be rid of it, or for the soul to be content with less than God. (Peers, 197 - aras.org/se_ecstasy.html).

It is this possibility of ecstatic Union with the Creator that sets Hinduism apart from the Semitic religions. The Jewish faith and that of Islam are strictly monotheistic in the belief that the one God remains forever distinct from humanity (Triadic Mysticism - Paul E. Murphy). Mysticism was later reintroduced into Islam by ‘esoteric Shia and Sufi traditions’ (ibid.).

The Tomb in Kashmir



Christianity's departure from Judaism included 'insights specific to the Indic religions' (ibid.). This insight might be evidence of the stories that Jesus was trained in India and went back to Kashmir to die. There is a tomb known as the 'Rauza Bal' in the Kan Yar district of Srinagar Kashmir. This tomb is said to contain the body of Jesus who spent his later years in Kashmir as a respected teacher and healer.

The Indic insights that influenced Christianity, according to Paul E. Murphy are: 'a belief of a plurality in the divine consonant with divine unity (interpreted by Christians as the Trinity); the humanization of God (the Incarnation); supreme bliss as union with the divine (for Christianity, the beatific Vision); the realization of this bliss through gratuitous divine election (grace); and the accessibility of the divine through numinous visible symbols (image cults - devotion to persons through their images)' (ibid.).

The Dark Night of Shiva

Devotional Yoga is also found in the writings of Kashmir Saivism. Bhatta Narayana (855-83), Utpaladeva (900-950), and Lalla (14th century) are cited as Saivites who practiced devotion. Utpaladeva speaks of the mystical night of Shiva in his devotional songs.

Where the sun, moon, and all other stars

Set at the same time,

There rises the radiant Night of Shiva,

Spreading a splendour of its own.

- Utpaladeva's Shivastotravali IV.22

The Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta ‘pays homage to the undifferentiated and ineffable Shiva, the Mystical Night (Sivaratri): Light of all Lights, darkness of all darkneses!’ (P.E.Murphy). God is the All and the ‘goal of life prescribed by these Saivas is the recognition and direct realization of the absolute Godhead as one’s own basic nature’ (Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta).

Poetry is often the consequence of mystical experiences and is written after such blissful occasions. Those who directly experience God’s Love are forever transformed by the force that purifies and ‘plays an essential role in preparing the way to illumination and in stabilizing it once it has been attained’ (P.E.Murphy).



Let me, without obstacles,

Behold only you, Lord,

Everywhere, all the time ...

- Utpaladeva’s Shivastotravali XII.14

In the lake of my mind, spilling over

With the bliss of the memory of your form,

May the lotuses of the pair of your feet

Ever bloom, effusing

Nectar most delicious and sublime.

- Ibid.IX.16

What else remains to be desired

By those rolling in the wealth of devotion?

- Ibid.XX. 11

As though saturated with the wine

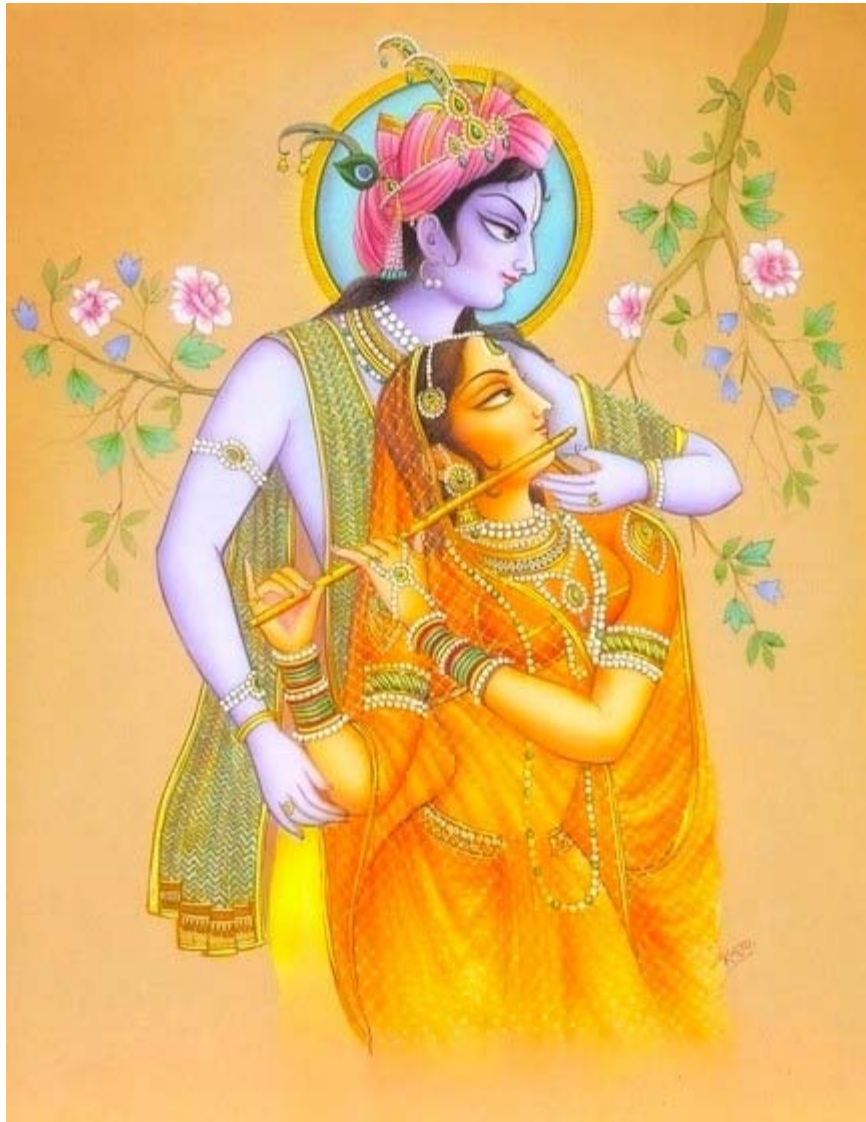
Of the nectar of devotion,

With vital organs radiating with delight,

The adventurous ones dance through the night ...

- Ibid.XX.20

I have only touched on a few of the devotional writings which I love and revere. There is Princess Meera (Mirabai), Kalidasa, Tukaram, and Tulsidas, just to name a few from Hinduism. From the Sufis there is the lady Rabia al Basri, the well known Rumi, and Kabir's couplets. And so many others who will guide you and inspire you, if you should decide to take the path that embraces devotional Love for the God within you that dwells in the secret cave in the Heart.



The Bhagavad Gita, Book XII continued ...

The *Bhagavad Gita* recommends that the one who aspires to liberation (*moksha*) and similitude (*sadharmya*) combine all three paths, knowledge (*jnana*), altruistic works (*karma*), and devotion (*bhakti*).

Who hateth nought

Of all which lives, living himself benign,

Compassionate, from arrogance exempt,

Exempt from love of self, unchangeable

By good or ill; patient, contented, firm

*In faith, mastering himself, true to his word,
Seeking Me, heart and soul; vowed unto Me,-
That man I love!*

Another sign that your consciousness has reached the level of similarity (*sadharmya*) with God would be that you could find no hatred in your heart for any being. You would be like the Creator in the sense that you would feel like a friend (*maitras*) and remain compassionate (*karunas*) to all beings.

In your identification with the All there would be no room for the small identity ego-self. You would have no need to be attached to particular possessions or people, or even to care about the ever passing phases of pain and pleasure, *sama-duhkha-sukhas* (XII.13).

*Who troubleth not his kind,
And is not troubled by them; clear of wrath,
Living too high for gladness, grief, or fear,
That man I love!*

*Who, dwelling quiet-eyed,
Stainless, serene, well-balanced, unperplexed,
Working with Me, yet from all works detached,
That man I love!*

The *yogin* who lives always in the state of contentment (*samtustas satatam*), with the small ego-self subdued, whose resolve is firm, and who is devoted (*yo madbhaktah*) to the God-within is beloved by and dear (*sa me priyah*) to the Supreme Lord (XII.14).

सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः .
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः .. १२- १४..

saṁtuṣṭaḥ satataṁ yogī yatātmā dṛḍhaniścayaḥ
mayy arpitamanobuddhir yo madbhaktaḥ sa me
priyaḥ 12.14

This state of contentment is a higher frequency that bears little to no resemblance to the ordinary concepts of being relaxed or satisfied. This contentment is a subtle yet entirely powerful feeling that deeply permeates your entire being and spreads out into the universe.

*Who, fixed in faith on Me,
Dotes upon none, scorns none; rejoices not,
And grieves not, letting good or evil hap
Light when it will, and when it will depart,
That man I love!*

When we Realize that we are the All, none is dearer to us than any other. We are All! This is evidence of our Union with the Creator who holds all of creation in affection with Divine impartiality. When we see another doing anything, we do not judge them; for we know they are us, on their own journey moving in the self-perpetuating cycles of time through the polarities in the temporal illusory hologram.

We do act selflessly for the well-being of the world, but we act in the understanding that good & evil come and go endlessly. Our commitment to a better world emerges from our earned higher consciousness, and not from any ego need.

*Who, unto friend and foe
Keeping an equal heart, with equal mind
Bears shame and glory; with an equal peace
Takes heat and cold, pleasure and pain;*

The small identity ego-self is ever concerned with its image. Do people like you? What do they think of you? The enlightened being knows that the ever fluctuating states of friendship and enmity, shame and glory are the result of *guna-maya*. They come and they go quite predictably.

All beings are moving in cycles, either towards the peak of a wave or heading down to the trough of another. The polarities of heat and cold, pleasure and pain all come and go. The enlightened remain unconcerned. 'This too will pass.'

abides

Quit of desires, hears praise or calumny

In passionless restraint, unmoved by each;

Linked by no ties to earth, steadfast in Me,

That man I love!

The enlightened belong to none but God. Their ties are no longer earthly. Love for the One replaces and subsumes all love that seeks attachment. What or who can you desire in this world when you have Become the whole world?

When others praise or criticize you, you realize that their words are only the product of their shifting, fluctuating, ever changing *gunas*. Without the Knowledge of Wisdom - what the deluded love one day, they despise the next. The enlightened are no longer needy for anyone or anything, for they have the Love of God. They are dear to the Supreme Being (*me priyah*) and that is everything!

But most of all I love

Those happy ones to whom 'tis life to live

In single fervid faith and love unseeing,

Drinking the blessed Amrit [Nectar] of my Being!

The enlightened who live in the consciousness of Love, see the presence of the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) everywhere, in every being (XII.15-20). God is in a summer breeze, the shimmering leaves of the trees, the grand sparkling stars high above, the small creatures below. God is in the ones who care and the ones who don't, the ones who envy

and the ones who are happy. The enlightened see and feel God's presence in all places, all people, all the time, and thus they live Loving the All in a state of intoxicated joy filled Wisdom - the Nectar of God's Being!

Devotion in the Kali Yuga

Truth is arduous if not impossible to come by in the Kali Yuga. The written word is a 'symptom' of the Kali Yuga because writing does little to convey the true deepest essence of realities beyond apparent density. Even the sacred texts can be altered by what one scholar describes as 'additions, interpolations, abridgment, omissions, etc.'

In other cycles of time, for example the *Satya [Krita] Yuga*, the Golden Era and Age of Wisdom, we communicate mind-to-mind and thus lies are not possible. But here in the Kali, lies dominate our current temporal illusory hologram, liars rule our world, and sadly people have come the 'prefer false ideas', which is yet another symptom of our current Age of Confusion.



The only remaining pure frequency is the Love in the Heart

I think of Krishna as God Realized in a human form – in other words, he represents the highest ideal of humanity in the sense that he was totally One with God. In the west this state of being is often spoken of as Christ Consciousness. When a person in human form realizes the God-within, they become enlightened and in the terminology of western mysticism gain Christ Consciousness.

There are many men and women throughout time who have achieved enlightenment and Realized the God-within them, but not all of them have taken on such overwhelmingly immense spiritual tasks, as did Krishna and Jesus.

Krishna left this earth at the end of the last *Yuga*, the *Dvapara*, after the Great War described in the *Mahabharata*. The *Bhagavad Gita*, contained within the *Mahabharata*, is Krishna's discourse to Arjuna the greatest warrior of that time. Krishna knows that the *Kali Yuga* is coming upon mankind. He realizes that human consciousness will soon be 'cooked by time' and that ignorance and delusion will permeate the temporal illusory

hologram; and so he explains the efficacy of Devotion to achieve Union, *Bhakti* (devotion) *Yoga* (union), for the *Kali Yuga*.

Devotion as a means to focus consciousness

Krishna is the ideal of a totally God-Realized man. He represents our deepest Self and the ultimate goal for us all. Krishna teaches us to remain immersed and absorbed in the consciousness of the God-within us. Devotion is a way to move into and keep our consciousness fixed on higher frequency waveforms so that the God-within us may reveal Itself to us through the power of Grace.

No one can free himself or herself from the power of *Guna-Maya* without the Grace of God. God created the three *GUNAS* to bind Itself in this temporal illusory holographic universe. Only the God-within you can liberate (*moksha*) you from these powerful forces, which are designed to enchant, delude, and bind. This is why you need to form a relationship with the God-within you, and to transfer over time the focus of your consciousness from the unreal, the small identity ego-self you have always falsely imagined you to be, into the Real, the Self-Atman within you.

Krishna's Cosmic Lifeboat

This temporal illusory holographic universe is a vast ocean of consciousness. *Bhakti Yoga*, devotion to the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*), and the words of Krishna Vasudeva in the *Bhagavad Gita* are our cosmic lifeboat, which allows us to safely cross over the spectrum of myriad waveforms that toss us around tsunami style, deluding and confusing. This boat can sail us Home back to our original state, in Divine Union to the God-within who waits patiently in our Heart.

Warnings on Bhakti

Bhakti Yoga can be a bit of a slippery slope, because the practice of devotion may lead you to become confused. This confusion may take the form of perceiving the object or being you are devoted to as forever separate from and external to you the worshipper. Direct your devotion to the God within you, and not ultimately to any separate external deity.

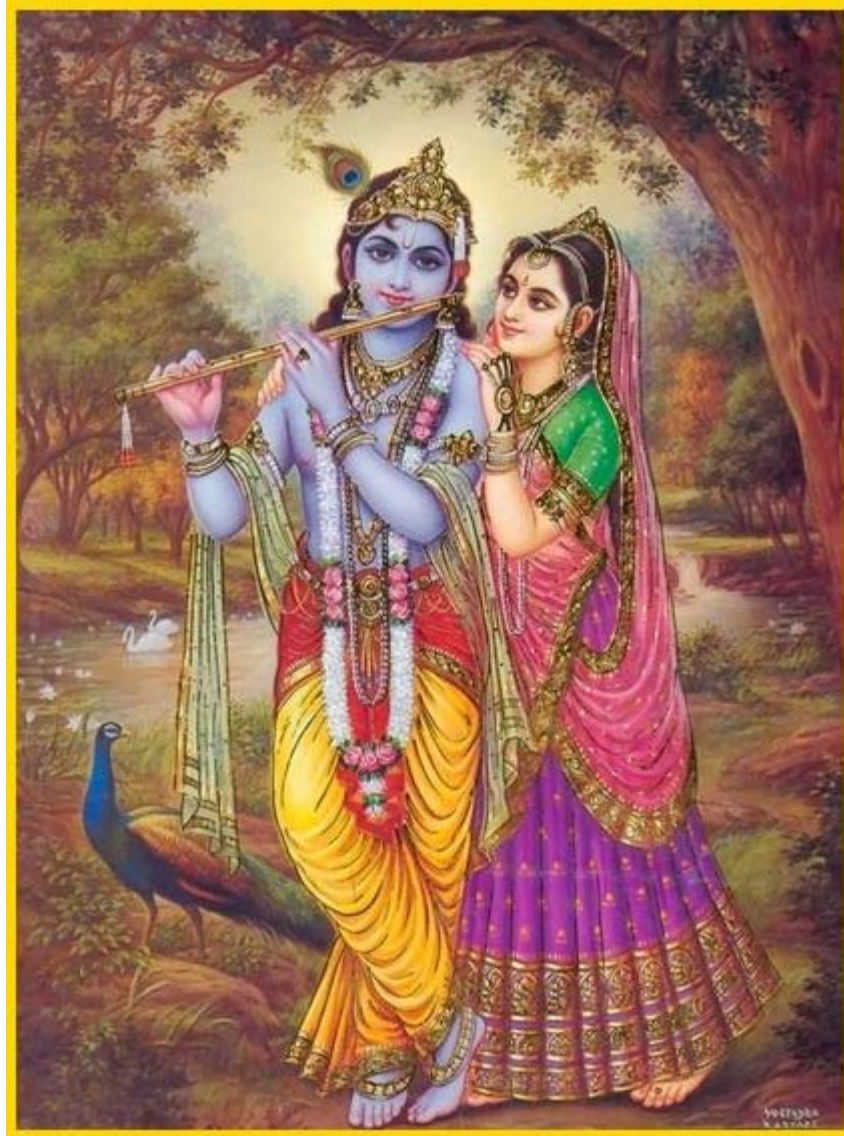
Always keep in mind that - Everything is God!

VASUDEVAH SARVAM ITI

Do not allow your consciousness to become trapped in the self-created illusion of

separation through a cherished image and by your own spiritual practices - practices that were originally designed to set you free from the appearance of multiplicity and the consequent bondage of the temporal illusory hologram.

I suppose this potential for entrapment and confusion is again one more way the Creator is here engaging in the adventure of Time & Space. It's all about the love of Play. This going Home is sometimes a bit tricky - the proverbial Razor's Edge!



Only You!

*Oh, Lord!
Let me love you dearly, every day,
In every moment, let there be a way
That I forget the boundary*

The Bhagavad Gita: An Evolving Loving Commentary

*I wish that He would hurry!
He tells me, we have Time;
But, oh! How I am longing
For His tenderness sublime ...*

I am Within ...

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So long divided You from me.

*There is a place where we will stay
From which I'll never wander,
Nestled in Your Heart of hearts,
Contented with Your Wonder.*

*What could e'r distract me from my Lord?
The worlds are in His eyes;
In all those years of calling Him,
At last He's heard my cries.*

*There is a sweetness deep inside,
No where else is Known,
Except in the Heart of my Lord,
Who is now mine ... alone.*

*There is a secret room,
Only He can take me to;
His Joy lives in mine,
And every song is new.*

*Him ... all around,
So warm, so peaceful,
And not a sound.*

*I'll not go back to things outside,
But only seek within;
My heart has now been won
By the One who makes me grin!*

*There is no other one for me,
How foolish all that seems;
Only You, here in my Heart,
The Source of all my dreams.*

*Only You, only You ...
Only You!*

- V.S. Ferguson, 2006

*This was inspired by a wonderful & soulful
song written by the great Indian composer
A.R. Rahman, on his 1997 recording Vande
Mataram.*

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Krishna images courtesy of

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The Field & the Knower of the Field - Prakriti & Purusha



Sin is moving away from the Real. As the Cycles of Time slowly ‘cook’ our consciousness and move us ever more into density and delusion, we forget the God within us. We identify more and more with the small temporal ego-self we created to enjoy this universe.

The small ego-self is that aggregate of *guna-maya* we imagine to be us - the data-collecting vehicle we call ‘susie’ or ‘billy’ or whatever name fate has given us in any fleeting lifetime. In fact we are not that temporal identity. We are the greater eternal Self (*Atman*) within.

Ignorance of Wisdom Knowledge (*jnana*) moves us further and further away from what is real into the frequency waveform described as sin. Knowledge of the Self will bring us back into the higher frequencies and purify our consciousness.

The act of attaining the Wisdom Knowledge of the Real is in itself a kind of sacrificial rite. We sacrifice our ignorance into the flames of Truth.

Arjuna now asks Krishna for more Knowledge. He begins Book XIII by asking for an understanding of *Prakriti*, which is the Field and material nature - and *Purusha*, the pure consciousness that dwells within and is the knower of the Field.

KSHETRA - The Field

The Sanskrit word *Kshetra* means ‘field’ and the use of this word in the *Bhagavad Gita* is intriguing considering how the term field is applied to physics. The search for a grand Unified Field Theory is well known and the term was coined by Einstein who sought to reconcile the general theory of relativity with electromagnetism. The Oxford Dictionary defines the word ‘field’ in physics as the region in which a force such as gravity or magnetism is effective. These fields are now considered to be ‘quantum fields’ which interact according to the laws of quantum mechanics.

Sanskrit is a sacred language

The M.Monier-Williams Sanskrit to English Dictionary defines *Kshetra* as the land and soil as property. A field is a place where crops are grown that are necessary for life. *Kshetra* is also defined as a sphere of action, a sacred place such as a Hindu temple, a portion of space, a plane figure (as a triangle, circle, etc.) enclosed by lines, the fertile womb or fertile soil, a planetary orbit, and the human body which is considered the field of the indwelling soul.

It is this last definition that pertains to Arjuna’s question. I list the others to give you a feeling for the depth, complexity and richness of this one Sanskrit word. Sanskrit is a sacred language. One word often contains multiple meanings on many different levels that convey primordial metaphysical principles.

These timeless gems are difficult to express in English, because English is a language designed to facilitate commerce. I have included many Sanskrit words in my comments on the *Gita* because I feel that reading, learning, and studying these words can give you access to an entirely different way of thinking and to higher consciousness.

The Body is the Field



Krishna explains that the body (*sariram*) is the Field (*kshetra*). I have given the body my nickname of data-collecting vehicle, but this attempt on my part to update metaphysical terms to our technological times does not encompass many of the more subtle interactions that occur. However it is correct in the sense that *Prakriti's guna-maya* is preprogrammed at birth and tends to behave in an automatic repetition of patterns.

The body is the Field (*kshetra*) wherein the results of acts (*karma*) are sown, grown and harvested. The one who is conscious of this knowledge is called the 'Knower of the Field' (*kshetrajna*) because of the enlightened awareness of a distinction between the Field and the Self (*jivatma*) that dwells within the body. The Knower of the Field, the pure consciousness *Purusha*, is a witness (Gambhirananda).

Once the Self (*atman*) enters into a body and is therefore in a self-created state of limitation, it is described by the Sanskrit word *jivatma*. The unlimited form is termed *Paramatman*, meaning the Supreme Self (B.Marjanovic). Sanskrit has various wondrous words which not only describe the subtle states assumed by the Creator, but also states of consciousness for which there are no words in English. English is the product of the deification of commerce in the latter days of our current *Kali Yuga* - days where thieves are kings and people prefer false ideas (*Linga Purana*).

The Knower of the Field



In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna speaks as *Paramatman* because he is God fully Realized in man. He tells Arjuna that, as the Supreme Self, Krishna is the Knower of the Field (*kshetrajna*) in all the fields (XII.2). The God within Krishna is the same Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) that dwells within the Heart of all beings. This gives us insight into the vast limitless awareness and knowledge brought by enlightenment. Once you Become one with the All, you may acquire the *siddhic* powers which are so often held out rather like carrots in front of our donkey-like stubborn resistance to Remembering who we are.

The Creator enters all fields (body/*kshetra*) with a small portion of Its Self and assumes the temporal appearance of Separation for the adventure of a journey into multiplicity. In our deluded ‘time-cooked’ consciousness, we imagine we see ‘susie & billy’ in black, brown, yellow, red and white as people so different, unique, even peculiar, and perhaps incomprehensibly foreign.

Yet beneath the curtain of all appearances, all beings are the Supreme Self playing in Time and Space in a multitude of disguises. God, the Supreme Self, can be Realized by those who Know this Truth, who have Knowledge of the Field (*kshetra*) and the Knower of the Field (*kshetrajna*).

The Elements - Bhutas

Krishna tells Arjuna that through the ages, sages (*Rishis*) have sung (*gitam*) sacred hymns about the Field (*kshetra*) and its Knower (*kshetrajna*). Krishna will teach his friend exactly what the Field is and who the Knower is. The Field (*kshetra*) is made up of the five great (*maha*) elements (*bhutas*) and their correlates:

Ether - *Akasha*: the primordial element is sonorous (*shabda*) and corresponds to the sense hearing (*shrota*).

Air - *Vayu*: consists of transverse movement in which the *guna rajas* predominates and corresponds to the sense of touch (*vach*) and that which is tangible (*soarsha*).

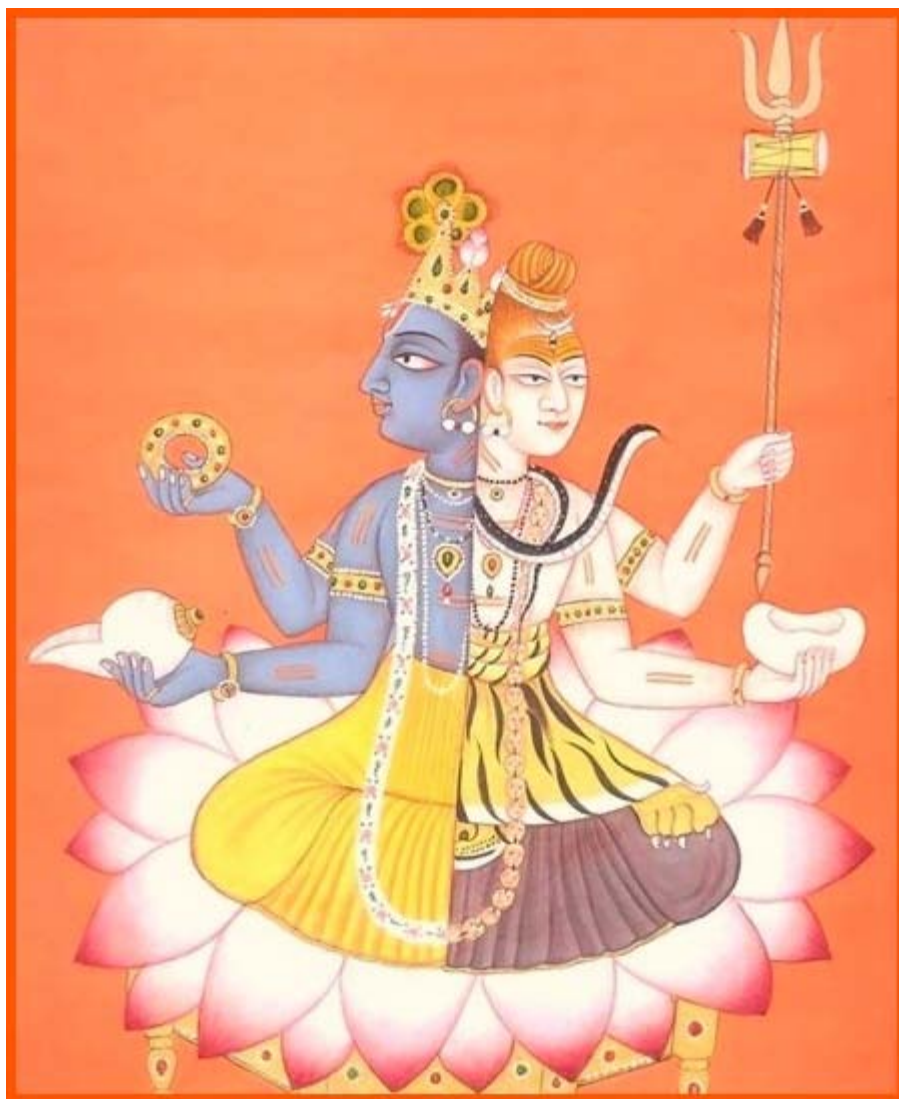
Fire - *Tejas*: that luminous ascending force in which the *guna sattva* predominates and corresponds to sight (*chahshus*) and that which is visible (*rupa* - form).

Water - *Ap*: The *guna tamas* predominates in this descending and compressive force which physically corresponds to gravity or weight and to taste (*rasana*), that which is *sapid*, meaning a strong and pleasant interesting taste (*rasa*).

Earth - *Prithivi*: corresponds to smell (*ghrana*) and the olfactory (*gandha*) and here *tamas* again predominates (Rene Guenon - *Studies in Hinduism*).

Rene Guenon is one of the most brilliant of all metaphysical writers. Guenon says that Sanskrit has no word that can be translated precisely as ‘matter’. The five Elements (*Bhutas*) represent ‘different vibratory modalities of matter’ (ibid.) which are perceptible to the five senses. Each one of the five senses is attuned to a specific range of frequencies in the spectrum of pulsating waveforms that have been projected out into the temporal illusory hologram as the appearance of matter.

Metaphysical Principles Personified



The *Bhutas* can be approached as metaphysical principles, as Newtonian or quantum physics, or they can be personified as deities and understood through the concept of an embodiment.

For example, *Vayu* as the Air become the Wind god who is the vital force that rules the breath (*prana*), and links heaven to earth. Breath brings form to life. Other personifications

of principles are the Creator deity as Brahma (*rajas*); the god that pervades, supports and sustains the universe as Vishnu (*sattva*); and the Destroyer as Shiva (*tamas*). The goddesses such as Lakshmi and Parvati (*Uma*) represent various aspects of the feminine principle as *Shakti*, *Maya*, and *Prakriti*.

The Supreme Self ‘reflects His own powers in His own psychic light and appears Himself as His reflections.’ Thus all appearances are consciousness in the form of the pulsating (*spanda*) emissions of the Absolute One. These appearances are perceived by the five senses of the ego-self as distinctly separate.

In reality all apparent pulsating vibratory waveforms are the ‘psychic luminosity of pure-consciousness and that is the basic form of the Absolute. Everything that ever appears, lies internally in the Absolute in the form of pure consciousness and the Absolute is thus compactly full of all phenomena ... the source of its infinite blissfulness’ (Paramarthasara.11).

Ahamkara

The five elements are brought into being by the principle of *Ahamkara*, which is the Will to emit the appearance of Separateness in the One and takes the form of the “I” or the ego-self (XIII.5 or 6). The *ahamkara* is the will in the form that says, ‘I shall become the many.’ This concept is a part of the teachings in *Samkhya*. The greatness of the *Bhagavad Gita* is Krishna's power to synthesize and sort through 1000s of years of ancient teachings with clarity and purpose.

महाभूतान्यहंकारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च .
इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः .. १३-५..

mahābhūtāny ahaṁkāro buddhir avyaktam eva ca
indriyāṇi daśaikam ca pañca cendriyagocarāḥ 13.6

This understanding which is in *Samkhya* is not accepted by all schools of thought. The more you study Hinduism in depth, you will realize that the processes of emitting the universe and their categorization into systems is bewildering in their diversity. However once again Krishna comes to our rescue and in the *Uddhava Gita (Bhagavata Purana)* Krishna tells us rather holographically that, ‘In any one part, the other parts are present.’

Each and every belief, doctrine, dogma, and understanding of IS-ness is the expression of the temporal identity-self that experienced it. It is a portion of the Totality. In our search for the return Home throughout time, we human beings have reflected IS-ness through the filtered lens of our own hearts and mind. These conflicting and clashing flavors of faith have emerged naturally over time within historical and cultural contexts. Every truth is truth --- and as such

a joy to the Creator.

'All such theories are mere suppositions & imaginary concepts of thinkers'

Abhinavagupta goes even further and states that, 'All such theories are mere suppositions and imaginary concepts of thinkers.' Why? Because – 'No diversity is the real truth.' It is useful to examine the systems as a sort of user's manual to facilitate our own being and give us an idea of the mechanics of creation. It is quite natural that once you begin to consider the nature of your relationship to the universe and the origin of both, you would want to systematize your findings to both share and clarify. Ever since we lost the memory of our absolute nature, we began this process.

In the Hindu tradition this was done through the enlightened inner revelations of great seers, the *Rishis* and others. *Samkhya* is one amazing repository of such thoughts and has influenced almost every philosophical and metaphysical system in India's great history. However, when you read these books you become aware that there are differences of opinion and arguments concerning the sequence and mechanics of the manifestation of the universe and *Prakriti's* relationship to Purusha. One venerable scholar even calls another a blockhead!

'No diversity is the real truth!'



While I was at first disturbed by these differences of opinion, I realized the truth from reading Abhinavagupta's *Paramarthasara*, a Sanskrit word which means the real truth: '... all such theories are merely dialectical speculations useful in discussions and debates. None

among such entities has a real existence, as all these are mere suppositions and imaginary concepts of thinkers' (*Paramarthasara*.27).

'In the same way that matters like piety and sin, heaven and hell, birth and death, pleasure and pain ... and so on, do never exist in reality, but appear in the Self on account of delusion caused by *Maya* (ibid.29).' The mechanics of apparent multiplicity can be described in many diverse ways depending on the consciousness of the experiencer.

Visualizing the Universe

Buddhi is another aspect of the Field. *Buddhi* is a Sanskrit word which is usually understood as intelligence, however Gambhirananda translates *buddhi* as visualizing and quotes the *Chandogya Upanishad*, VI.2.3:

'It (Being or Brahman as the Creator principle) thought: May I be many.'

Here the word for 'thought' (*aikshata*) literally means 'It saw' and thus implies that thought is the process of visualizing.

Abhinavagupta describes this power as: 'His will to create a particular phenomena presupposes its existence inside His awareness, because nothing particular could have otherwise become the object of His conation [the desire to perform an act; an endeavor], or creation. The phenomena appears initially in Him and that is due to His cognitive power. It shines clearly in Him as the object to be created ...

'A worldly creator also follows such process. He creates only that thing outwardly which is initially created by him in his own self. A painter creates initially a wonderful form in his own will and then he illuminates it thoroughly while forming a clear idea about it in his mind and afterwards he starts to paint it actually on a board. So does the Lord create the phenomena in His own subjective self before manifesting it outwardly and objectively' (*Paramarthasara*.45).

Prakriti as the Unmanifest - Avyaktam



The Unmanifest also makes up the Field. Here the Sanskrit word *avyaktam* is used to refer to *Prakriti* in her state ‘the undifferentiated primordial substance’ (R.Guenon). *Prakriti* is the substance, ‘the uncaused cause’ and pure potential for what will be manifested, set forth and displayed via *Maya*’s *gunas* and the five senses in the temporal illusory hologram.

Prakriti is the feminine principle who in the presence of the powers of pure consciousness, *Purusha* the masculine principle, works through *guna-maya* to project the world in her womb, the Matrix.

But which comes first - *Prakriti* or *Maya*? In the west *Maya* is often defined as ‘illusion’ but this does not express the power of *Maya* which is a creative force - *Shakti*. *Maya* is the power of *Shakti* to create as an artist creates. Rene Guenon suggests that *Maya* as *Shakti* is ‘Divine Activity’ (*Ichchha-Shakti*) and therefore is ‘situated at an incomparably higher level than *Prakriti*’ (*Studies in Hinduism*).

Abhinavagupta’s Kashmir Saivism breaks it down thus:

*The divine power of the Absolute - *Shakti* - is projecting itself externally and covering the Absolute with pure creation. Manifesting diversity within unity, it hides the basic absoluteness and the perfect unity of the Absolute God ...

*The sphere of *Maya* pushes into oblivion the natural purity and divine potency of the Absolute, covers it with five sheaths or limiting elements (*kancukas*) and presents the Absolute as a finite being called *Purusha* (pure consciousness).

*The sphere of *Prakriti* covers *Purusha* with all psychic elements, senses, organs, subtle objective elements (*tanmatras*), the three *gunas* (*rajas, sattva & tamas*) ... (Abhinavagupta's *Paramarthasara*.4)

The substantive cause of numerous universes floating in it like bubbles in an ocean

On the highest level there is no difference between *Prakriti* and *Purusha* - both are aspects of the One. *Prakriti* is the creation and aspect of the Supreme Being who 'desires to cover Himself in *Maya* to conceal His nature of absolute purity and divinity' (*ibid.*15).

The appearance of separation of *Prakriti's Maya* from the Absolute emerges from 'the divine power of the Lord, reflected by Him externally' (*ibid.*). *Prakriti's* creative power of *Maya* 'serves as the inanimate objective substance out of which all other insentient elements evolve. It is thus the substantive cause of numerous universes floating in it like bubbles in an ocean' (*ibid.*).

Continued in Part 2 ...

Man & His Becoming According to The Vedanta

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Studies in Hinduism

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Translated by Dr. B.N. Pandit

Munishiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1991, Delhi

Images courtesy of

www.vishvarupa.com/vishnu-vishnu.html

Kshetra, Death, Non-Attachment & Solitude



... for this flesh ye see

*Is Kshetra, is the field where Life disports;
And that which views and knows it is the Soul,
Kshetrajna. ...*

*The elements, the conscious life, the mind,
The unseen vital force, the nine strange gates*

*Of the body, and the five domains of sense;
Desire, dislike, pleasure and pain, and thought
Deep-woven, and persistency of being;
These all are wrought on Matter by the Soul!*

The Field is made up of the Five Elements (*bhutas*), the “I” consciousness as ego and will (*ahamkara*), the intelligence (*buddhi*) that visualizes the temporal illusory hologram, and the Unmanifest (*avyaktam*) aspect of *Prakriti* (Nature, the feminine Principle including the three *gunas*). The Field is the five senses (*indriyani*) as the eyes that see, the ears that hear, the nose that smells, the tongue that tastes, and the skin that feels touch. The Field is also the five motor organs - the voice, hands, feet, anus, and the generative organs.

Krishna gives Arjuna illustrations of the Field with its changes and modifications (XIII.5-6; Gambhirananda):

*Desire (*iccha* or *kama*) and its opposite repulsion or hatred (*dvesah*).

*Happiness (*sukham*) and its opposite pain and sorrow (*duhkham*).

*The body as the aggregate (*sanghatah*) of organs that are made up of the five elements (*bhutas*).

*Consciousness (*cetana*) which is sentient intelligence that produces knowledge.

*Courage (*dhrtih*) as the steadfast fortitude of hope that allows us to hold on to the vital energy (*prana* - the life breath).

This universe is the One veiled. Everything in our temporal illusory hologram is the Supreme Self who has taken on the aspect of limitation to play in Time and Space. The Creator covers Its Self in various layers, the sheaths (*kancukas*) that produce the Illusion of Separation and the Appearance of Multiplicity.

*... the non-dual Lord, who by the power of His Maya, covered Himself, like a spider,
with threads drawn from primal matter (pradhana) ...*

- Svetasvatara Upanishad VI.10

The sages absorbed in meditation through one-pointedness of mind, discovered the creative power belonging to the Lord Himself and hidden in Its own gunas.

- Svetasvatara Upanishad I.3

... Thou art great God in the highest position lying beyond the mysterious sphere of Maya. Thou art One and hast yet penetrated in multifarious ways into the Hearts of all beings having Thee as their abode.

- Paramarthasara.1

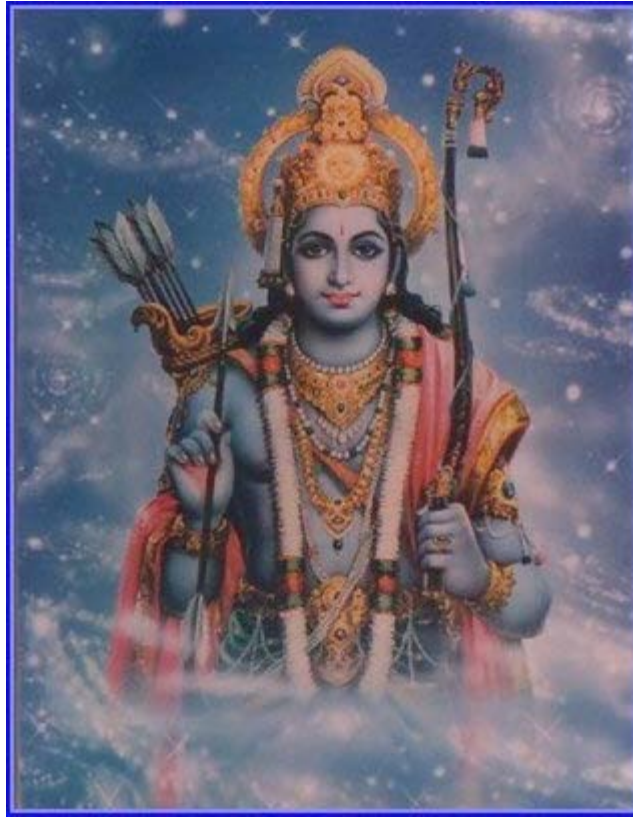
Krishna enumerates what is spoken of as Knowledge (*jnanam*). He tells Arjuna that whatever is contrary or opposite to this, is considered to be the absence of knowledge (*ajnanam*). These are the attributes that are indispensable for living in the Field in a state of harmony. These are the qualities generated by higher consciousness:

Humbleness, truthfulness, and harmlessness,

Patience and honour, reverence for the wise.

Purity, constancy, control of self ...

- Ganguli



The ones who live in the understanding of Wisdom Knowledge never forget the temporal nature of birth (*janma*) and death (XIII.8). In the west we deny the intrusion of old age that inevitably brings sickness and death to all without exception. We cling to our fantasies of immortality with an endless stream of products which promise to keep us young, with face creams and plastic surgery, and costly medical practices that often only prolong suffering.

We fear death. Our lives are spent in consumption, chasing the dreams of the young - dreams that always elude us. We are not taught to seek wisdom; we don't understand death, and we fear what we don't understand.

The wise, however, are ever mindful of the wheels within wheels that turn ineluctably. Old age comes to us all and brings the loss of physical strength, beauty, memory and intelligence. The vigilant awareness of the temporal nature of existence in the Field reminds us to remain unattached to what can never be permanent.

Contempt of sense-delights, self-sacrifice,

Perception of the certitude of ill

In birth, death, age, disease, suffering, and sin ...

- Ganguli

The Honey Pit



There is a wonderful story in the Mahabharata that I call ‘Hanging on Life’s Illusions’ which describes the transient, fragile and perilous nature of life. Only a culture steeped in primordial traditions could produce a story like this one!

In my words based on Ganguli’s translation, Book 11. Section 5:

There once was a man, a *brahmana* priest, who wandered the wilderness and found himself in a remote deep forest teeming with beasts of prey, lions and elephants all roaring such sounds as would frighten Death (*Yama*) itself! The man was terrified, his hair stood on end; his heart beating fast, he ran ‘hither and thither’ trying to escape.

But the forest was a trap surrounded with a net and many five-headed snakes that reached to the heavens. Running in fear, the man fell into a pit and became entangled in ‘clusters of creepers that were interwoven’ so that he hung upside down by his feet. From his hanging plight, he saw a large mighty snake in the pit. Close by the monster snake was a gigantic dark elephant with six faces and twelve feet.

Near the mouth of the pit were many ‘bees of frightful forms’ swarming in large numbers, who desired to drink honey collected in combs. But this honey could only attract children. The honey fell in many jets below and the man who was hanging by his feet in the pit began to drink from the jets of honey. He drank and drank more - but his thirst was never quenched and he always desired more.

‘Even then he did not become indifferent to life. Even there, the man continued to hope for existence. ... In that plight he continued to dwell, deprived of his senses, in that wilderness, never losing at any time the hope of prolonging his life.’

The Mahabharata tells us that if we understand this story properly, it will lead to our release. The wilderness is this world and the forest is the limited sphere of our own life. The beasts are all those forces which threaten our existence. The huge snake at the bottom of the pit is Time, which destroys all embodied creatures.

The creepers represent our desire to hold onto life and the bees are our endless desires. 'The jets of dropping honey are the pleasures derived from the gratification of our desires and to which men are seen to be strongly addicted. The wise know life's course to be even such. Through that knowledge they succeed in tearing off its bonds.'

Let go!

Non-attachment (*asaktis*) occurs as we cultivate in the mind a sense of indifference and dispassion to the objects of the senses (*indriyarthesu*). This non-attachment takes the form of an evenness, an equanimity of the mind. The consciousness of non-attachment also applies to your loved ones, to family, even your spouse and children.

Detachment, lightly holding unto home,

Children, and wife, and all that bindeth men ...

- Ganguli

I don't think that non-attachment to the ones we love means being cold to them. As Ganguli says, 'lightly holding'. This non-attachment is the constant awareness that all things come and go in life. The reality is that there is nothing we can hold on to forever - except the God within us that we are. Everything and everyone else is in motion, either moving toward us or away. We accept and enjoy what comes to us, and we let go when that time passes.

Rama's attachment to Sita



In the *Mahabharata* the story of Rama and Sita is told to Yudhishtira, Draupadi and the Pandu family who have been exiled to the forest. Rama also suffered such an exile. His wife Sita is kidnapped by the terrible demon Ravana, the king of the Rakshasas; and her husband Rama is beside himself with grief, lamenting profusely. Rama's brother says to him: 'this state of your mind is as unworthy of you, as diseases...' These words make Rama 'recover his natural calmness' and he becomes once again 'mindful of his business' (M.N.Dutt; *Vana Parva*, Ch 280.4-7).

Rama is reminded that power is lost in attachment. Rama's consciousness of grief and lament will not give him the self-contained focus required to rescue Sita from the demonic. This story can be seen as a parable: The demonic has taken over the small self - Sita is the self lost in Prakriti's *Maya*, and must be redeemed by the one-pointed effort of the Soul - Rama as Purusha.

In the Age of Wisdom, we live alone ...

In their descriptions of the Golden Era, the *Satya* or *Krita Yuga*, the Sanskrit *Puranas* say that we live alone. Surely if we know that we are One with our Source we would need no other to fulfill us. Our contentment would come from within. We might interact with other beings and enjoy these experiences, but we do not need them. The emptiness that generates need emerges only in the frequencies of the Illusion of Separation that occur in the *Treta*, *Dvapara*, and *Kali Yugas*.

They are mostly isolated ... - Linga Purana Ch.39

14. In the Satya (Krita) Yuga, the subjects are born as twins; their avocation abounds in taste (rasa) and happiness.

15. They are always satisfied. They enjoy all pleasures and bliss. There is no inferiority or superiority among them; there are no special characteristics among subjects; they are all auspicious.

16. Longevity, happiness, and [facial] features among the people in the Satya (Krita) Yuga are the same for all; they have no special liking; they have no pairs-of-opposites (Dvandvas, ie. pleasure-pain, etc.), no hatred, no fatigue.

17-19. Those who have no abodes live on mountains and in the oceans. Even then they are devoid of misery. They have mostly sattva gunas and are mostly isolated. They move about without specific desires; they are perpetually delighted in their minds. They refrain from virtuous and sinful activities.

The necessity of solitude ...

In our current *Kali Yuga*, those who seek Wisdom (*jnana*) and Liberation (*moksha*) from the endless rounds of birth and death understand the need for solitude. To gain access to the Real, we need to begin to hold our consciousness away from the ebb and flow of the collective.

We are living in an ocean of frequencies which affect and modify our behavior. These frequencies are born in the thoughts of others and wash over us like waves on the sea. They are emitted from friends and family, from television and radio, and even from passing strangers in the street. We need solitude (XIII.10 or 11).

Loving all solitudes, and shunning noise

Of foolish crowds; endeavours resolute

To reach perception of the Utmost Soul,

And grace to understand what gain it were

So to attain, - this is true Wisdom, Prince!

And what is otherwise is ignorance!

- Ganguli

In his commentary Abhinavagupta says that the realization that ‘there is nothing beyond’ the Supreme One, leads the *yogin* to ‘develop unwavering devotion to God’ (B.Marjanovic). Knowing God to be All, you begin to want only God. The company of those who are devoted to their own egos no longer interests you. You recognize the *gunas* at work in the small identity ego-self.

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी .
विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि .. १३- ११..

mayi cānanyayogena bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī
viviktadeśasevitvam aratir janasaṃsadi 13.11



Craving the solitude that permits you to listen to the God-within, you naturally seek out secluded places (*vivikta-desa*). Once you have tasted the Nectar (*amrita*) of God's Love, nothing else will do. Nothing is sweeter.

You will want nothing more than to abide in your devotion (*bhaktis*) to the one within. The Wisdom Knowledge (*jnana*), the Knowledge of the Supreme Self (*adhyatma-jnana*) will hold you steadfast in your effort because you understand the true goal (*artha*) of all Life (XIII.11). Whatever is contrary (*anyathe*) to this goal is ignorance (*ajnanam*).

Svetasvatara Upanishad Vol. Two
The Upanishads, A New Translation
Translated by Swami Nikhilananda, 1952
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Essence of the Exact Reality or Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta

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The Linga Purana - Part I

Translated by a Board of Scholars, 1973

Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1990, Delhi

Images courtesy of

www.vishvarupa.com/vishnu-rama.html

Brahman the Immensity

*Now will I speak of knowledge best to know -
That Truth which giveth man Amrit to drink,
The Truth of HIM, the Para-Brahman, the All,
The Uncreated; not Asat, nor Sat,
Not Form, nor the Unformed; yet both, and more; -
- Ganguli*



Krishna now teaches his friend Arjuna the Knowledge concerning *Brahman* (XIII.12). Be aware that the Sanskrit word *Brahman* is a metaphysical principle and not the personal Brahma, the deity. *Brahman* is the highest, the supreme (*param*) which has no beginning (*anadimat*). *Brahman* is neither that which exists (*sat*) nor that which does not exist (*asat*).

These seemingly contradictory statements are meant to lead our ordinary mind into a consciousness that is beyond duality. It is useful to meditate on such verses and leave all polarities behind. There is only the One. The polarities, dualities are the temporal illusory hologram and the Field. To transcend the sheaths (*kancukas*) that hold us bound to *Maya's* creative play, we must learn to see through the layers of her webs. Contemplating the immeasurable immensity of *Brahman* opens us up to those frequencies for which there are no words.

Brahman is unreachable with the mind and cannot be known by words (*Taittiriya Upanishad* II.iv.1). Lao Tzu said something similar with ‘existence is beyond the power of words to define.’ There comes a time in your meditation when all words will fail.

Words are the attempt to bring what has been experienced by those who ‘See’ into comprehensible form. Nothing is accepted as Truth that has not been experienced in the deepest levels of higher consciousness in meditation.

All accepted systems of metaphysical knowledge in Hinduism must be rooted in and relate to the four Vedas. The Vedas are *shruti*, meaning revealed scripture that has been inspired by inner experience and heard directly. The Vedas were heard by the *Rishis* (Seers) or holy sages as sacred eternal sounds.

The *Mahabharata* is considered to be the Fifth Veda and therefore the *Bhagavad Gita* is *shruti*. The Upanishads, the Brahmanas, and the Sutras of the six great philosophical schools of India are usually considered to be *shruti* (Judith M.Tyberg).

The M.Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary defines *Brahman* as literally growth, expansion, evolution, and development. *Brahman* is the Immensity, the seed and source of ‘the possibility of existence resulting from the union of opposites’ (A.Danielou). Thus *Brahman* is without qualities (*nirguna*) until it expands through the creative power of *Maya* to become that which has qualities (*saguna brahman*).

Brahman as Prakriti



The ancient system *Samkhya* equates the term *Brahman* with *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* is also considered to be the Unmanifest until the power (*Shakti*) of *Maya* causes her three qualities (the *gunas*) to become unbalanced and produce the temporal illusory hologram.

Both *Brahman* and *Prakriti* are the ‘source of the manifest world’ and both are the uncaused cause, beginningless, eternal, without parts ...’ (K.A. Jacobsen). However *Brahman* is said to be an immutable ultimate principle, while *Prakriti* is a mutable ultimate principle.

That immortal Brahman alone is before, that Brahman is behind, that Brahman is to the right and left. Brahman alone pervades everything above and below; this universe is that supreme Brahman alone.

- *Mundaka Upanishad II.ii.11*

Vyasa was both poet and seer, well versed in the sacred texts. Poetry can succeed where other means fail. Here Ganguli’s translation conveys the feeling and sense of Vyasa’s genius. This ‘stuff’ that is the unmanifest immensity is ubiquitous.

Whose hands are everywhere, and everywhere

Planted His feet, and everywhere His eyes

Beholding, and His ears in every place

Hearing, and all His faces everywhere

Enlightening and encompassing His worlds.

- Ganguli XIII.13

What I know from my own experience is that there is a vibrating pulsating golden light that lies just beneath the appearances of all forms - call it *Brahman*, *Prakriti*, *Spanda* or whatever. It is there.

Hiranyagarbha - The Golden-Embryo

The deity Brahma is said to have been born from the Golden-Embryo or Egg named *Hiranyagarbha*. This Egg formed out of the seed in the waters of the 'causal' ocean. *Hiranyagarbha* is the 'principle of all vibration or movement' and 'expresses itself in the form of a vibrating energy - *spanda-shakti-rupa* (A.Danielou).

Spanda

The Sanskrit word *spanda* is often used in Kashmir Saivism and is defined as 'the spiritual throbbing of consciousness. Such a vibratory activity of consciousness which brings about the manifestation of its extroversion and introversion. That divine active nature of God which manifests externally His divine nature and results in the show of His five divine activities' (Abhinavagupta's *Paramarthasara*).

As the principle of all vibration (*spanda*), the Golden-Embryo 'divides itself into the causal mass of potentialities (the causal waters - *rayi*) and the breath-of-life (*prana*) pictured as the wind that creates the waves in the causal ocean from which all forms develop' (A.Danielou).

Brahman is that omniscient, omnipotent cause from which proceed the origin, sustenance, and dissolution of this world.

- Brahma-Sutras I.1.2

The resting-place of heaven, earth, etc. is Brahman on account of the word Self ...

designating this resting-place.

- Brahma-Sutras I.3.1

The luminous Brahmin dwells in the cave of the heart and is known to move there. It is the great support of all; for in It is centered everything that moves, breathes, and blinks. O disciples, know that to be your Self --- that which is both gross and subtle, which is adorable, supreme, and beyond the understanding of all creatures.

- Mundaka Upanishad II.ii.1

That which is radiant, subtler than the subtle, That by which all the worlds and their inhabitants are supported --- That, verily, is the indestructible Brahman; That is prana (life-breath), speech (vac), and the mind; That is the True and That is the Immortal.

- ibid.II.ii.2

*Glorified in the senses He hath given,
Yet beyond sense He is; sustaining all,
Yet dwells He unattached: of forms and modes
Master, yet neither form nor mode hath He;*

- Ganguli

Brahman is 'glorified in the sense He hath given' - means that the principle which is the Source of existence shines through the organs of the five senses (sarvendriya) that respond to the ever-fluctuating gunas (rajas, sattva, & tamas). 'Yet beyond sense He is' - while Brahman supports the gunas and their senses, It is free of all these attributes both in the operations and their effects. Brahman as Purusha, the Knower of the Field, enjoys the products of the gunas and yet remains untouched by them (XIII.14).



*He is within all beings - and without -
Motionless, yet still moving; not discerned
For subtlety of instant presence; close
To all, to each; yet measurelessly far!*

- Ganguli

Brahman is 'within all beings - and without' states that It is both outside (*bahir*) and inside (*antah*) all creatures (*bhutanam*). 'Motionless, yet moving' *Brahman* is both the unmoving inanimate (*acaram*) and the moving animate (*caram*). *Brahman* is the subtle (*suksmatvat*) and therefore remains incomprehensible (*avijneyam*). *Brahman* is far away and yet near (XIII.15), depending on the state of your consciousness.

It [Brahman] is farther away than the far off, and It is near at hand in the body. Among insentient beings It is perceived as seated in this very body, in the cavity of the heart.

Brahman is undivided (*avibhaktam*) as the Oneness and yet takes on the appearance of being divided (*vibhaktam*) in all beings (*bhutesu*). *Brahman* is that which supports all beings (*bhuta-bhartr*), absorbs them (*grasisnu* - devours) at the time of the Dissolution, and creates them again (*prabhavisnu*) at the time of the origination of the worlds (XIII.16). Thus we see that the metaphysical principle *Brahman* pervades the three principles: creation personified as the god Brahma, the principle that supports and sustains as Vishnu, and destruction as Shiva.

Not manifold, and yet subsisting still

In all which lives; for ever to be known

As the Sustainer, yet, at the End of Times,

He maketh all to end - and re-creates.

The Light of Lights He is, in the heart of the Dark

Shining eternally.

- Ganguli

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते .

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् .. १३- १८

p.p3

jyotiṣām api taj jyotis tamasah param ucyate

jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ jñānagamyam hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam 13.18



Brahma is the Light of all lights (*jyotis*) and is said to be beyond any darkness (*tamasah*). This Light is the light of the Sun, the light of consciousness in Knowledge, the light that is external, and the non-reflected light within (XIII.17 or 18). Knowledge of Brahman is the goal of Knowledge (*jnana-gamyam*). It is seated in the Hearts of all - *hrdi sarvasya vishthitam*.

Wisdom He is

And Wisdom's way, and Guide of all the wise,

Planted in every heart.

- Ganguli

This immeasurable immensity *Brahman*, that is both far and near, and remains undivided while appearing to be divided, that which permeates all of creation, is to be found in our very own Heart (*hrdi*). We only need to Know this Truth and to listen to that which dwells within us all.

No diversity is the real truth ...

Do not be concerned or confused by these various terms - *Brahman, Paramatman, Prakriti, Purusha*, etc. There is only the One. These sacred Sanskrit words were created over the

centuries to describe the various aspects of the One in all Its states of the unmanifest and the manifest. There are endless arguments among the ‘schoolmen’ as to the precise meaning of the terms. Study them, meditate on them, and use them to guide you into your own understanding.

Remember what Abhinavagupta says - ‘... all such theories are merely dialectical speculations useful in discussions and debates. None among such entities has a real existence, as all these are mere suppositions and imaginary concepts of thinkers’ (*Paramarthasara*.27). Why? Because – ‘No diversity is the real truth’ (*ibid*.29).

In his commentary on the *Gita*, Abhinavagupta points out that Krishna is here teaching ‘non-difference among all types of knowledge expressed in different philosophical systems’ (B.Marjanovic). The Knowledge of the One beyond the power of all words to define, raises our consciousness so that we may attain that state of similitude (*sadharmya*) with the God within us all (XIII.18).

The Language of the Gods

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Purusha is Consciousness & Samkhya's Potter's Wheel

Know that Nature [Prakriti] and the Spirit [Purusha]

Both have no beginning!

- Ganguli XIII.19



Krishna now teaches Arjuna how *Purusha* and *Prakriti* serve to cause the world. *Purusha* is often translated into English as Spirit, however both Rene Guenon and Abhinavagupta agree that *Purusha* is Consciousness. Certainly *Purusha* should never be confused with any western concept of spirits as the waveform after-effects of the dead.

The Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) through the power (*Shakti*) of Its *Maya* creates the appearance of Separation. These apparent distinctions are the multitude of Beings, the *Atman*. *Atman* is the true Self or the Soul.

Atman (or *Atma*) is the 'Living Soul' that dwells in the Heart. Once in a body, *Atman* is defined as *Purusha*. *Purusha* is the eternal present because in the Light (*jyotis*) of Knowledge, 'all things are in perfect simultaneity' (Rene Guenon). Time does not exist outside the temporal illusory hologram and the *Atman* is beyond Time.

Now is described Atman, whose nature is incomprehensible to the ordinary understanding. It is the unchanging Consciousness present in man, and the Witness...

...the Purusha, who remains awake [conscious] while the sense-organs [of the gunas] are asleep [unconscious], shaping one lovely form after another, that indeed is the Pure, that is Brahman, and that alone is called the Immortal. All worlds are contained in Him, and none can pass beyond.

In spite of the multiplicity of bodies, Atman is one and non-dual.

- *ibid.II.ii.9*

Purusha enters into an apparent ‘correlation’ with *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* is Nature and the abode of the three *gunas* (*rajas*, *sattva* & *tamas*). This is a polarity universe, thus *Purusha* is the male active principle and *Prakriti* is the female passive principle. Together they produce all that is manifested, but remain the Unmanifest.

Purusha is the Witness. *Prakriti* produces effects for his enjoyment. *Purusha* is ‘solitary, neutral, a spectator, and non-agent’ (*Samkhya Karika*). *Purusha* is solitary because even though as consciousness he is the Witness to the effects produced by *Prakriti* and her three *gunas*, *Purusha* remains pure and untouched.

The three *gunas* are born of *Prakriti*. It is their imbalance that causes the wheels-within-wheels to turn and produce the hologram. After a cyclical Dissolution of the world the *gunas* return to and remain in a state of perfect balance until next time of Creation. *Purusha* abides in *Prakriti* (*prakritisthas*) as Witness to the effects of her *gunas* (BhG.XIII.21).

Purusha’s Confusion

Here Samkhya becomes very subtle and perhaps a bit weirdly mysterious. For it seems that the Creator allows Its Self as *Purusha* to become somewhat confused for a time. Even though *Purusha* as Witness remains untouched by the gyrations and effects of *Prakriti’s gunas*, *Purusha* temporarily mistakes these ‘transformations’ as his own (B.Marjanovic).

Purusha wrongly assumes that he is the ‘agent’ of *Prakriti’s* manifestations. The *Samkhya Karika* states that it is his proximity with *Prakriti* that causes this false impression. In the process of his enjoyment of the world, *Purusha* begins to consider the polarities of pleasure-and-pain (*sukha-duhkha*), etc. as his own. This confusion, caused by attachment, eventually makes *Purusha* realize that he has become bound in the webs of *Maya* that are produced by *Prakriti’s gunas*.

Pain is the wake-up alarm

The Creator understood that there must be some fail-safe that would allow all Its Selves to find eventual release from the temporal illusory hologram. Surely God would never trap Its Self in any limited form for all eternity. When pleasure turns to pain, the alarm goes off. Hopefully the mind starts to activate the intellect (*buddhi*) which can discriminate between what is Real and the unreal.

Therefore after experiencing pain, *Purusha* realizes that he has become attached (*guna-sangas*) to those polarities which are the cause of the endless cycles of birth and death in both good and evil wombs (*sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*).

Like this ...

The Creator desires (*kama*) to play in this polarity universe for the purpose of enjoyment (*bhoga*). The One creates the Appearance of Separation as the *Atman*, the multitude of Souls. The *Atman* enters into human bodies and becomes *Purusha*, which is Consciousness. There *Purusha* ‘correlates’ with the Unmanifest principle *Prakriti*, which is not conscious but has the female power (*Shakti*) to produce and manifest this polarity universe through the three *gunas*.

The proximity - a sort of illusory union - of *Purusha* to *Prakriti* causes *Purusha* to forget his real state, which in reality is not capable of being affected by *Prakriti*’s changes; and he begins to mistake these effects, pleasure-and-pain (*sukha-duhkha*), as his own.

I cannot help but observe somewhat wryly how this seems to play out in our mundane everyday human interactions. If you will forgive my less than pristinely metaphysical observations, what male does not become confused by those female energies which often arouse his passions to such an extent that he forgets himself, at least for a time.

Of course we must remember that we all contain *Purusha* the male principle and *Prakriti* the female within us. One thing we all know for certain is that the Creator does have an enormous cosmic sense of humor!

Release from birth and death ...

Whoso thus knows himself, and knows his soul

PURUSHA, working through the qualities

With Nature's modes, the light hath come for him!

Whatever flesh he bears, never again

Shall he take on its load.

- Ganguli



Krishna tells Arjuna that the one who Knows from direct experience (*vetti*) this temporal and actually nonexistent 'correlation' between *Purusha* the real Self as *Atman* and the unreal *Prakriti* who produces the illusory, is not born again! Knowledge of the Real brings release from endless transmigration (XIII.23).

Samkhya Karika & Discriminative Wisdom

The *Samkhya Karika* of Isvara Krsna has a charming anthropomorphic portrayal of this liberating realization. The illusion of pain is experienced by *Purusha* until the intellect (*buddhi*) is brought into being as Discriminative Wisdom. This occurs as a result of *Prakriti* producing her effects via the three *gunas*.

Purusha is the Witness and experiencer. *Prakriti* works through the three *gunas* and the five senses to produce what *Purusha* experiences. *Purusha* would not develop this Discriminative Wisdom without *Prakriti* providing the experiences of pleasure (*sukha*) and pain (*duhkha*), etc.

Purusha becomes indifferent ...

The game is over once *Purusha* realizes the mechanics of their ‘correlation’ through his newly acquired Discriminative Wisdom. He recognizes that she is distinct from him. He comes to know her. The text says literally that she is ‘seen’ by him (*maya drsta*) and therefore he becomes indifferent (*iti upeksha-kah*).

The one (Purusha) thinks: ‘she has been seen by me’ and therefore loses all interest; the other (Prakriti) thinks ‘I have been seen’ and ceases to act further. Therefore, even if there is still connection there is no motive for further evolution.

- *Samkhya Karika, Verse 66*



The writer of the *Samkhya Karika* compares *Prakriti* to a maiden who is modest in the sense of being extremely delicate with an acute sensitivity and ‘who cannot bear exposure to the prying glance of a stranger ... Having been seen [recognized] once by the *Purusha* through discrimination, will in no case expose herself again.’

My opinion is that nothing is more modest than the Prakriti: Knowing that ‘I have been seen,’ she no more comes within the sight of Purusha.

- *Samkhya Karika, Verse 61*

While this comparison obviously is taken from another time when women of noble descent were not permitted to be seen by strangers or even the sun, the meaning is conveyed that for *Prakriti* the performance is over and she will not continue her dance. The *gunas* will cease their allure and stop the show.

Destroyed like a burnt up seed ...

We are told that perfect Knowledge is attained by this ‘recognition’ and afterwards *Purusha* ‘continues to live for a while invested with the body, just like a potter’s wheel continuing to revolve, even when the potter ceases in his efforts at revolving the wheel due to the momentum of the past impulse’ (*Samkhya Karika 67*).

The attainment of ‘direct knowledge’ causes the ‘entire stock of subliminal impressions of deeds,’ which are the fuel of repeated births, to get ‘destroyed like a burnt up seed, and no more produces any fruit in the form of experiences of rebirth, life, etc.’

‘... is not born again’

Verse 23 in the thirteenth Book of the *Bhagavad Gita* allows us to examine how the translations vary. Diverging interpretations are in my view - based in the belief systems of the translator and Verse 23 (or 24) is particularly informative in this regard.

(Book XIII begins with Arjuna asking a question, therefore some translations count this question as a verse while others do not which accounts for the discrepancy in enumeration.)

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह .
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते .. १३- २४..

ya evaṃ vetti puruṣaṃ prakṛtiṃ ca guṇaiḥ saha
sarvathā vartamānopi na sa bhūyobhijāyate 13.24

sarvatha vartamano 'pi

sarvatha - in any manner whatsoever; however, in whatever way
vartamano - he continues to live; existing, moving, living
'pi (api) - even if, even, also

na sa bhuyo 'bhijayate

na - not
sa (sah) - he
sa (saha) - together
bhuyo (bhuyah) - again
'bhijayate (abhijayate) - he is born (therefore na abhijayate - he is not born)

Here are seven translations of Verse 23 which begins with the idea that the one who has experiential Knowledge of *Purusha* and *Prakriti* ...

M.N. Dutt: ... in whatever state he may be, he is never born again.

Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta (B.Marjanovic): ... whatever his present condition might be, such a person is not reborn again.

Swami Nikhilananda/Vedanta: (He) ... is not born again, howsoever he may comport himself.

Ganguli: Whatever flesh he bears, never again Shall he take on its load.

Gambhirananda/Advaita: (He) ... is not born again even if he continues to live in any manner whatsoever.

Winthrop Sargeant: In whatever stage of transmigration he may exist, Is not born again.

J.A.B. van Buitenen: (He) ... is not born again, in whatever way he now exists.

You can see for yourself how one might draw various conclusions from the subtle distinctions made in these seven. I would choose to interpret Verse 23 to mean that any of us can attain liberation regardless of the status given to us at birth, or what we might have done during our lives. Krishna says that even the worst criminal can be liberated by his boat of Knowledge (BhG.IV.36).

It does not matter if we are rich or poor, thieves or philanthropists, old or young, male or female, high born or low, healthy or crippled. All that matters is that we have the experiential understanding of the Knowledge of *Purusha* and *Prakriti*. When this teaching is Known and we come to recognize *Prakriti*'s *gunas* operating through the senses on their objects, we Know that we are not the Doer.

We are *Purusha* as Consciousness - pure Soul, *Atman*, pieces of the Absolute, the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) - dwelling in the body which has been the creation and playing ground, the Field of *Prakriti*. We realize that we have intentionally veiled our true Self to enjoy being lost in the performance of *guna-maya* for perhaps eons.

Samkhya's Potter's Wheel

Samkhya's idea that the body continues 'even after the attainment of the Knowledge of Truth on account of previous impulses' is intriguing. The comparison is made to the potter's wheel which continues 'to rotate for a while even though the potter has ceased from action, owing to the momentum of past impulses of the action' (*Samkhya Karika* 67).

The *Samkhya* Aphorisms of the great Sage Kapila offer us insight into liberation, which

is called *apavarga* in *Samkhya*. Kapila states that the Soul's (*Purusha* as Consciousness) aim in life is to cut short the relation between Nature (*Prakriti*) and the Soul (*Kapila's Aphorisms*, Book VI.70). According to Kapila, the 'Body's existence is dependent on Soul' (ibid.VI.64).

The body is the Field in which the insentient *Prakriti* manifests. The one who through Discriminative Wisdom recognizes her operations - which occur via the three *gunas* - ceases to be affected and therefore attached to their effects. *Prakriti's* effects may continue on their own momentum, like the potter's wheel; but they will no longer bind the Soul in the temporal illusory hologram because they have been 'seen' as distinct from *Purusha*.

Purusha is Not the 'Doer'

The Soul as Consciousness realizes that it never was affected by *Prakriti's* endless machinations, those effects she so gracefully produces so the Soul may experience the worlds and attain Discriminative Wisdom.

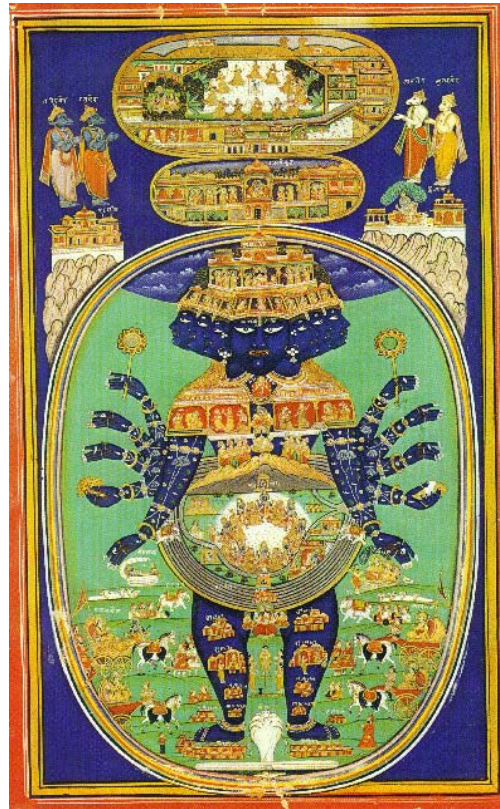
The 'emancipated has understood that he never was really otherwise' (ibid.IV.43). *Purusha* is pure, untouched by it all! We come to recognize the habitual patterns produced by the *gunas*. We know when another performance is beginning, for these shows have been running for us in repetition for lifetime after lifetime, in *yuga* after *yuga*, and *manvantara* after *manvantara*.

Neo in the Matrix

We discern an old and familiar desire, but we are no longer under the power of its compulsion. We know where it leads, all pleasure eventually leads to pain - *sukha-duhkha*. As Trinity, the lovely girl in the first Matrix film, said to Neo - "Because you have been down there Neo, you know that road, you know exactly where it ends. And I know that's not where you want to be."

Once the Wisdom of Discrimination has been attained, there is 'no reason why the emancipated should be subject to Nature's invasion' - even though it will continue to invade others (ibid.VI.44).

Like the momentum of the potter's wheel which continues after the potter has 'ceased from action,' we go on living and observing the *gunas* with that consciousness of Non-attachment that Krishna teaches, until the momentum has run its course.



Each one of us is uniquely different owing to thousands of lives and experiences in a myriad of forms with all their possibilities due to the endless fractal-like variations produced by the imbalances of *Prakriti*'s three *gunas*. How could the Immeasurable Immensity be otherwise?

What we do once we have Become liberated (*jivan mukti*) through our own experiential Knowledge is up to us. We may choose to work for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*), as Krishna urges Arjuna to do. Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair states that the *Samkhya* of Vyasa's Krishna is not the same as Kapila's *Samkhya*. Our Indian scholar says that the world is 'the design of a conscious intentionality' and therefore '*Purusha* is not aloof from *Prakriti*' (*The Mahabharata, A Literary Study*).

For Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair enlightenment comes with the responsibility to work for the well-being of the world and the become the instruments of this Divine Intentionality.

In the *Mahabharata* before the war takes place, Krishna offers to go to the enemy and try to make a peaceful alliance. He tells Yudhishtira, Arjuna, and the others that 'human affairs are accomplished both by divine providence and by exertion on the part of man' (M.N.Dutt; *Udyoga Parva*, Ch.79.5).

This 'exertion' on your part might take many forms. We are all aware of the multitude of monumental problems in the world today - our toxic environment, political corruption, religious fanaticism, poverty and overpopulation being just a few.

The Razor's Edge

I believe that the God-within will direct you on your Path after enlightenment. But be aware that this is still the Kali Yuga and the Sage Kapila warns that it is possible to fall. Think of walking on the Razor's Edge and apply your hard earned Discernment and Discrimination in each moment and at every crossroad. Stay immersed in the Heart even when you are confronting the demonic.

Some of you may choose to teach others, or write to share the Knowledge in a way that reflects your own experiences. Some may remain in solitude until the wheel loses all its momentum and at long last stops turning. Even in silence the presence of the enlightened ones will have been felt around the planet to balance the frequencies of this Kali Yuga.

Whatever you choose to do will be done in complete humility based in the Knowledge that God is All - Vasudeva sarvam iti. Whatever you do will be done with no attachment to the results, for you are not the Doer!

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Crossing Over Delusion & Beyond Death



Whoso thus knows himself, and knows his soul

PURUSHA, working through the qualities

With Nature's modes, the light hath come for him!

Whatever flesh he bears, never again

Shall he take on its load.

- Ganguli XIII.23

The one who has experiential Knowledge of *Purusha* and *Prakriti* is not born again (XIII.23). Now Krishna tells Arjuna how this Knowledge that liberates (*moksha*) from endless transmigration is attained.

Some few there be

By meditation find the Soul in Self

Self-schooled;

- Ibid.XIII.24

There are those who see and Realize (*pasyanti*) the Self (*atman*) by perfecting their inner consciousness through meditation (*dhyanena*). These ‘few’ are said to be the best of yogis, for they are directed through the inner grace of their own Self and by their own adamant efforts to Realize the Self within (XIII.24). This statement infers that the God-with can be Known by all, regardless of their background and faith.

...and some by long philosophy

And holy life reach thither; some by works:

- Ibid.

Even though Realization of the Self by the Self in meditation is considered to be the best, liberation (*moksha*) is also possible via other paths. The way that studies and disciplines the mind in *Samkhya* is open to those who are so inclined. Immersing your consciousness in the recognition of *Prakriti*'s *guna-maya* and her relationship to the untouched *Purusha* will enlighten through the discernment of the Real from the unreal.

The ‘works’ of Karma Yoga will also lead to liberation when all acts are performed in total dedication to the God-within and in absolute non-attachment to their results (XIII.24).



*Even though
Some, never so attaining, hear of light
From other lips, and seize, and cleave to it
Worshipping; yea! and those - to teaching true -
Overpass Death!
- Ibid.XIII.25*

Krishna understands that there are many in whom a spontaneous inner Realization in meditation will not readily occur, and yet there are true hearted ones who sincerely desire enlightenment and freedom from the endless rounds of birth and death.

These who are pure in their intent and who want Knowledge, not for personal power and ego, but for the purpose of returning Home, therefore listen to others who Know (XIII.25). Honoring (*upasate*) what they hear, they become devoted to these teachings (*shruti-parayanah*); and holding them as the highest goal, they too will cross beyond (*ati-taranti*) death (*mrtyum*).

Samsara

In his commentary Abhinavagupta says that they will ‘cross the ocean of *samsara*’ (B.Marjanovic). *Samsara* is the Wheel of Transmigration, those wheels-within-wheels that perpetually propel us all through the Cycles of Time. The etymology of the word *Samsara* is ‘to flow together’ (J.Tyberg) and *Samsara* is thus often perceived as an ocean.

Wherever, Indian Prince!

Life is - of moving things, or things unmoved,

Plant or still seed - know, what is there hath grown

By bond of Matter and of Spirit:

- Ganguli XIII.26

The apparent worlds come into being through the temporal illusory union (*samyogat*) of the Field (*Kshetra-Prakriti*) and the Knower of the Field (*Kshetrajna-Purusha*). Any moving being (*sattvam*) in all the myriad worlds or any inanimate unmoving (*sthavara*) object emerges in the temporal illusory hologram from this correlative association (XIII.26).



Later on in the Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna that there is not one creature who is free of *Prakriti*'s three *gunas* (XVIII.40). Not one being on this earth nor in any of the heavens, the myriad *Loka* realms of the gods and others. All are bound by *guna-maya*!

... through this union, the insentient evolute [Prakriti] appears as if it is intelligent [buddhi]; and similarly, also from agency belonging to the gunas, the neutral Spirit [Consciousness as Purusha] appears as if it were the agent.

- Samkhya Karika.20

The pure consciousness that you have always been allows Its Self to become confused by Maya's power (*Shakti*) and gets lost in the temporal effects constantly being produced by the three *gunas* as they operate on their objects via the five senses.

You begin to mistake these temporal effects as your own and eventually identify them as you. You are not these 'things'! You are not the body you are currently experiencing through. You are not your relationships, your family, your possessions, or even your accomplishments, both successes and failures. You are the Soul, the Atman, the Witness within.

Know

He sees indeed who sees in all alike

The living, lordly Soul; the Soul Supreme,

Imperishable amid the Perishing:

- Ganguli XIII.27

The one who has the Vision of Wisdom to 'see' (*pasyati*) the Supreme Lord (*Paramesvaram*) in all beings (*sarvesu bhutesu*) as the Eternal which is Imperishable and does not die when these multitude of forms and creatures perish, as they must - that one truly sees what is the Real (XIII.27).

For, whoso thus beholds, in every place,

In every form, the same, one, Living Life,

Doth no more wrongfulness unto himself,

But goes the highest road which brings to bliss.

- Ibid.XIII.28

How can you harm yourself? Only those who are so hurt as to become unbalanced bring injury to themselves, as unrelenting suffering brings on self-destruction in madness. In the *Kali Yuga* we are all suffering a kind of madness brought on by the delusion of ignorance.

The enlightened ones who have seen their own Self to be the same as the Self in all beings can no longer hurt others (XIII.28). This Realization leads us to the Supreme Goal (*param gatim*) and that state of consciousness we enjoyed in the *Satya Yuga*.

You are not the Doer ...

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः .
यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति .. १३- ३०..

prakṛtyaiva ca karmāṇi kriyamāṇāni sarvaśaḥ
yaḥ paśyati tathātmānam akartāraṃ sa paśyati 13.30

Everything you have come to identify with as you in this lifetime - is not you. The characteristics, qualities and habits you think of as yours, your likes and dislikes, quirks and compulsions, and every act you have ever engaged in were not done by the Real you. You were never the Doer!

Seeing, he sees, indeed, who sees that works

Are Nature's wont, for Soul to practise by

Acting, yet not the agent;

- Ganguli XIII.29 (or 30)

All you have ever done, along with any quality of the small personality ego-self you falsely identified as you, was the performance of *Prakriti's guna-maya*. At the moment of death in your previous life, your thoughts formed into a cumulative aggregate that generated a direction. This directive force, which is created by your acts in that life and others, moved your Consciousness (*Purusha-Atman*) into the body you currently inhabit.

Your current corporeal form is the best available correlative frequency of your cumulative thought in the moment of your death. This frequency is described by what we now call DNA. Your personality ego-self does not reincarnate. The Soul transmigrates to a resonance of being that correlates in frequency and thus reflects the threads being pursued by the Soul, the Real you. Your 'now' body is the perfect expression of your desires (*kama*), for better or worse here in the *Kali Yuga*.

You are not your body and you are not the Doer

You are the One, the Soul, eternal, pure and untouched by your 1000's of incarnational adventures, experiences generously provided for you by *Prakriti*, the Unmanifest Nature who by the *Shakti*-power of *Maya* manifests the universe. *Atman* in the body is called *Purusha*, and *Prakriti* performs for *Purusha*.

Prakriti is also the one, but in the aspect of providing an endless array of experiences in Time and Space. She is the One as the feminine principle. She is the One as every goddess. She is the One whose qualities are the forces of the three *gunas*.

Every being in the universe is subject to the three *gunas*. In our human form the *gunas* operate through the five senses on their objects and transmit what is perceived as the temporal illusory hologram back to the brain as what is seen, heard, touched, etc. In the previous Cycles of Time we were not limited to the five senses but enjoyed access to other means of perception, such as telepathy, seeing at-a-distance, and the other ‘siddhic’ powers.

Maya-Shakti

Prakriti is fueled by the *Shakti*-Power of *Maya*. *Maya* is also the One, but in the aspect of a power so great that it can Veil the One from Its Self and create the Appearance of Separation. This appearance is illusory because there is only the One - but *Maya* is far more than illusion. She is the creative power that as the ultimate artist, produces all the worlds in this universe.

The supreme self-dependence of Paramashiva [the highest reality - Paramatman], through which He brings about even that which is not possible, is known as the deity named Maya-Shakti. It serves Paramashiva [Paramatman] as a veil to hide Himself.

Maya, the divine power of the Lord, reflected by Him externally, appears as Maya-tattva [tattva is the essence of things] ... The Lord, covering Himself with it, conceals His nature of absolute purity and divinity. Making a show of His involvement in it, He [as Purusha] sees everything through a viewpoint of diversity and forgets the divinity of His I-consciousness.

Besides, Maya-tattva serves as the inanimate objective substance out of which all other insentient elements evolve. It is thus the substantive cause of numerous universes floating in it like bubbles in an ocean.

- Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta, Verse 15

Abhinavagupta was a Kashmir Saivite. Saivite refers to Shiva (*Siva*). The Saivite schools walk the path that is expressed by the metaphysical principles of the deity Shiva. The term *Paramashiva* means the highest reality and therefore is an approximate equivalent to *Paramatman*.

The pure consciousness, having adopted Maya as a part and parcel of Its Self, becomes [takes on the temporal appearance] impure and appears as the finite subject known as Purusha who is bound like a beast with the chains of bondage...

- Ibid. Verse 16

Putting thus playfully the machine of the circle of divine powers in motion, I am myself the Lord, with purity as my nature, working at the highest post as the master hero of the infinite wheel of Shaktis or divine powers.

[Thus] ... the aspirant realizes that he is not a finite being, but the great Lord who is the only hero having multitudes of divine powers as His heroines. He feels that actually he is himself [or herself!] activating playfully the whole circle of such powers ...
- *Ibid.. Verse 47*

The One in Multiple States of Being

... sees the mass

Of separate living things - each of its kind -

Issue from One, and blend again to One:

Then hath he BRAHMAN, he attains!

- Ganguli. XIII.30

Those who by their own effort and alone in silence ‘see’ (*pasyati*) and discern that the apparent multiplicity (*bhuta-prthag-bhavam*) in truth abides in the One (*ekastham*), they Become the consciousness that is called Brahman. Those who Know that all the myriad forms and states of being emerge and expand (*vistaram*) from the same Source, they reach the Immeasurable Immensity that is Home.

The Self remains Pure

The Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) is without a beginning (*anaditvat*) and beyond all Time whatsoever. *Paramatman* has no *gunas* (*nirgunatvat*) and as the Source of all frequency waveforms is beyond and untouched by any and all qualitative energies.

O Prince!

That Ultimate, High Spirit, Uncreate,

Unqualified, even when it entereth flesh

Taketh no stain of acts, worketh in nought!

- Ibid.XIII.31

Paramatman is the eternal Imperishable (*avyayas*). It is seated in the body (*sarirasthas*) through some ‘imagined’ relationship (*Gambhirananda*); but It does not act - It is not the

Doer - and is never affected nor is Its absolute purity polluted (*na lipyate*) by any actions performed by the body and *guna-maya* (XIII.31).

Just as the all pervading (*sarvagatam*) space (*akasham* - ether) can never become polluted or tainted (*na upaliyate*) because of its subtlety (*sauksmyat*), so it is that the Self which abides (*avasthitas*) in the body is never stained by any impure acts. It remains untouched by the endless permutations of *guna-maya*'s performances. The Self abiding within us all is eternally pure.

*Like to th' ethereal air, pervading all,
Which, for sheer subtlety, avoideth taint,
The subtle Soul sits everywhere, unstained:*

- Ganguli XIII.32

The *Samkhya Karika* of Isvara Krsna states that in fact the Self, Atman in the body as *Purusha*, was never bound in ignorance and delusion. The entrapment in Maya's webs is only apparent and temporal in its illusory lack of discrimination. The Self is never bound and therefore never released.

Both enjoyment and release belong to *Prakriti* 'the supporter of the manifold creation' (*Samkhya Karika*, Verse 62). The comparison is made to a king who is given credit for victory or defeat in battle, when the reality is that only his soldiers are either defeated or victorious. The king suffers the effects of 'grief or profit' as long as he supports and identifies with those who serve him.

The Lord of the Field

Just as the Sun provides light for the Earth and every planet in our solar system, so does the Lord of the Field (*kshetri*) illumine and cause the appearance of the whole (*krtsnam*) entire Field.

*Like to the light of the all-piercing sun
[Which is not changed by aught it shines upon,]
The Soul's light shineth pure in every place;*

- Ganguli, XIII.33

Just as the sun, which is the eye of the whole world is not tainted by the ocular and external

defects, similarly the Self, which is but one in all beings, is not tainted by the sorrows of the world, It being transcendental.

- Katha Upanishad, II.ii.11

Prakriti is the Matrix

Those who through the Eye of Wisdom (*jnana-caksusa*) understand the relationship (*antaram*) between the Field and the Knower of the Field, and know that the goal of life is final liberation (*moksha*) from *Prakriti's guna-maya*, they go to the highest reality, the Supreme (*param*).

*And they who, by such eye of wisdom, see
How Matter, and what deals with it, divide;
And how the Spirit and the flesh have strife,
Those wise ones go the way which leads to Life!*

- Ganguli, XIII.34

Gambhirananda translates the liberation of beings from *Prakriti (bhuta-prakrti-moksham)* as 'the annihilation of the Matrix of beings.' *Prakriti* is the Matrix.

The Language of the Gods

Judith M. Tyberg

East-West Cultural Center, 1970, LA CA.

Essence of the Exact Reality or Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta

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Advaita Ashrama, 2000, Calcutta

The Mechanics of the Matrix: Prakriti's Three Gunas



The Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says that one who has Knowledge and self-mastery need not live in fear of the senses. This universe is not merely suffering. The Supreme One created all the possible worlds and the beings that inhabit them for the purpose of enjoyment (*bhogyā*). It is only in the Kali Yuga that suffering (*duhkha*) begins to outweigh its opposite (*sukha*). The belief systems that declare suffering and sin as the sole tenets of human existence emerged in the *Kali Yuga* after 3606 BC.

Book XIV - Knowledge of the Three Gunas

In Book XIV Krishna teaches Arjuna the Knowledge of the three *gunas*. This is the Knowledge that all who seek enlightenment must come to know in order to be liberated from the illusory holographic matrix and to pass beyond transmigration in this world on to the highest perfection (*param siddhim*).

Krishna:

Yet farther will I open unto thee

This wisdom of all wisdoms, uttermost,

The which possessing, all My saints have passed

To perfectness.

- Ganguli XIV.1

Those who take refuge in this Knowledge attain similitude (*sadharmya*) with the Creator, the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*), and are not born again even at the point that begins the creation of another set of time cycles, *yugas*, *manvantaras*, and *kalpas*. Nor do these who have ‘become identical’ (B.Marjanovic) with the One suffer at the time of a Dissolution.

On such high verities

Reliant, rising into fellowship

With Me, they are not born again at birth

Of Kalpas, nor at Pralyas suffer change!

- Ibid.XIV.2

The Sanskrit word *Pralyas* refers to the time of a Dissolution. The *Naimittika Pralaya* concerns ‘all living beings on earth’ and takes place at the end of a *Manvantara*. Each *Manvantara* is divided into 71 *Maha-Yugas* of 4,320,000 years each; each *Maha-Yuga* is made up of four *Yugas*. This *Naimittika Pralaya* occurs when the Creator can no longer find any remedy apart from the total destruction of the world to put an end to the disastrous and unplanned increase in the number of beings (A.Danielou).

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः .
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च .. १४-२

idaṃ jñānam upāśritya mama sādharmaṃyā āgatāḥ
sargepi nopajāyante pralaye na vyathanti ca 14.2

This destruction will begin with an underwater explosion called *Vadava*, the mare, which will take place in the southern ocean (ibid.). The increasing reports of underwater thermal vents deep on the ocean floor which appear to be causing movements in the earth’s plates always command my attention.

The ‘extraplanetary world’ Mahar



Survivors of a *Naimittika Pralaya* are said to take refuge in the *Loka* called *Mahar*, an ‘extraplanetary world’ when at the end of the *Kali Yuga* the entire species is destroyed by these catastrophic events (ibid.). The current *Kali Yuga* began in 3606 BC when Krishna left this earth after the great war described in the *Mahabharata*.

Alain Danielou gives the date 1939 as the beginning of the Twilight of this *Kali Yuga*. He says that the last traces of this present mankind will have disappeared by the year 2442 AD, the end of the *Kali Yuga* according to him.

There is another *Pralaya* called the *Prakritika Pralaya* which ‘concerns the whole universe’ and occurs when the ‘divine dream which is the world ends’ (ibid.).

‘All vestiges of creation are destroyed ... The earth, the atmosphere, the planetary and the extraplanetary worlds [all the Lokas wherein dwell the myriad beings] disappear. Everything that exists is united in one single liquid mass, an ocean of fire in which the world dissolves. It is in this immense cosmic ocean (ekarnava) that the organizing principle, Brahman, sleeps until at the end of night, he awakens and ... raises a new world out of the waves.’

- Linga Purana, as cited by Alain Danielou

Prakriti is the Matrix

Prakriti is the uncaused, unmanifest Nature, the Matrix as womb. She produces the entire fabric of creation which lies within her as the insentient unconscious Matrix and operates through the three *gunas* - *rajas*, *sattva*, and *tamas*. *Prakriti* is the uncaused cause of all entities and has no existence apart from the *gunas*.

*This Universe the womb is where I plant
Seed of all lives! Thence, Prince of India, comes*

Birth to all beings!
- *Ganguli.XIV.3*

The etymology of the word ‘matrix’ is womb. The Sanskrit for womb is *yonī*. The womb of this universe is described as *maha brahma* which the scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair reads as the Great Nature. The Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta reads *maha brahma* as *Shakti*, the instrumental power to create the entire universe. This *Shakti* is the womb and is *svatantrya-shakti*, the Lord’s ‘Great Power of Freedom’ (B.Marjanovic). The Supreme Being places the seed (*grabham*) in the womb (*yonī*) as the origin (*sambhavas*) of all beings (*sarva-bhutanam*).

Whoso, Kunti's Son [Arjuna]!

Mothers each mortal form, Brahma conceives,

And I am He that fathers, sending seed!

- *Ibid.XIV.4*

The Supreme Lord is the father (*pita*) who sows the seed (*bija-pradah*) in all wombs (*yonis*) from which every form and image (*murtayas*) emerges (*sambhavanti*). It is the nature of *Shakti* to ‘manifest the universe’ (B.Marjanovic), therefore she is called the Mother.

The 3 gunas - sattva, rajas & tamas

Prakriti possesses the three *gunas* - *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The *gunas* are the basis of everything produced in the temporal illusory hologram. All that is perceivable by the five senses are her effects.

Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, so are named

The qualities of Nature, "Soothfastness,"

"Passion," and "Ignorance."

- *Ibid.XIV.5*

While you read this teaching of the *gunas* and their distinctions, bear in mind what the Abhinavagupta says - “No diversity is the Real Truth!” The One as *Paramatman* is

Atman, the appearance of myriad Souls. The *Atman* is *Purusha* once it inhabits a form. The Oneness is *Prakriti* whose three *gunas* are activated by the presence of *Purusha* to produce the universe via the five senses operating on their objects. All are but aspects of the One.

During a Dissolution the *gunas* remain in balance. Their nascent imbalance ensues with the beginning of any creation in any of the first Cycles of Time. As the cycles proceed, the *gunas* move further into imbalance and it is this imbalance that causes the projection of an expression or manifestation out into the hologram.

These three bind down

The changeless Spirit in the changeful flesh.

- Ibid.

The *gunas* integrate the human body; adhering to the subtle form, they ‘conduct’ the body. (B.Bhattacharya). Our individual *gunas* may be described by the planetary placements in our birth chart. The Cardinal signs are *rajas*, the mutable are *sattva*, and the fixed are the *guna tamas*.

The *gunas* serve to limit us from the infinite. As our consciousness moves through the Cycles of Time, we become more and more limited by the increasing imbalances in the *gunas* which are governing our corporeal existence. Eventually the adventure is less than fun and we land in a *Kali Yuga* rut as the repeating downward cycles of the same-old same-old boring experiences hurl us into the proverbial brick wall and we are forced to think. It is perhaps time to wake-up.

Oneness pervades ...

It is the presence of *Purusha* in proximity to *Prakriti* and her *gunas* that kindles, impels, and instigates the emergence of her effects in the hologram. *Prakriti* is the ‘final substratum of all empirical realities,’ however her unmanifest is not different from her effects. ‘What was subtle and undifferentiated is called effect when it becomes manifest and differentiated’ (Chakravarti). On the highest level of the Real even the cause, Consciousness as *Purusha*, is not separate from her or her effects. God is All - *Vasudeva sarvam iti* (Bh.G.VII.19).

The Sattva Guna

The archaic word ‘sooth’ means truth and the *guna sattva* relates to truth because of its luminous purity. The three *gunas* are ever in motion, one dominating over the others for a time and then another predominates. Your moods, thoughts and actions are the resulting effects of these migrating blends produced by the *gunas*.

Whereof sweet "Soothfastness," by purity

Living unsullied and enlightened, binds

The sinless Soul to happiness and truth;

- Ganguli XIV.6

Ganguli truly made the heroic effort to translate the *Mahabharata* into English as poetry in keeping with the original Sanskrit verses. However words such as ‘soothfastness’ are a bit of a mind-boggle and it is easy to understand why subsequent translators preferred meaning to rhyme.

The *sattva guna* is said to be in full strength when ‘every gate (meaning sense perception) of the body is illumined and receives Knowledge of the Absolute’ (B.Bhattacharya). The Gambhirananda translation tells us that *sattva* is illuminating, a ‘revealer’ of Consciousness (*prakashakam*) that is without sorrow (*anamayam*).

Even the sattva guna binds ...

All three *gunas* are the instruments of *Prakriti*’s *guna-maya*, the operative power which binds our consciousness into the webs of the temporal illusory hologram. *Sattva*’s binding power (*guna-maya*) takes the form of attachment to happiness and what is good (*sukha-sangena*). *Sattva* also binds by attachment to knowledge, even as wisdom (*jnana-sangena*).

It is not enough to become good, knowing and wise. When we identify our small ego-self as good or wise, we have attached our consciousness to a polarity. Granted *sattva* is the most pleasing *guna* and does bring temporal happiness (*sukha*). However the *gunas* are the unreal and our attachment to their effects, even if pleasant, will eventually lead us back into delusion.

This is akin to ‘Pride goes before a fall’ (Proverbs 16.18). The perils in pride of knowledge and wisdom, often called spiritual-pride, ever beset the seeker of the Real.

Better than happiness (*sukha*) is the adamant divine ‘contentment’ beyond any duality.

The Guna Rajas

The *guna rajas* is the sphere of action and ambition. *Rajas* is passion. One might observe here in the *Kali Yuga*, that when behavior-gurus tell you to live your passion - what they are actually saying is that you should remain perpetually in the *guna rajas*!

The current trendy obsession with being ‘busy’ from dawn to dusk is a reflection of the *rajas guna*. This obsession is robbing children of their natural inclination to explore their own creativity and imagination as even babies are being programmed and entrained by the latest get-ahead rubbish.

*And Passion, being kin to appetite,
And breeding impulse and propensity,
Binds the embodied Soul, O Kunti's Son!*

- Ganguli XIV.7

The passion of *rajas* is born of a thirst (*trsna*) that takes the form of desire. Desire walks hand-in-hand with attachment (*sanga*). Most of us cannot bear to let go of anything we had passionately desired. This thirst-desire passion drives us to actions which are performed in attachment and bind our consciousness in the temporal illusory hologram. We imagine falsely that we are the ‘Doer’ and we identify our self as our passion for what we desire.

The Guna Tamās

The *guna tamās* deludes all embodied beings (*sarvadehinam*) and is born of ignorance (*ajananjam*). *Tamās* is the deluder (*mohanam*) that ‘produces erroneous notions’ because it has no capacity for discrimination (*Gambhirananda*).

*By tie of works. But Ignorance, begot
Of Darkness, blinding mortal men, binds down*

Their souls to stupor, sloth, and drowsiness.

- Ganguli XIV.8

Tamas produces laziness, sleep, distraction, and indolence. *Tamas* is the couch potato *guna*! *Tamas* binds by covering the light of wisdom with ignorance. It causes us to neglect our spiritual practices. Abhinavagupta says that the ‘sleep’ of *tamas* is not mere somnolence, but for the seeker this sleep is ‘spending too much time on the wrong path’ (B.Marjanovic).

Rajas does supply the energy that can overcome the inertia of *tamas*; and neither *sattva* nor *tamas* has the power to urge the creation of new forms (B.Bhattacharaya).

The gunas bind us in the webs of illusion ...

Sattva binds our consciousness in the temporal illusory hologram through attachment to happiness (*sukha*). *Rajas* binds through actions born of passion and emotion based in desire. *Tamas* obscures, veils and covers Knowledge with delusion which further binds us in attachment.

Yea, Prince of India! Soothfastness binds souls

In pleasant wise to flesh; and Passion binds

By toilsome strain; but Ignorance, which blots

The beams of wisdom, binds the soul to sloth.

- Ganguli XIV.9

These three qualities, the *gunas*, take turns overpowering our consciousness. Once you understand the mechanics involved, you can begin to observe which *guna* is prevailing over the other two by your mood. When you are feeling peaceful, happy and wise, *sattva* predominates. When you are driven to take actions by the desire to acquire, succeed, accomplish, create, control, and be busy-busy-busy, the *rajas guna* rules.

Passion and Ignorance, once overcome,

Leave Soothfastness, O Bharata! Where this

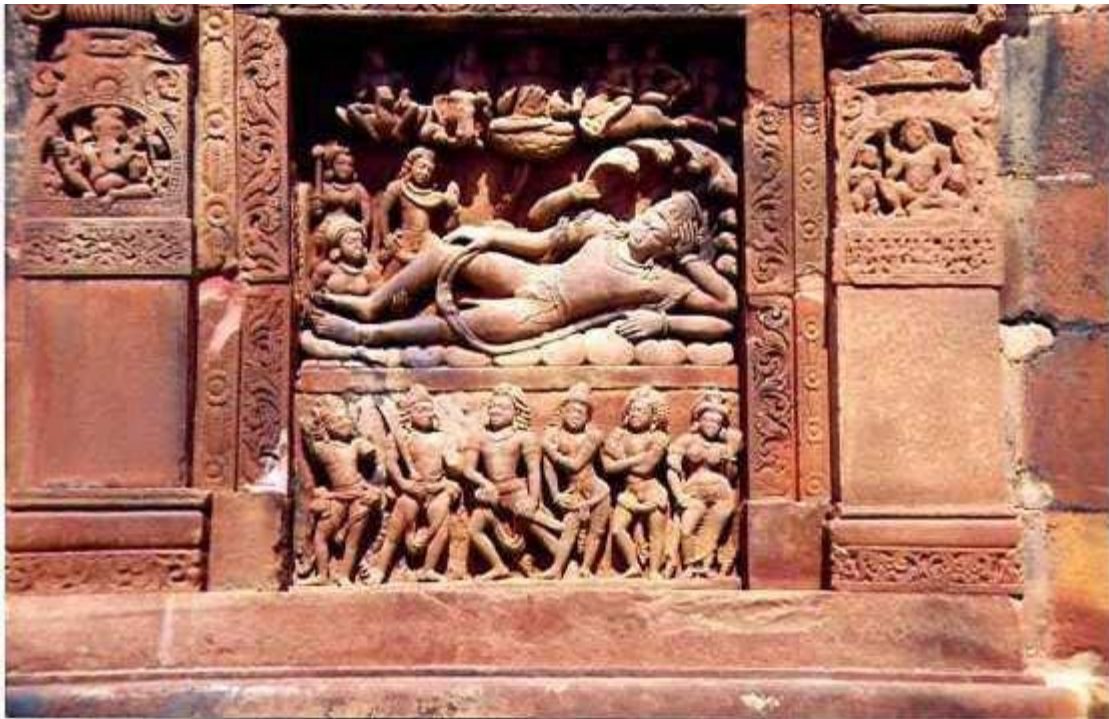
*With Ignorance are absent, Passion rules;
And Ignorance in hearts not good nor quick.*

- Ganguli XIV.10

Tamas is the ‘Why bother?’ mood that moves upon our consciousness like a dull obscuring fog. When *tamas* prevails we wonder why we should do anything or learn anything. *Tamas* is the ‘blahs’ frequency that leads to laziness and the death of wisdom. *Tamas* is the miasma of amnesia.

Those of you who are familiar with your correct astrological birth charts can observe the *gunas* operating through your planetary placements. You will be aware of a predominance of cardinal (*rajas*), mutable (*sattva*), and fixed (*tamas*) signs in your chart. This is no guarantee of enlightenment, merely another tool to assist in your perceiving the pure Witness within.

The Portals of Illumination



Our freedom from the binding power of *guna-maya* lies in shifting our consciousness from the *gunas*’ incessant gyrations, back into the God within us. When our Consciousness as *Purusha* identifies its Self as the inner Witness, we come to understand that we are never the Doer. This entire universe and all its myriad worlds are produced by *Prakriti's gunas* operating on their objects via the senses.

*When at all gateways of the Body shines
The Lamp of Knowledge, then may one see well
Soothfastness settled in that city reigns;
Where longing is, and ardour, and unrest,
Impulse to strive and gain, and avarice,
Those spring from Passion - Prince!
- Ibid.XIV.11*

The identification with the God-within, the Witness, takes place when the *sattva guna* predominates and the Light of Knowledge, which discriminates between the Real and the temporal, shines (*prakashas*) and illuminates the gates in the body (*sarvadvarsu dehe*). These gates or doors are the sense organs, our means of perception as sight, hearing, etc.

Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says that when the senses have been controlled, meaning they have come to rest in the Wisdom of Discrimination of the *sattva guna*, they ‘will become portals through which light will pour in.’ The senses will then ‘cease to be ill-lit alleys through which the temptations of the world will steal in for rendezvous with low appetites.’

In other words, the five senses will no longer serve the demonic whose function is to bind us in the temporal illusory hologram. The senses will serve the God-within. What was utilized to entrap and drag our consciousness ever further down into Kali Yuga confusion and delusion, will now illuminate.

The senses will again ‘become portals through which light will pour in, the splendour of the world and its meaning, and this light will illuminate for the Self its own real nature’ (The Betrayal of Krishna). We will regain the consciousness that was natural to us in the Golden Age, the *Satya Yuga*.

*While the Gods Play:
Shaiva Oracles & Predictions on the Cycles of History & the Destiny of Mankind
Alain Danielou*

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How the Gunas Rule This Life & the Next

The yogi of calmed mind, of pacified passion, free from impurities, attains the Absolute and the supreme happiness.

- BhG.VI.37; as translated by Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair



In his ‘Literary Study’ of the *Mahabharata*, the Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says that the one who has attained similitude (*sadharmya*) with the Supreme Self, need not distrust his senses. He can ‘move in the world of sense-interests with joyous assurance (*prasada*) if his Self has become the master of the self (*vidheyatma*), and attachment and aversion are both within the control of the Self’ (ibid.II.64).

Free from all fear

The Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta writes that the person who Realizes their own nature as the God-within no longer feels ‘any dread from any quarters because everything is his own Self’ (*Paramarthasara*, Verse 58). What can cause fear when everything is experienced as one’s own Self.

When you Realize that you are not the finite temporal being, the small ego-self you have

falsely identified with, then you come to abide in the Supreme Self. As this eternal Self, you feel that it is actually you who ‘playfully activates the whole circle’ of powers which create and activate the spheres of Maya as the causal creation, *Prakriti* as the subtle creation, and the material creation as *Prthvi* (ibid.Verse 47).

Maya is the principle the Absolute creates to take on the temporal illusory appearance of limitation. *Prakriti* is the sphere of the insentient Matrix and the unmanifest primordial source of objects of perception. *Prthvi* is the sphere of solid and gross matter. All these spheres of creation are the ‘outward or objective manifestation of the essential nature of God’ (ibid.Verse 46).

The chains of piety & sin

Abhinavagupta says that our confusion and suffering in this life are the direct result of our ‘companionship with incorrect knowledge. The evil of bad company [this incorrect knowledge or nescience] is indeed very dangerous’ (ibid.Verse 53).

When we are in ignorance of the Real, our consciousness resonates with the frequency waveform that is delusion. Delusion makes us feel that we are the Doers. This deluded state of consciousness impels us to ‘undergo births and deaths on account of their [our] being bound by the chains of piety and sin’ (ibid.Verse 54).

... engrained; and where

Darkness and dulness, sloth and stupor are,

'Tis Ignorance hath caused them, Kuru Chief!

- Ganguli XIV. 13

The after-death realms we call heavens and hells are the *Lokas* in Sanskrit. *Loka* is derived from ‘*lok*’ and its meaning is connected with the act of seeing, beholding, and recognizing. A *Loka* is defined as a wide space or world that is a division of the universe (M.Monier-Williams).

Triloka

In the early texts, there were three divisions - heaven or sky, earth, and the atmosphere or lower regions. ‘There are three worlds of existence, *triloka*, which are considered as the

primary hierarchical divisions of the cosmos. *Bhuloka* is the "Earth world," the physical plane. *Antarloka* is the "Inner or in-between world," the subtle or astral plane. And *Sivaloka*: "World of Siva," and of the Gods and highly evolved souls; the causal plane, also called *Karanaloka*' (experiencefestival.com/lokas).

'The seven upper worlds are *Bhuloka, Bhuvanloka, Svarloka, Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka* and *Satyaloika*. The highest three comprise the causal plane. The seven lower worlds, collectively known as *Naraka* or *Patala*, are (from highest to lowest) *Put, Avichi, Samhata, Tamisra, Rijisha, Kudmala* and *Kakola*' (ibid.).

Expanding hell ...

There is no mention of hell worlds or punishment in the original four Vedas (S.Ghosh). However later texts, for example the Puranas, go into considerable detail, apparently relishing accounts of the various tortures of the hellish realms. I suggest this evolvment and expansion of hells worlds is the product of the *Kali Yuga*. These realms have continued to be generated as fractile-like expressions of our human thoughts and actions via the chakras, higher and lower.

At the time of our death a waveform of a particular frequency is produced as the cumulative result of all our thoughts and acts in that life. This cumulative frequency propels us into an interim resonate *Loka*-world which correlates with our belief system, and eventually into our next corporeal form and subsequent lifetime.

Obviously most of us will in the moments of our death be in pain or considerable confusion. Therefore what we do before that time arrives is of utmost importance. Not only does what we do and how we treat others matter, it is also crucial that we learn to distinguish what is Real and eternal over what is temporal and illusory. We need to make a lasting connection with the God within us and practice mastering our focus over distraction.

Krishna tells Arjuna that those who have cultivated the *guna sattva* so that *sattva* comes to dominate (*sattve pravrdhe*) will go to that world (*loka*) which is pure and shining, the world of those who are the Knowers of the Highest (XIV.14).

Moreover, when a soul departeth, fixed

In Soothfastness, it goeth to the place -

Perfect and pure - of those that know all Truth.

- Ganguli XIV. 14

Those who die when the *guna rajas* predominates their consciousness, for example in anger or still craving control, are reborn among those who are attached to action (*karma-sangisu*). While those who die when the *guna tamas* rules their being are reborn into the wombs of the deluded (XIV.15).

*If it departeth in set habitude
Of Impulse, it shall pass into the world
Of spirits tied to works; and, if it dies
In hardened Ignorance, that blinded soul
Is born anew in some unlighted womb.*

- Ganguli XIV. 15

Sattva produces acts which are performed a pure consciousness. The results of acts done in rajas are pain. Ignorance is the fruit of the *guna tamas* (XIV16).

*The fruit of Soothfastness is true and sweet;
The fruit of lusts is pain and toil; the fruit
Of Ignorance is deeper darkness. Yea!*

- Ibid.XIV.16

From *sattva* is born Wisdom Knowledge, from rajas desire, and from tamas comes the darkness of delusion and ignorance (XIV.17).

*For Light brings light, and Passion ache to have;
And gloom, bewilderments, and ignorance
Grow forth from Ignorance.*

- Ganguli XIV. 17

Location is the result of and determined by the frequency of our consciousness. When our consciousness is grounded in *sattva*, we find ourselves in the higher realms. While those who are existing in the frequency waveform of the *guna rajas* will remain in the middle worlds (*lokas*), and those who are *tamasic* will go to the worlds below (XIV.18).

Those of the first

Rise ever higher; those of the second mode

Take a mid place; the darkened souls sink back

To lower deeps, loaded with witlessness!

- Ibid.XIV. 18

All three *gunas* are the domain of the Matrix, *Prakriti*'s temporal illusory hologram. Those who are weary of her performance and the endless transmigration through pleasure and pain (*sukha-duhkha*), seek to transcend the binding power (*guna-maya*) of her webs.

Those who seek liberation from the *gunas* come to discern, by their own efforts, that they are not the Doer. All acts are performed by the *gunas*. The Soul that dwells within is the Real you and remains untouched and pure, eternal.

Those who Realize this Truth by perceiving (*anupasyati*) as the Observer (*drasta*) that it is the *gunas* alone that are 'doing' and making the temporal effects of the temporal illusory hologram, they merge (*adhigacchati*) into the Supreme Being (XIV.19).

When, watching life, the living man perceives

The only actors are the Qualities,

And knows what rules beyond the Qualities,

Then is he come nigh unto Me!

- Ibid.XIV.19

Those who come to Know the Real transcend (*aditya*) the three *gunas* which have their origin in and operate through the physical and subtle body (*deha-samudbhavam*). They who transcend the three *gunas* are released (*vimuktah*) from birth, death, old age and

pain (XIV.20).

The Soul,

Thus passing forth from the Three Qualities -

Whereby arise all bodies - overcomes

Birth, Death, Sorrow, and Age; and drinketh deep

The undying wine of Amrit.

- Ibid.XIV. 20

The Mechanics of the Gunas in B.Bhattacharya's 'Saivism & the Phallic World'



The Indian writer B.Bhattacharya was born in Varanasi (1910) and spent most of his life in the West Indies, Guyana and Trinidad. He wrote some thirty books, one of which is an excellent exposition of Bhakti Yoga. His two volume set, '*Saivism and the Phallic World*', not only reveals a historical and spiritual understanding of Saivism (Shiva), but of Hinduism in its many diverse aspects.

The 'Phallic World' refers to the metaphysical principles embodied in the lingam, which is a 'mark' or symbol representing the universal creative forces and 'the merging of the

particular in the universal, the dissolution of the mind, with its agitations, aspirations and accomplishments that attach and adhere, in the *atma*-awareness' (experiencefestival.com).

In a section on the three *gunas*, B.Bhattacharya tells us that the *gunas* are much more subtle than atoms. *Gunas* are immaterial. 'Hindu seers insist that the atoms themselves are subject to the subtle *gunas*.' This sphere of influence extends to electrons and protons.

The distinguishing features of whatever is produced - the term often used is 'evolutes' - through the 'imbalance of the *gunas* in the body of electromagnetic atoms' never follows a given method and is therefore unpredictable. It seems that the Creator is not overly fond of what is predictable and enjoys our freewill universe.

The mutations generated by the 'subtle balancing of the *gunas* is a phenomenon, the operations of which are clouded in mystery to material science.' The protons and electrons are said to be astral 'bodies' (*bhutas*) that take shape into matter. The *gunas* 'constitute the subtle aspirations in the [astral/subtle] bodies, and confer on them individual character, potentiality, and personality.' This is the unmanifest generating, interacting with, and influencing the manifest.

'The point of cause, and the point of motive, in the cycle of existence, start and end at the same point in a circle. The space within the circumference is the sea of consciousness.' This circle is in fact a sphere.

The imbalances of the three gunas ...

The endless differences between things, the evolutes produced by the imbalances of the *gunas*, is based in their relative share of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. This imbalance accounts for what is 'near or far' from our natural state of bliss consciousness. The spectrum of the *gunas* extends and expands from the self-luminous transparency of *sattva*, through the passionate urge to possess and control that is *rajas*, down into the density and delusion that emerges from the *guna tamas*.

Rajas is the *guna* that urges what is into motion. Once motion is invoked, it is perpetual. *Tamas* is the *guna* of inertia that slows and stops the urge to perpetual motion invoked by *rajas*. Thus the creator deity Brahma is the *guna rajas*, and Shiva as the principle of destruction is the *guna tamas*. Vishnu is *sattva*.

'Mass and energy in this process become manifest to our senses as individual and distinct phenomenon.' The effects produced in the external holographic matrix are

always in a state of emerging or decaying. Our 'inner senses' allow us to access an ideal state, a sort of 'center of the storm' where we are beyond the confusion of the *gunas* machinations. This realm of this 'inner senses' provides us with the insights that reveal the Truth of the Real 'beneath the curtain of each atom' (Mahmud Shabistari).

The 'mark' of those who transcend the gunas

Arjuna. Oh, my Lord!

Which be the signs to know him that hath gone

Past the Three Modes? How liveth he? What way

Leadeth him safe beyond the threefold Modes?

- Ganguli XVI.21

After hearing of the interactions and effects of *guna-maya*, Arjuna asks Krishna what characterizes one who has transcended the *gunas*. How does such a person behave? How does one go beyond and transcend these three binding qualities?

Krishna's answer is subtle. I think most of us have been led to believe that upon enlightenment we will immediately transform into some sort of radiant Light Being! In his commentary, Abhinavagupta says that because the three *gunas* - *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* - are 'present' in all the states and every condition of life, the 'yogin cannot avoid them.' However the *yogin*, meaning one who has 'yoked' united their consciousness in the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*), is 'free from the influence' of the *gunas* because they do not 'feel attachment or aversion for these qualities' (B.Marjanovic).

Renunciation simply 'sends back'



Krishna explains this state of consciousness - non-attachment - is seen in those who no longer hate nor do they desire for the effects of the *gunas*, good or bad (XIV.22). The five senses are constantly transmitting signals to the brain which are interpreted as

objects in the external hologram; renunciation is the process of ‘sending back’ these signals to their source. Offer everything to the God that dwells within.

Those who are free of *guna-maya* remain indifferent to the appearance or disappearance of illumination (*prakasam*, the effect of *sattva*), activity and incessant endeavor (*pravrttim*, the effect of *rajas*), and the delusion/confusion (*moham*) produced by the *guna tamas*.

Krishna. He who with equanimity surveys

Lustre of goodness, strife of passion, sloth

Of ignorance, not angry if they are,

Not wishful when they are not:

- Ganguli.XIV.22

The Gambhirananda translation adds that this ‘sign’ (*lingais* - mark) of the *guna* free *yogin*’s consciousness is meant only for the one who has attained it. ‘Indeed the presence or absence of dislike and the presence or absence of liking, which are subjective, cannot be perceived by others.’ There is no point in revealing this process to your friends, who will have their own unique set of *gunas* to deal with; and such sharing may entrap you back in the ego. Returning to the One is a solitary journey.

It’s just the gunas!

Those who attain this state of non-attachment to the *gunas* remain established in their disinterested indifference ‘as if seated apart’ (Winthrop Sargeant; XIV.23). Whatever occurs, you know that it’s only the *gunas* operating through the five senses on their objects. This knowledge allows you to stand firm and not be swept away, carried back into attachment and delusion. You can be ‘in’ the temporal illusory hologram, but not ‘of’ it!

... he who sits

A sojourner and stranger in their midst

Unruffled, standing off, saying - serene -

When troubles break, "These be the Qualities!"

Gambhirananda further says that those who transcend the *gunas* have come to identify with the Illuminator of the All, the ‘self-effulgent Truth which is changeless and devoid of duality.’ Therefore they feel no ‘connection’ with the characteristics - the body, the sense organs, and objects produced - of the things which It illuminates.

The process of detaching from the gunas

The Realization of the mechanics of the *gunas* can spontaneously occur to you in an instant, however it may take some time and practice to release your consciousness from its habitual responses to the effects of the *gunas*. You have to make the effort to observe alone how you have been snagged, like a fish on a hook, by the subtle powers of *guna-maya*.

Samkhya’s example of the potter’s wheel slowing down of its own momentum serves to illustrate the process and also shows how we can ‘fall’ if we once again energize the wheel by losing our focused conscious awareness. This fall in consciousness will cause us to become attached through the same old feelings of ‘I did this’ and ‘This is mine’ that give the small identity ego-self its comfort zone.

The test ...

The test is being indifferent to pain and pleasure, and perceiving them as being the same (*sama-duhkha-sukha*). We are, all of us, positioned on some point of the curve, the peak or the trough, that depicts movement from pleasure to pain and vice-versa.

He unto whom - self-centred - grief and joy

Sound as one word;

- Ibid.XIV.24

The test is seeing a clod of dirt, a rock (literally iron), or a piece of gold as being the same - having the same value. They are all the One.

to whose deep-seeing eyes

The clod, the marble, and the gold are one;

- Ibid.XIV.24

The test is perceiving those who are loved and that which is agreeable (*priya*) with the same evenness as those who are not loved and that which is disagreeable (*apriya*).

The test is reacting to both praise (*samstati*) and blame (*ninda*) with the same steadfast impartial dispassion (XIV.24). Everyone you know, every being is subject to their *gunas* - including all who dwell in the now invisible worlds, spirit guides and extraterrestrials, evolved or otherwise.

Whose equal heart holds the same gentleness

For lovely and unlovely things, firm-set,

Well-pleased in praise and dispraise;

- Ibid.XIV.24

Impartial to all ...

Those who have immersed their consciousness in the God-within as the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*), and have attained similitude (*sadharmya*) with that One, find honor and dishonor to be the same. Impartial to both friend (*mitra*) and foe (*ari*), not taking sides, they have no desire to reap the results (fruits) of any action. Thus renouncing all undertakings, they are said to have transcended the *gunas* (XIV.25).

... satisfied

With honour or dishonour; unto friends

And unto foes alike in tolerance;

Detached from undertakings,- he is named

Surmounter of the Qualities!

- Ibid.XIV.25

Honoring the God-within with constant unwavering devotion (*bhakti yogena*), they are qualified (*kalpate*) for liberation from death and rebirth, and absorption in Brahman (*brahma-bhuyaya* - XIV.26)

And such -

*With single, fervent faith adoring Me,
Passing beyond the Qualities, conforms
To Brahma, and attains Me!*

- Ibid.XIV.26

Abhinavagupta adds the important understanding that this devotion (*bhakti yogena*) must be free of all attachment to results. Those who worship only to attain desired results, ‘cannot possess unwavering devotion to the Lord.’ Unwavering devotion purifies our consciousness as devotion itself is ‘the primary power of God’ (B.Marjanovic). God is Love.

For I am

*That whereof Brahma is the likeness! Mine
The Amrit is; and Immortality
Is mine; and mine perfect Felicity!
- Ganguli.XIV.27*

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च .
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च .. १४- २७..

brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham amṛtasyāvyaśyaś ca
śāśvatasyaś ca dharmasya sukhasyaikāntikasyaś ca 14.27

In this last verse of Book XIV, Krishna firmly identifies his Self with that of the Supreme Being, the foundation (*pratiṣṭha*) on which rests the immortal (*amṛtasya*) and imperishable (*avyayasya*) Brahman, the eternal Dharma and bliss (*sukhasya*) absolute (*aikantikasya*).

The Lokas

<http://www.experiencefestival.com/lokas>

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Munishiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1991, Delhi

The World Tree - Axis Mundi & Attaining the Supreme

This is That eternal Asvattha Tree with its root above and branches below. That root, indeed, is called the Bright That is Brahman, and That alone is the Immortal. In That all worlds are contained, and none can pass beyond. This verily is That.

- Katha Upanishad II.iii.1

In the beginning verses of Book XV, Krishna teaches his friend Arjuna the understanding of the Tree of the Universe or the Tree of *Samsara*. *Samsara* is this relative universe with its endless cycles of births and deaths. This tree is upside down (XV.1). Its roots are above (*urdhva*) and its branches below (*adhas*).

... the Asvattha, ...

Which hath its boughs beneath, its roots above, -

The ever-holy tree.

- Ganguli XV.1



Asvattha is the Sanskrit name for the Peepal (*ficus religiosa*) fig tree and is familiar to all Indians. It has heart-shaped leaves and its fruit is purple when ripe. The Peepal tree was first depicted on a seal discovered at Mohenjodaro, a city of the Indus civilization (3000 BC - 1700 BC). Its leaves are applied to wounds after being heated in ghee. It sends its branches down to the earth below, and is the Buddha's *Bodhi* tree

Yea! for its leaves

Are green and waving hymns which whisper Truth!

Who knows the Asvatta, knows Vedas, and all.

- Ibid.

Krishna says that the leaves of this metaphorical tree are the sacred hymns of Vedas. Its branches are nourished by the three *gunas* (*guna-pravrddha*) and its twigs (*pravalas*), which sprout branches are said to be the objects of the five senses (*visaya*). In *Samkhya*, the things of this world are never separate from the senses, through which they are perceived. It is the ‘operation’ of the five senses on ‘their’ objects that makes the temporal illusory hologram perceptible to our human consciousness.

The roots of the upside-down Tree of *Samsara* stretch downward from above as our desire-based actions bind (*karma-anubandhini*) us to this earth, the human world (*manusyaloke*). The upside-down tree is also a metaphor for the mirror image of the unreal which is only a reflection of the Real.

The trunk is formed by ‘the various subtle bodies of living beings’



This Tree of the Universe (*Samsara*) is said to be noisy ‘constantly reverberating with the tumultuous’ sounds that arise from the cacophony of all human activity. Its trunk is formed by ‘the various subtle bodies of living beings.’ Its growth is fed by desire and its fruits are the *Lokas*, the worlds of the afterlife, which are experienced as the reward for actions (*Sankaracharya* as translated by Nikhilananda).

Thus the longing for results, the fruits of our acts, engenders the roots which reach down into the earth plane and further bind human consciousness in the temporal illusory hologram.

*Its branches shoot to heaven and sink to earth,
Even as the deeds of men, which take their birth
From qualities [gunas]: ...*

... *As actions wrought amid this world of men*

Bind them by ever-tightening bonds again.

- *Ganguli XV.2*

The form of the Tree of the Universe cannot be known by living beings here on earth (XV.3). It has no beginning (*adih*) and no end (*antah*), nor can its continual existence be perceived. This Tree forms the link between the transcendental worlds and the phenomenal ones.

The Sharp Axe of Detachment

The Tree of *Samsara* is an illusion, the projection of the Immutable Immeasurable Imperishable Oneness. When Souls are weary of enjoying the experiences provided by transmigration through a myriad of births and deaths, they must learn to discern the Real from the effects of *guna-maya* and cut down this Tree. The only way to cut this upside-down Tree is with the Axe of Non-attachment (*asange-sastrena*).

The Sanskrit word *asange* means that which is opposed to desire, and *sastrena* is an axe or knife like weapon. Dispassion and renunciation of the signals which transmit the perceptions of the five senses to the brain, become a mighty (*drdhena*) weapon (*sastra*) because they detach human consciousness from the world of desire, attachment and aversion, likes and dislikes, pleasure and pain (*Gambhirananda*).

An eagerness for Knowledge of the Supreme Self makes this Axe strong and the repeated practice of Discriminations between the eternal Real and the temporal unreal, produced by *Prakriti's guna-maya*, sharpens the weapon that cuts down our attachment which binds us in the temporal illusory hologram (*ibid.*).

The World Tree - Axis Mundi

Krishna's *Asvattha* Tree, the Tree of the Universe or *Samsara*, is none other than the World Tree, the *Axis Mundi* known in every metaphysical understanding through the ages around the planet. The brilliant metaphysical writer Rene Guenon says that Krishna's upside-down *Ashvattha* tree refers to the primordial traditions symbolized by the sacred oak for the Celts, the lime tree for Germans, and the ash for Scandinavians (*Man & His Becoming According to Vedanta*).

Guenon explains the upside-down position of the tree as ‘analogy, here as everywhere else, [that] must be applied in an inverse sense.’ Like the Hanged Man card in the Tarot, what is true for the inner spiritual reality is inverse to the external material one. Guenon says that the roots are above because they stand for ‘the Principle’ and the branches spread out below to ‘represent the deploying of manifestation’ (ibid.).

The Symbol of the Cross

The Tree as World Axis is the true meaning of the symbol of the cross. The vertical line represents the axis and the horizontal ‘forms its branches’ (R.Guenon; *The Symbolism of the Cross*). The Hebrew *Kabbalah* has their Sephirothic Tree of Life.

Guenon states that this tree ‘stands at the center of the world, or rather a world.’ Wherever a ‘state of existence, such as the human state, is developed’ (ibid.) you will find the Tree as the Axis of that state, that world.

Perhaps it is useful to think of fractals, or dimensions within dimensions all existing simultaneously, or the traditional concepts macrocosm and microcosm. The Tree is the Axis of the Matrix that is the structural womb of the temporal illusory hologram. Every piece of the hologram contains the entire hologram; thus the Tree also exists within you, and is there to be seen with the Inner Eye.

The Tree of the Universe is the metaphysical reality on which all the myriad existences are formed. The total lack of knowledge of this Truth is the source of all that has gone wrong in science and in our modern world. Ignorance of the World Axis is itself a symptom of the *Kali Yuga* and what Rene Guenon with precise insight calls the Reign of Quantity.

Go beyond the Tree

The state of being (*padam* - place or footing) that is beyond this illusory Tree of *Samsara* is to be sought. Those who attain, who have gone to (*gatas*) this abode beyond the Tree, they do not again return (*nirvartanti*) to the world (XV.4).

ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं
यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः .
तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये .
यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी .. १५-४..

tataḥ padaṃ tat parimārgitavyaṃ
yasmin gatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ
tameva cādyam puruṣam prapadye
yataḥ pravṛtīḥ prasṛtā purāṇī 15.4

Those who seek release from the endless rounds of birth and death take refuge (*prapadye*) in the Primordial (*adyam*) Being (*Puruṣa*) - ‘Who made the mystery of old Creation’ (Ganguli XV.4) - from which have flowed like streams, the ancient (*purani*) currents, the frequency waveforms of creation.

*No longer grow at mercy of what breeze
Of summer pleasure stirs the sleeping trees,
What blast of tempest tears them, bough and stem:
To the eternal world pass such as these!*
- Ganguli XV.5



The wise ones who have cast off the veils of delusion (*amudhah*), go the imperishable (*avyayam*) abode (*padam*). They have become free from pride and arrogance (*nirmana*). They have conquered attachment (*sanga*).

Abhinavagupta states that it is the ‘deep-grown roots’ of the Tree of *Samsara* that must be cut, the roots which have been produced by ‘both good and bad action’ by limited

human consciousness. Such cutting symbolizes the liberation from all attachment (B.Marjanovic).

The wise who have attained liberation from attachment dwell eternally in the Supreme Self (*adhyatma*) beyond the dualities produced by desire, beyond happiness and misery (XV.5) - *sukhaduhkha* is often written as one word!

Another Sun gleams there! another Moon!

Another Light, - not Dusk, nor Dawn, nor Noon -

Which they who once behold return no more;

- Ibid.XV.6

Verse six can be interpreted in two ways. One is simply that the Supreme Abode or Home (*paramam dhama*) of the Lord is not lit by the Sun (*suryah*) or the Moon (*sasankas*), or even fire because these are the products of time and space. The abode of the Supreme Being is beyond both.

A further interpretation rests in the experiential inner visions of the Light that is self-effulgent. There is no reflected light beyond the polarity based earth plane. There are many realms which also do not appear as reflected light and possess a visual quality as if lit from within, somewhat like an animated cartoon. Their translucence and density vary relative to the frequency of consciousness they emit. Some resemble the strange ‘plastic’ quality of light in computer animation.

The Self-Effulgent Illuminator of All!

However only the Lord is self-effulgent, self-luminous. For it is That Light which is the Illuminator of all others. Every universe and all creations arise from the Surpeme Bliss of the One.

The Sun does not shine there, nor the Moon and the stars, nor do these flashes of lightning shine - nor this fire. He shining, everything shines after Him [Brahman as IS-ness]. By His Light all this is variously illumined.

- Katha Upanishad II.ii.15; Gambhirananda translation

Krishna assures Arjuna that those who go to the Supreme Home (*paramam dhama*) of

the Lord do not return (XV.6). Once you have found your way Home and have Realized your real identity as the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*), merging your consciousness fully with That which is imperishable, self-effulgent Bliss, you do not return to the wheel of transmigration, birth and death through the endless Cycles of Time.

The Bodhisattva

This declaration of not ever returning to a human incarnation brings up the question of the Bodhisattva. Surely there are those who out of compassion for others will choose to delay their own enlightenment or will return to corporeal form to assist in the enlightenment of others before their final liberation.

It may be that their mere presence is enough - especially in a *Kali Yuga* - to help balance the oppressive influence of the darkside demonic. Or they may take on an active role and work for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*) in the spirit of passionate non-attachment. What matters is the effort, meaning the consciousness the effort springs from; the results remain subject to the fabric of the hologram.

With a mere fragment ...

The One, the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*), becomes an individual living being with a 'mere fragment' (*amsah* - Winthrop Sargeant) of Its own eternal Self. *Paramatman* the One becomes *Atman* as the multitude of Selves - which are the fragments, parts, pieces that are a share in the One. The *Atman* is known as *jiva* and *Purusha* once it enters a corporeal form. This world of the living is *jivaloka*.

In *jivaloka* the One as the many draws to Its Self the senses (*indriyani*), the sixth of which is said to be the mind. As a fragment (*amsah*) of Its Totality, the *Atman* takes on the consciousness of limitation which is in fact a temporal illusory appearance in the holographic matrix (XV.7).

The undying Spirit, setting forth from Me,

Taketh on form, it draweth to itself

From Being's storehouse, - which containeth all, -

Senses and intellect.

- Ganguli XV.7

The Lord (*Paramatman*) as Atman acquires (*avapnoti*) and enters into a body (XV.8). The Lord, *Isvarah*, is the true master and owner of the aggregate of the body and the sense organs (*Gambhirananda*). When the Atman or Soul leaves (*utkramati*) a particular body, the sense organs and the mind are taken along like fragrances (*gandhan*) of perfumes carried on the wind (*vayu*).

It is this 'fragrance' that creates the magnetic alignment that pulls you into the next body. Your subtle body is magnetized to a resonant DNA which was created through the experiences of multiple lifetimes, one building upon another passed on through the genes.

Transmigration - not reincarnation

Therefore when you recall past lives, what you are actually seeing are the lives of the body you currently inhabit. This is the basis of ancestor worship. Those holograms of the lives in your DNA do resonate with the template-like-form of your own cumulative experiences. It's a bit like finding the perfect car that in every detail suits your personality. Your soul (*Atman*) transmigrates. The small personality ego-self does not reincarnate.

Abhinavagupta states that this retaining of the sense organs and the mind, as they are taken from one body to the next, is a function of the subtle body (*purustaka* - B.Marjanovic).

The Sovereign Soul

Thus entering the flesh, or quitting it,

Gathers these up, as the wind gathers scents,

Blowing above the flower beds.

- Ganguli XV.8

The Supreme One - who has taken on the appearance of multiplicity as the myriad Selves, the Atman, who in reality never leaves Its consciousness that is the Absolute - enjoys (*upasevate*) the objects of the senses (*visayan*).

As the *Atman*, the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*) presides over (*adhithaya*) the five senses: hearing (*strotram*), sight (*caksus*), touch (*sparsanam*), taste (*rasanam*), and

smell (*gharnam*) - and the mind (*manas*). The five senses work on their objects to transmit signals to the sixth, the brain (XV.9).

Ear and Eye,

And Touch and Taste, and Smelling, these it takes, -

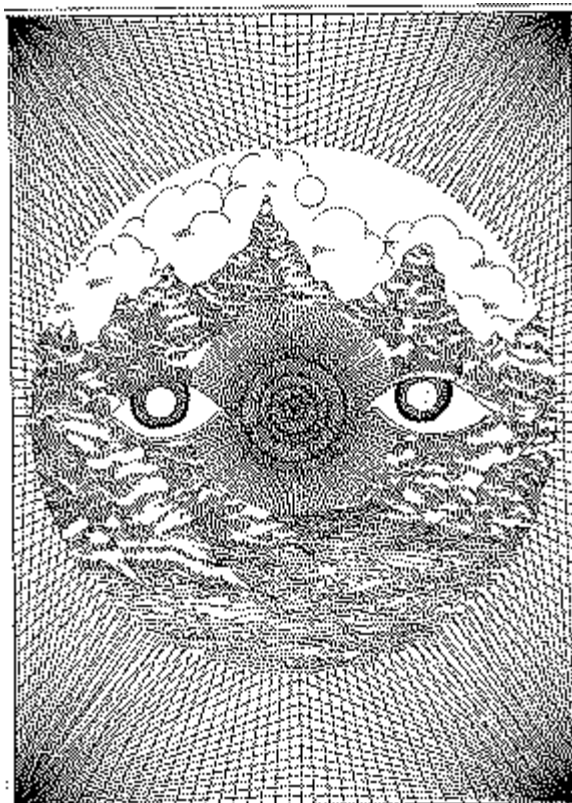
Yea, and a sentient mind; - linking itself

To sense-things so.

- Ibid.XV.9

God dwells in the Heart of everyone, but most of us are not conditioned to ‘see God in every eye.’ If we did recognize our own Self in every man, woman and child, in every living creature, and every insentient thing, in mountains, rocks, trees, rivers and oceans - there would be no war and no destruction of the environment. The moment you Recognize the God within you as the same God within All, there is only Love.

The Eye of Knowledge



Those who are deluded (*vimudhas*) do not see that it is God who dwells in all forms, in all bodies. They do not see God as the Soul (*Atman*) when at death It leaves the body.

The deluded do not recognize that it is God, veiled in a myriad of mere fragments of Its Immeasurable Immensity, that enjoys (*bhujanam*) the experience of the *gunas* (*gunanvitam*) operating on their objects through the senses. Only those who have the 'Eye of Knowledge' (*jnanacaksusas*) see God in every eye (XV.10).

The unenlightened ones

Mark not that Spirit when he goes or comes,

Nor when he takes his pleasure in the form,

Conjoined with qualities; but those see plain

Who have the eyes to see.

- Ibid.XV.10

Krishna clarifies for Arjuna how one develops the Eye of Knowledge, for it is not enough to engage in endless practices if you have not purified your consciousness (XV.11). Spiritual practices that are done in attachment for results or for the enhancement of the small ego-self will not bring perfection.

Holy souls see

Which strive thereto. Enlightened, they perceive

That Spirit in themselves; but foolish ones,

Even though they strive, discern not, having hearts

Unkindled, ill-informed!

- Ibid.XV.11

Identify your consciousness with and as the Lord that abides (*avasthitam*) in the Self (*Atman*). No amount of practices or external rituals and 'initiations' will succeed until you alone, by your own efforts shift your consciousness into the Heart and Immerse your Being in the God-within.

The Katha Upanishad

The Upanishads, Vol. One
Translated by Swami Nikhilananda, 1949
Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center; 2003, NY

Man & His Becoming According to The Vedanta
Rene Guenon, 1925
Sophia Perennis, 2001; Ghent, NY

The Symbolism of the Cross
Rene Guenon, 1931
Sophia Perennis, 2001; Ghent, NY

The Reign of Quantity
Rene Guenon, 1945
Sophia Perennis, 2001; Ghent, NY

A walk through Mohenjodaro
<http://www.harappa.com/har/moen0.html>

‘Who comprehendeth this hath wisdom! He is quit of works in bliss!’

Know, too, from Me

Shineth the gathered glory of the suns

Which lighten all the world: from Me the moons

Draw silvery beams, and fire fierce loveliness.

- Ganguli XV.12



Krishna now enumerates the visible states of the Supreme Oneness. The Lord God is that refulgence of the Sun that lights the universe. The One is also the light reflected off the Moon and the brilliance (*tejas*) in fire (XV.12).

As the Force and Power that enters (*avisya*) the earth, the Lord God sustains (*dharayami*) all beings (*bhutani*) and ‘objects existing on earth’ (Gambhirananda - XV.13).

I penetrate the clay, and lend all shapes

Their living force; I glide into the plant -

Root, leaf, and bloom - to make the woodlands green

With springing sap.

The next line in verse 13 contains the Sanskrit word Soma - *soma bhutva rasatmakah*. The Lord becomes *Soma* 'the essence of all saps' to nourish all plants making them 'juicy and tasteful' (Gambhirananda). The translations of this verse vary as the 'moisture of the Moon' (B.Marjanovic) and the 'Savoury Moon' (M.N.Dutt) - or the famous Soma plant itself which is praised in the Vedas for producing 'rapturous' effects (Winthrop Sargeant).

It is accepted that *Soma* was used by the Vedic Aryan priests in sacrificial rituals, however no one seems to know exactly what *Soma* was. Some researchers consider *Soma* as an hallucinogenic mushroom (the *amanita muscaria*). I believe that whatever the true *Soma* was could only have been present in the previous cycles of time. In my view, its effectiveness and perhaps its very existence vanished in the *Kali Yuga*.

Guenon: 'The Fissures in the Great Wall'

Rene Guenon says that in our current modern era of time we have become essentially cut off from the higher realms. In 'The Reign of Quantity' he writes on the Fissures in the Great Wall, warning that our world is threatened by what he called unanticipated interferences. As we have come to accept matter as the only reality, meaning as the solidification of the world has progressed, we have come near to the limits to that solidification. And because the world can never become a completely closed system, what Guenon calls 'fissures' have occurred in the protective barrier that surrounds our world.

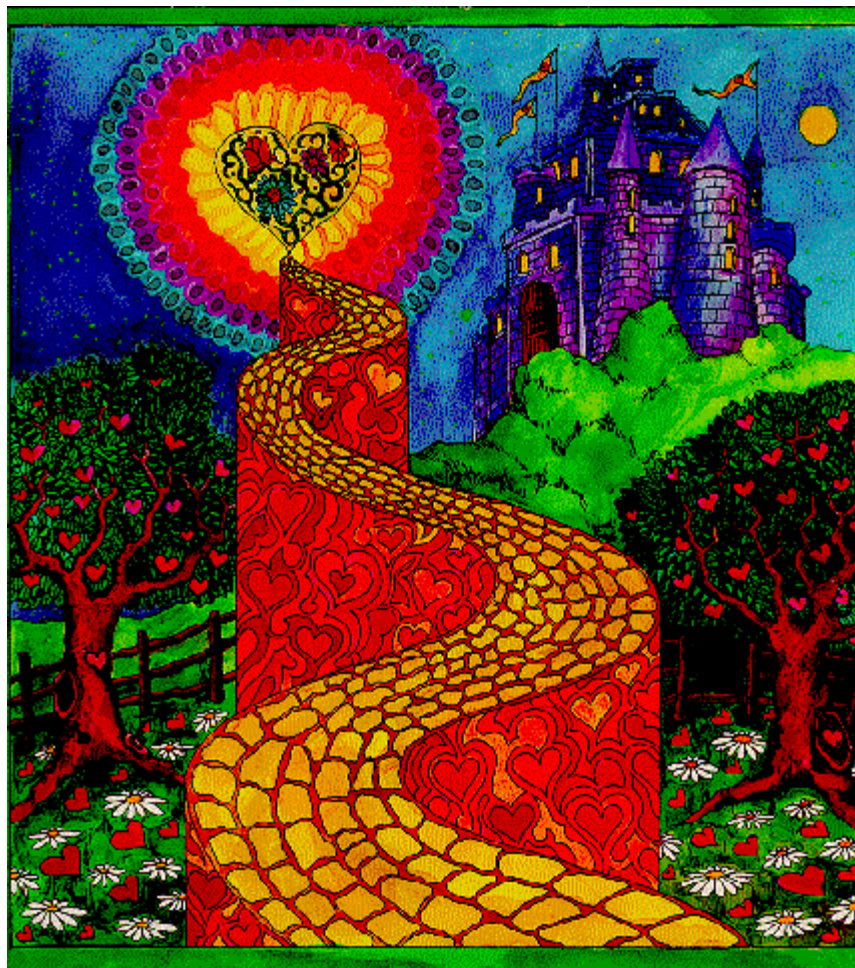
This protective barrier is known in metaphysics as the Great Wall and it exists to protect us. The Great Wall, as he terms it, is a shell and as such not only keeps energies out to act as our protection, it also serves as a limitation, a container. It exists to ensure that we are protected from being attacked by enemies from below. I assume this implies that many of these entities are not particularly evolved and may have a somewhat 'Darkside' consciousness.

Apparently in previous cycles of time before the current solidification of the world, there existed openings in the top of this protective shell that allowed us to communicate with the higher realms.

Such communication was the purpose of the ancient Spiritual Centers clustered all over the planet which function as time portals. Most of these are now abandoned and according to Rene Guenon have been intentionally taken over by the Darkside, so that

they may feed off the residual frequencies once generated there. Think of how many once sacred sites are the focal point of ongoing wars and human misery (inannareturns.com/articles/invaders.htm).

The Doors of Perception ...?



In my view those herbs and drugs that offer ‘doors’ into other dimensions, which are so often cluttered with mysterious and often seductively hypnotic entities, resonate only with the lower frequencies that would be easily accessible in a *Kali Yuga*. Authentic access to the highest Consciousness that is the Real Supreme Being, lies within the Heart as the God within us all. As Krishna has said, God is seated in the Hearts of All (*hrdi sarvasya visthitam* - XIII.17).

Becoming vital warmth,

I glow in glad, respiring frames, and pass,

With outward and with inward breath, to feed

The body by all meats.

- *Ganguli XV.14*

The Lord takes the form of fire in the bodies of all living beings (*vaisvanaras*), and through the vital breath - inhaling (*prana*) and exhaling (*apana*) - digests with this fire (*pacami*) the food eaten (XV.14). The Gambhirananda translation says that this food should be meditated on as Soma. Perhaps seeing God in your food will turn it into Soma for you.

... by entering ... in the form of the jiva of each individual being, I shall clearly manifest name and form.

- *Chandogya Upanishad VI.iii.2 as translated by Gambhirananda*

Again Krishna says that he, as the Consciousness that is identified and at one with the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*), is in the Heart (*hrdi*) of All (XV.15). Both Memory (*smrtis*) and Knowledge (*jnanam*), as well as their loss (*ca apohanam*) arise from the Supreme Oneness.

Arrogant Seers

There are several stories in the *Puranas* where accomplished Seers become a bit arrogant in their acetic achievements and are covered by delusion (*maya*) to relieve them of their pride. These cautionary tales can be a lesson to us all, as this 'vanishing wisdom' can happen to even one as great as the Sage Narada.

After cursing the two attendants of Shiva suitably, the sage [Narada] still under the earlier delusion ... due to Shiva's will. He did not wake from the delusion still again due to Shiva's will ... he became unbearably infuriated ... his wisdom had vanished due to Shiva's will.

- *Shiva Purana; Rudra Samhita I, Ch.4.3-5*

The Imperishable Akshara

Krishna tells Arjuna that in this world (*loka*) Consciousness (*purusau*) takes two forms (XV.16). One is the Perishable, the mutable *ksarah*; and the other is the Imperishable, the immutable *akshara*. The Perishable consists of all beings (*sarvani bhutani*) and the

innumerable products of *Prakriti's guna-maya*.

For in this world

Being is twofold: the Divided, one;

The Undivided, one. All things that live

Are "the Divided." That which sits apart,

"The Undivided."

- Ganguli XV.16

The Imperishable (*akshara*) is that which is covered by the illusory webs of the Lord's self-created power to veil Its Self - *Maya*; but *akshara* is that which remains forever pure, untouched, and is never altered (Gambhirananda).

Higher still is He,

The Highest, holding all, whose Name is LORD,

The Eternal, Sovereign, First! Who fills all worlds,

Sustaining them.

- Ibid XV.17

Beyond these two expressions of Consciousness, the Perishable and the Imperishable, is another higher greater being - the Supreme Self, *Paramatman* (XV.17).

The Supreme Self permeates the three worlds (*lokatrayam*) as *Isvara* (pronounced *Ishwara*). The literal meaning of *Isvara* is 'able to do' or 'capable of' (M.Monier-Williams). My understanding of *Isvara* is that it describes the aspect of the Creator that has entered into this universe. *Isvara* is often heard in popular Hindi songs, especially in the context of asking for help or protection.

Hinduism has many words that describe the various subtle aspects of the One. However the understanding that is conveyed by a word may have different divergent meanings in various schools of thought. For example *Isvara* is also a name for Shiva.

And - dwelling thus beyond

Divided Being and Undivided - I

Am called of men and Vedas, Life Supreme,

The PURUSHOTTAMA.

- Ibid XV.18

The One Supreme Self (*paramatman*) that is simultaneously within and beyond both the Perishable (*ksarah*) and the Imperishable (*akshara*) is known as *Purushottama*, the Supreme Consciousness or Person (XV.18).

Who knows Me thus,

With mind unclouded, knoweth all, dear Prince!

And with his whole soul ever worshippeth Me.

- Ibid.19

Those who come to Know the Supreme Consciousness and thereby release their being from the frequency waveform of delusion, Become all-knowing (*sarva-vit*). When you Realize that the God within you is and has always been your True Self, you will of course, meaning quite naturally, feel an overwhelming wonderful cleansing and blissful Love for that Supreme Consciousness (*Purushottama*) with all you being, all your heart (XV.19).

यो मामेवमसम्मूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् .
स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत .. १५- १९.

yo mām evam asaṁmūḍho jānāti puruṣottamam
sa sarvavid bhajati māṁ sarvabhāvena bhārata 15.19

This Love is none other than the ‘unified field’ which modern science seeks so intently. Love is the Absolute Nature of the Supreme Consciousness. Love is the Source of this universe and all others. When you Know, you will want nothing more than to remain immersed in your own ‘true love’ - your own Self as the Supreme Consciousness.

Now is the sacred, secret Mystery

Declared to thee!

Who comprehendeth this

Hath wisdom! He is quit of works in bliss!

- Ibd.XV.20

With a twinkle in his eye - I'm sure - Krishna lovingly tells his dear friend that what he has here been taught is the highest secret (*guhya-taman*). The real purpose and ultimate end of life and all lives is to Become wise (*buddhiman*) in this understanding (*buddhva*). Having attained this Knowledge, all 'duties' (*krtyam*) are fulfilled and accomplished (XV.20).

In solitude & by your own effort

Abhinavagupta reminds us that this wisdom 'cannot be attained by an intellect engaged in ordinary worldly activities' (B.Marjanovic). All who seek to be free from delusion and ignorance must in solitude and by our own efforts, confront the 'demonic' in the mind. These darkside forces are designed to hold us bound, ensnared and entrapped in temporal illusory holographic webs, until we Recognize them as our own creation.

Once we acquire the powerful Wisdom of Discrimination between the Real and the unreal, we are no longer bound in ignorance and delusion. In transcending their hold over our consciousness, we find our Way Home, back to the One from which we emerged into this grand adventure.

The Demonic is Us!

I would like to say something about the demonic forces here, especially as I am personally weary of all the endless speculation about the infamous Reptilians and their pernicious influence on human affairs.

The Darkside is what allows the existence of the universe. Those who are naive and want to believe that this earth plane is nice and sweet, and filled with rainbow puff-dreams, love to blame and dwell on the demonic forces that are playing their role and allowing the World Drama to unfold.

Yes, there are many *Loka* realms, the Myriad Worlds and ‘astral planes’ where millions of beings, including the extraterrestrials, dwell. Some are evolved and friendly, some are unevolved and solely motivated by their own selfish interests. These worlds are projections of the human mind over the Cycles of Time and have increased in complexity throughout the *Kali Yuga*. They are all expressions of the One. There is only the One.

Black Holes ‘Eat’ Everything!

A recent scientific study of black holes emphasizes the fact that black holes ‘eat’ everything that comes near them. They ‘devour’ stars and galaxies, and spew out the energy and matter that keeps Creation in its ongoing state of flux through creation (Brahman), sustained existence (support - Vishnu), and destruction (Shiva). Black Holes are part of the grand mechanism of Creation.

The ancients hid metaphysical Knowledge in metaphorical and anthropomorphic terms because they knew that the *Kali Yuga* was coming and that human consciousness was about to be ‘cooked by time’! They wanted to leave us simple symbols in the hope that a few of us might, by some lightning-strike chance, recognize and remember the Truth.

‘Caught in its mouth, whirls like a wheel ...’

‘The whole universe caught in its mouth [*Kala* - time] whirls like wheel through the activities of creation and annihilation’ (*Shiva Purana*; Stella Kramrisch). This description perfectly fits the activities of the black holes which are dotted throughout the vast blackness of space and at the center of galaxies.

The Principle of Destruction devours what It has Created and thus can be seen as ‘an eater’ of what is. This is distorted into an array of personal fears which are then projected into what really are ‘myths’ - and not Primordial traditional metaphysics. These fearful projections are the product of the human mind and have been perpetuated by an unformed consciousness that does not understand metaphysical principles and therefore continues an endless menagerie of mischief and confusion - the domain of the *Kali Yuga*, which is the Age of Confusion.

Do not allow your consciousness to get lost in the low-ways and byways of fear and paranoia. Ignore the demonic. They are you! You created them to bind your consciousness in this temporal illusory hologram. Focusing on the darkside *ad nauseum* can only empower them and waste your time and energy. Forget the astral planes - they

are illusions created by the mind of man.

Focus on the Knowledge that is Liberating Wisdom. Generate a higher frequency and leave the waveforms that resonate with the darkside 'cooties' behind. Everything you need to know is right here in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Become the God within you and you Become the God within All! Then as Krishna says, you will be 'all-knowing' (*sarva-vit*) - after which 'nothing more remains to be known' (VII.2).

Come Home! Home is in the Heart.

The Reign of Quantity & the Signs of the Times

Rene Guenon

Originally published in French, 1945

Sophia Perennis, 2001, Ghent, NY

The Presence of Siva

Stella Kramrisch

Princeton University Press, 1981, Chichester, West Sussex, UK

The Divine and the Demonic Frequency Waveforms



We all have the ability to stretch our thoughts back in time to the *Satya Yuga*, the Golden Era, before we had forgotten our Real identity as the God-within. The memories of this Golden Age are in the DNA and the subtle body. Anyone can access them in pure contemplation and with the Knowledge that Time itself is an Illusion created to set the rate of vibratory pulsation, the beat or ‘tempo’ in the holographic Matrix.

In the *Satya Yuga* we were all still consciously connected to the One, our Source. The Immeasurable Immutable Immensity ‘dreamed’ Its illusory appearance of Separation. The Supreme Soul (*Paramatman*) created the multitude of living souls (*atman*) and the *Atman* became *Purusha* in subtle luminous forms. These forms were complete in themselves and had not yet begun to take on the appearance of solidity.

The living souls (*atman*) that existed in the *Satya Yuga* were in no lack and did not ‘need’ relationships to fulfill them. Conscious that they were the expression of the One, they were filled with the Power of Love. The Sanskrit texts, the *Puranas*, say that these Golden Era beings did not have to labor for their food. When on the rare occasion they required sustenance, there were abundant ‘honey-cups’ on trees.

What happened ... ?

So how did we get from this state of bliss, purity, and fulfillment to where we are now? As Time (*kAla*) “cooked” our Consciousness (*Purusha*) down through the ensuing cycles, we made choices in our Free Will polarity universe. It is said that there are other kinds of universes, however we are here now in this one and our polarity world is made up of waveforms which carry frequencies of consciousness available from the spectrum of positive to the negative.

Whatever waveform frequency of consciousness we move toward and become connected with through our thoughts and actions, eventually seeps and spills and merges into our being, and alters our hologram. In Book XVI, Krishna enumerates the various polarity states of consciousness that will, as the result of your choices, magnetize you to either the divine or the undivine, the demonic.

The Virtues that lead to a divine destiny

Krishna lists the virtues which are destined to be acquired by those beings who are born into the consciousness that is ‘divine’ (XVI.3). In case you want to, as the country & western song goes, ‘get right with God’!

XVI.1

abhayaṃ - the fearlessness which emerges when doubt is overcome; secure and beyond danger

sattva saṃsuddhir - purity of heart & being

jñānayoga vyavasthitiḥ - persevering & abiding in the Yoga of Knowledge which is Self-Realization, the Recognition of That which you are

dānaṃ - being charitable; giving according to your ability; you give what you can, you do not give everything away as this would make you a dependent on others; *dāna* - the act of giving

damaś - being restrained, having self-control; taming and subduing (the *gunas*)

yajñāś - sacrificing the illusions of external world and performing altruistic acts

svādhyāyas - reciting sacred texts, scriptural study

tapas - generating the 'inner heat' through austerity and self-denial; penance

ārjavam - becoming that which is Righteous; *ārjava* - straight, honest, sincere

XVI.2

ahiṃsā - adhering to nonviolence, harmlessness; not causing injury to any others

satyam - being truthful, telling the truth, being honest

akrodhas - without anger (*krodhas*); anger is a primary cause of delusion and clouds the discerning judgment that allows for the Knowledge of Discrimination between the eternal Real and the temporal unreal

tyāgaḥ - renunciation

śāntir - abiding in peaceful serenity and tranquility; calm, gentle, free from passions

apaisunam - not gossiping or speaking ill of others

dayā bhūteṣv - having compassion for all beings, all creatures

aloluptvaṃ - being free from the snares of desire and lust, because you understand all too well that *sukha* (pleasure and happiness) is inevitably followed by *duhkha* (pain and the loss of happiness)

mārdavaṃ - being kind and gentle

hrīr - possessing modesty to the point of shyness

acāpalam - having discretion over fickle impulses; controlling that 'restlessness' that so often takes the form of mindless chatter or other nervous habits

XVI.3

tejaḥ - having personal vigor as health, energy and enthusiasm; also the maturity that can remain calm in the presence of foolishness

kṣamā - being patient and forgiving

dhṛtiḥ - courageous; which includes that effort and fortitude that overcomes weariness and even physical exhaustion

śaucam - the internal purity in the mind and the external purity of the body

adroho - hating none

nātimānitā - without a perilous pride; those who have Realized the One in the All lose the false arrogance of the small identity ego-self and are inclined to a dignified modesty

(Winthrop Sargeant, M. Monier-Williams & Gambhirananda)

Krishna:

*Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will
Always to strive for wisdom; opened hand
And governed appetites; and piety,
And love of lonely study; humbleness,*

*Uprightness, heed to injure nought which lives,
Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind
That lightly letteth go what others prize;*

*And equanimity, and charity
Which spieth no man's faults; and tenderness
Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,
Fluttered by no desires;*

a bearing mild,

Modest, and grave, with manhood nobly mixed,

With patience, fortitude, and purity;

An unrevengeful spirit, never given

To rate itself too high;

- such be the signs,

O Indian Prince! of him whose feet are set

On that fair path which leads to heavenly birth!

- Ganguli XVI.1-3

None of these should turn you into a rigidly sanctimonious, humorless prig, judgmental of others, flaunting your superior spirituality. These ‘virtues’ are simply the result of Knowing that everyone and everything is God. We are all the One Veiled in a multitude of beings, who are all struggling within the bonds of delusion and ignorance through a plethora of cyclical stages.

How can you judge what is you, but in another form and yet another phase of their awakening? There but for the Grace of God, go you. How can you harm your own Self?

Waking up from delusion or enjoying it!

When you Know that all Beings are in this process of awakening from their delusion or enjoying it, you will quite naturally have Compassion for them all - no matter how they ‘see’ you or how they treat you. As Jesus said, ‘Forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ Whatever they do in ignorance returns to them, not to you - unless you interfere and judge them in a way that attaches their frequency of consciousness into yours, meaning their consciousness becomes yours.

There is a big difference in discerning and making the distinction between what is right, *sattvic*, and truth from what is demonic delusion - and being ‘judgmental’ of others in an attachment to a false sense of arrogant superiority. On the Path Home you must utilize the Wisdom of Discernment to perceive what is the Real, and in the consciousness of non-attachment learn to discriminate and discern what is the Imperishable Real from the temporal unreal. Such discrimination is not priggish ‘judgment’ of the others - who are All the One.

What is a saint and how do they behave?

In the west we have an ideal of the life of a saint that is probably false. I don't believe that Krishna is telling Arjuna to be a self-effacing saccharine pill. In fact if you recall, they are still standing in the middle of the battlefield while two massive armies await the signal to slaughter each other.



Krishna wants Arjuna to act, to kill all the 'bad guys' - but he wants Arjuna to act in the Knowledge of Wisdom that incorporates the frequency of non-attachment. Krishna is helping Arjuna to understand that all these warriors are God Veiled as the personality selves of the arrogant wicked Duryodhana, his blind father blind Dhritarashtra, and the others who have thrown in their lot on the side of the demonic in the form of greed and ruthless acquisition.

A sense of humor, please!

One writer says that in India saints spend their time composing poetry and songs praising God. Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair emphasizes the idea that the person who is a master of the *gunas* need have no fear of the five senses. Saint Teresa of Avila is said to have wanted only nuns who possessed a sense of humor in her order.

The Saint Teresa in Kolkata (Calcutta) who took care of the lepers, the sick and the poorest of the poor was an amazing stellar inspiration to us all. However we may not all find our own expression in that way. We are all different, and when we Remember who we are and awaken to our true identity, who can say what Path we will take? It is obvious to me that the Creator loves surprise and revels in the unique gems that lie within each human heart. Who can say what you will do? Whatever that will be, I assure you it will not be boring. God is Love!

It's their job!



In the *Mahabharata*, Vishnu's bird Garuda (*Suparna*) shows the ascetic student Galava, who is worthy, the Invisible Realms which lie in the Four Directions beyond the 'end of the world.' In the southern quarter Dakshina, the student is shown the demonic, the *Rakshasas* whose job it is to assail those who have not perfected their souls (J.A.B.van Buitenen).

Here are many thousands of Rakshasas [demons] who have been created to stand in the way of men coming to these [higher] regions [of the gods and Rishis/Seers] and who can be perceived by those who have not brought their souls under control.

- The Mahabharata, Udyoga Parva, Ch.109.8; translated by M.N. Dutt

Sinking into demonic frequencies

Returning to the demonic and how we fell from Knowledge and Grace, Krishna now enumerates those qualities which propel us along the slippery slopes of consciousness, like water spiraling down the drain into the demonic realms. Say someone is good and the conversation is often over; say someone is bad and the story just begins, for the ways of the darkside are numerous and tend to take on an endless permutations. As they say, the devil is in the details.

*Deceitfulness, and arrogance, and pride,
Quickness to anger, harsh and evil speech,
And ignorance, to its own darkness blind,-
These be the signs, My Prince! of him whose birth
Is fated for the regions of the vile.*

XVI.4

dambho - hypocrisy and fraudulence; religious ostentation, the hypocrite who displays virtue to feel superior

darpo**h**imānaś - is the combination of two words (darpah & atimanah) meaning the arrogance and insolence of those who are hostile in their conceit and haughtiness (which Duryodhana epitomizes).

krodhaḥ - anger that deludes

pāruṣyam - that which is harsh or rough, also applying to rude language; reproach, insult

ajñānaṃ - this is ignorance, the absence of Knowledge and therefore a lack of Discrimination

āsurīm - the demonic; those multitude of inauspicious tendencies which arise from the combinations of the *gunas rajas* and *tamas*

(Winthrop Sargeant, M. Monier-Williams & Gambhirananda)

These are the qualities possessed by those who are born with a demonic (*asuric*) nature (*sampadam*) and destiny (XVI.4). The *guna tamas* is said to be the source of ignorance. Abhinavagupta uses the words ‘demonic particles or elements’ to describe the nature of ignorance (B.Marjanovic). This brings to mind the now familiar idea in quantum physics that light and matter can be considered as both waves and particles.

An osmotic immersion in vibrational rates ...

When Abhinavagupta describes ignorance as ‘particles’ I suggest he is pointing to the idea that consciousness itself may be considered as waveforms which carry specific frequencies. These frequencies of say ignorance or enlightenment may enter our holograms, either individually or as groups, and alter our consciousness for better or worse. Thus it is by an osmotic immersion in vibrational rates of frequencies that we are drawn closer to the Divine, our Home, or further away from our Source to the demonic.

The waveforms/particles that resonate with the *guna tamas* draw our consciousness into those frequencies which bind us in ignorance (XVI.5). While the waveforms produced by

the *guna sattva* allow us to cultivate the Knowledge of the Real in a state of non-attachment and contentment. It is through the nurturing energies of *sattva* that we may acquire a similitude (*sadharmya*) with the God-within that simultaneously permeates the All. The *guna sattva* opens the door to our Liberation (*vimokshaya*).

*The Heavenly Birth brings to deliverance,
So should'st thou know! The birth with Asuras
Brings into bondage. Be thou joyous, Prince!
Whose lot is set apart for heavenly Birth.*

- Ganguli XVI.5

Krishna assures his friend that Arjuna was born with a divine destiny. The reader might hope that Arjuna's *sattvic* nature will empower him to inevitably overcome and defeat the demonic, who are represented on the battlefield of Kurukshetra by Duryodhana, Dhritarashtra, Bhishma, Karna, Drona, and their assembled armies.

*Two stamps there are marked on all living men,
Divine and Undivine; I spake to thee
By what marks thou shouldst know the Heavenly Man,
Hear from me now of the Unheavenly!*

- Ibid.XVI.6



Kurukshetra, the battlefield that is the setting for the Bhagavad Gita and Krishna's discourse to his friend Arjuna, is in fact symbolic of the war that rages in us all. Consider that the wars which are waged in the external world are reflections of our own personal struggle between good and evil. Just as the temporal illusory hologram is projected from our consciousness, wars on earth are the projections of the human heart and mind in conflict.

The War within ...

Krishna fully understands this inner war when he says that there are two types of beings in this world - the divine *daivas* and the demonic *asuras* (XVI.6). Each of us has these qualities in our *gunas*. *Sattva* relates to the divine and *tamas* to the demonic; *rajas* serves to activate them both. When you think of the deity Shiva as the principle connected with *tamas*, keep in mind that Shiva has both the power to delude - and that power which destroys and annihilates delusion.

*They comprehend not, the Unheavenly,
How Souls go forth from Me; nor how they come
Back unto Me: nor is there Truth in these,
Nor purity, nor rule of Life.*

- Ibid.XVI.7

The souls who have allowed the demoniacal (*asuric*) frequencies to dominate their consciousness are ignorant of the underlying metaphysical Truth (*satyam*) of this universe. Abhinavagupta says that they do not know the source from which 'this universe emerges' (*pravritti*), nor are they aware of its cyclical Dissolutions (B.Marjanovic). How many people are aware today of the Cycles of Time or that we are now in the *Kali Yuga*?

Deluded by the appearance of Separation, those who have aligned with the demonic frequencies have no Knowledge of the Cosmic Laws that formulate the structure of our world. In such ignorance there is little motivation for goodness (*acaras*) and purity (*saucam*). They have forgotten the God-within and therefore there is no Truth (*satyam*) to be found in them (XVI.7).

*"This world
Hath not a Law, nor Order, nor a Lord,"
So say they: "nor hath risen up by Cause
Following on Cause, in perfect purposing,
But is none other than a House of Lust."
- Ganguli XVI.8*

Without the experience of feeling ‘connected’ with the Greater Reality, these demonic types claim that there is no truth (*asatyam*) in this world (XVI.8). For them there is no God on which to stand, no solid ground to build their lives on with integrity and honesty. The demonic are limited to the perceptions of the five senses, and their gratification. They say that this world is only motivated by desire (*kama*). Perhaps the current axiom ‘sex sells’ sums this up perfectly.

*And, this thing thinking, all those ruined ones -
Of little wit, dark-minded - give themselves
To evil deeds, the curses of their kind.
- Ibid.XVI.9*

These souls who have temporarily lost their way and exist in the consciousness of Separation from the One, become the enemies (*ahitas*) of the world. Once we lose awareness of the Real Self (*atman*) within, our intelligence diminishes into deeper delusion and ignorance. The men and women who have no Knowledge are driven to commit selfish acts which are destructive to the world (XVI.9).

I do not believe that there is any one person who is all bad. Perhaps there are some who come close to being ruled by the darkside; but until they die, their soul remains within them waiting for recognition. However as the old saying goes, ‘the road to hell is paved with good intentions’ and many have lost their integrity, their wholeness, their soul trying to ‘do good’ only to find themselves mired in webs of evil.

Our broken hearts & minds ...

I don't think the businessmen who wanted better lives for their families, and who saw themselves as doing good by providing jobs for others, were intent on poisoning our land, air and water. How many idealistic determined young men and women have made their way to the power centers of civilization to make the world a better place, only to find themselves mired in hypocrisy, mendacity, and a corrupt system that relies on favors and favoritism. How many of us even now sit bewildered, broken hearted, head in hands, wondering how it could have all gone so wrong.

Consciousness is Everything!

Without the Knowledge of Discrimination, without an adamant connection to the God-within, and an understanding rooted in primordial metaphysics, none of our endeavors can succeed. The only way we can conquer the 'darkside' is to shine the Light of Truth on the thick miasma of ignorance and delusion, and Remember who we are.

When we achieve similitude (*sadharmya*) with the God within us, we can in confidence work for the well-being of this world - *lokasamgraha*. Even then we have to face the warp and weave of a multitude of holograms. Krishna does not promise Arjuna that he will succeed against the demonic.

In the *Kali Yuga*, the consciousness in which actions are performed is of greater value than successful results. Krishna does not guarantee that non-attachment will bring success, only that it purifies and sets us free!

In the net of black delusion, they fall down to a foul hell



In the *Kali Yuga* the Knowledge that is Wisdom has nearly vanished. The Sanskrit *Puranas* say that in the golden *Satya Yuga*, *Dharma* stands happily on four legs; but in the *Kali*, teeters on only one leg. In our current *Kali Yuga* greed is valued over truth and being successful is more important than being honest. The word integrity is seldom spoken and people ridicule the study of metaphysical principles.

The *Kali Yuga* is the time of the darkside; it is their ‘turn’ so to speak. In my lifetime (1945-) the pernicious and insidious influence of the dark forces has increased in ways I could never have imagined, and gets worse by the day.

In a culture where the moral imperative is that ‘greed is good’ and people have little faith beyond their selfish interests, most have come to feel that nothing matters beyond their own insatiable (*duspuram*) desires (*kama*).

The *Vishnu* and the *Linga Puranas* delineate the symptoms of the *Kali Yuga*. We are told that ‘thieves will be kings, and kings will be thieves.’ These days most people emulate the rich, those who by-hook-or-by-crook have grabbed the greatest wealth. Today a clever lawyer can make guilt irrelevant.

Hypocrisy & ‘Spin’



Another symptom of the *Kali Yuga* which I find stunning is that ‘people prefer false ideas.’ This fact is obviously well understood by people who hire public relations firms and consultants to ‘spin’ the truth and create acceptable images for those who are in the public eye. We no longer want the truth, we now ‘prefer’ a sugar coated lie.

This acceptance of ‘spin’ makes our leaders, and the others who were supposed to respect, into nothing more than hypocrites. They say one thing and do another. We are lied to so that the agendas of the rich and powerful can be implemented using our money from taxes, or our savings as ‘investments’ in the companies of their rich cronies.

Krishna describes the people who have demoniacal characteristics as being hypocrites (*dambha*) who are intoxicated with arrogance (*mada*) and pride (*mana*). People who are living in demonic frequencies are deluded by their own ignorance (XVI.10). They actually seem to believe that it is fine to be totally selfish. Their creed is every man for himself and they don’t care who or what they harm to achieve their ends. They reason ‘better him or her than me!’

Krishna says that those who are delusional use impure (*asuci*) practices (*vratah*), which covers the spectrum from ritualistic black magic to propaganda and the ubiquitous mendacity of high-priced lawyers.

*Surrendered to desires insatiable,
Full of deceitfulness, folly, and pride,
In blindness cleaving to their errors,*

- Ibid. XVI.10

The trouble with living only to fulfill one's own desires is that this thirst can never be quenched. The nature of desire (*kama*) is that it is insatiable. Even children become easily bored with their toys and demand the next new thing. So it is with grown-ups who become bored with whatever they have 'gotten' and must continually seek the new high, the next thrill and conquest.

Those who have no connection with the Eternal One that dwells in the Heart are driven by an insatiable urge to consume 'stuff' - the temporal illusions in the external hologram. This compulsion to consumption now appears to be leading mankind towards extinction. It seems we may eventually consume even the Earth herself.

Mother's little helpers ...

This is an era of anxiety (*cintam*) when many people are taking one kind of 'life-style drug' or another. These manmade molecules regulate and modify moods, our feelings through manipulating and intruding on our delicate endocrine system.

Serotonin inhibitors - with their unintended consequences and bizarre side effects - are dispensed like candy to keep the population smoothed so we, like the comical Coneheads, will continue to consume mass quantities of manufactured products that are in turn cluttering and poisoning the planet and her oceans.

I suggest that depression might be considered as an opportunity to think and not something to be avoided with endless prescription drugs. Depression is the call from your soul to examine your heart and mind, to look within, and begin to wake up from this miasma of amnesia and the frequencies of delusion that have kept us bound in the temporal illusory hologram.

Krishna says that this anxiety (*cintam*) is beyond measure (*aparimeyam*) for those who have given in to the demonic frequencies and are convinced (*niscitas*) that their own self-gratification (*upabhoga*) is the goal of life (XVI.11). Abhinavagupta interprets this verse to mean that they will be tormented by anxiety and countless worries in lifetime after lifetime until the final Dissolution (B.Marjanovic).

... caught

Into the sinful course, they trust this lie

As it were true - this lie which leads to death -

Finding in Pleasure all the good which is,

And crying "Here it finisheth!"

- Ibid. XVI.11

Strangled with hundreds of nooses of expectation ...

‘Strangled with hundreds of nooses of expectation’ is J.A.B. van Buitenen’s translation of verse 12 - and my favorite. Somehow the imagery of the ‘nooses of expectation’ paints such a vivid picture for me. Perhaps this preference is my childhood influence, as I watched many hours of ‘Cowboy Thrills’ on 1950s American television and saw countless crooks and cattle thieves being hung from a rope noose on a lonesome half-dead tree in the wild desolate west.

Ensnared

In nooses of a hundred idle hopes,

Slaves to their passion and their wrath, they buy

Wealth with base deeds, to glut hot appetites;

- Ibid. XVI.12

People get angry when their desires (*kama*) are unfulfilled and frustrated. Anger (*krodha*) clouds the intelligence and skews judgment with delusion. In anger we become confused. We don’t see clearly. Our actions are motivated by the compulsion to gratify our insatiable desires. Anger destroys wisdom.

In such deluded states of desperation people will resort to any means to gratify their cravings (*asa*). They begin to bend the rules to suit their purpose. The end justifies the means and they will resort to any means - however wrong - to get what they want which usually involves money. Most people assume that only more and more money can relieve their despair and realize their fantasies. They are snared and bound by their own expectations.

"Thus much, today," they say, "we gained! thereby

Such and such wish of heart shall have its fill;

And this is ours! and th' other shall be ours!

- *Ibid. XVI.13*

Krishna gives us a glimpse of what the fat-cat businessman, despot tyrant, or criminal boss might say to him or herself. Cuban cigar and brandy in hand, deep in the privacy of their own thoughts comes --- ‘Today I closed the deal. A majority of the shares are mine. Tomorrow I’ll get more - one way or another. I’ll take over more companies and expand my control over more industries, more territories. My multinational corporation will be the biggest and I will be among the top billionaires in this world. Enormous wealth (*dhanam*) will be (*bhavisyati*) mine!’

Today we slew a foe, and we will slay

Our other enemy tomorrow! Look!

Are we not lords? Make we not goodly cheer?

Is not our fortune famous, brave, and great?

- *Ibid. XVI.14*

Perhaps the criminal kingpin will say to himself --- ‘Yesterday I killed (*hatas*) my enemies. Anyone who gets in my way will also be murdered (*hanisye*). I am the big man, the lord of my world, who enjoys power over everyone in it. Power is happiness.’

Rich are we, proudly born! What other men

Live like to us? Kill, then, for sacrifice!

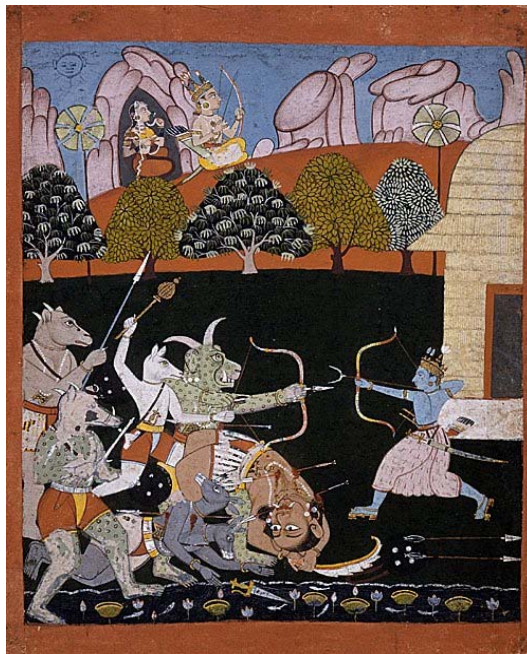
Cast largesse, and be merry!" So they speak

Darkened by ignorance;

- *Ibid. XVI.15*

Ignorance is the fuel for all sin. Deluded (*vimohitas*) by ignorance the tyrants tell themselves that they are superior to others. To them people are like children who need to be told what to do and how to think. I once knew a man who watched a film on bee hives over and over, so that he might learn how to structure his companies and control his employees more efficiently. People are considered to be no better than sheep who require herding.

The Mechanics of the Kali Yuga, our current Age of Confusion



In a truly important book, ‘Taking the Risk out of Democracy: Corporate Propaganda versus Freedom and Liberty’ the author Alex Carey exposes the mechanics of propaganda and shows how we as Americans have been lied to and manipulated. Included in the symptoms of the *Kali Yuga* are:

- People will prefer to choose false ideas.
- Base [low minded] men who have gained a certain amount of learning (without having the virtues necessary for its use) will be esteemed as sages.
- Thieves will become kings, and kings will be the thieves.
- Rulers will confiscate property and use it badly. They will cease to protect the people.

Mr. Carey says that today the ‘common man ... has never been so confused, mystified and baffled; his most intimate conceptions of himself, of his needs, and indeed the very nature of human nature, have been subject to skilled manipulation and construction in the interests of corporate efficiency and profit.’

Carey’s book says that the American people have been subjected to a 75-year long multibillion dollar intentional assault on our freedom to think and to choose: ‘... propaganda techniques have been developed and deployed (in the United States)... to control and deflect the purposes of the domestic electorate in a democratic country in the interests of the privileged segments of that society.’

What is propaganda?

‘Propaganda is the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols ... Collective attitudes are amenable to many modes of alteration ... intimidation ... economic coercion ... drill. But their arrangement and rearrangement occurs principally under the impetus of significant symbols; and the technique of using significant symbols for this purpose is propaganda.’ (Laswell, Bradson, and Janowitz 1953:776-80).

People are polarized by symbols. They see life in terms of good and bad, black and white, and thus are more easily manipulated. The ‘enemy’ out there may indeed seem evil. But in the solitude of our own hearts, we know that we are all a mix of both. None of us is so clearly saint or sinner. Instead of emotionally polarizing, we could have a dialogue, a discussion; and yet, it seems we can be manipulated by propaganda into thinking almost anything.

‘Engineering consent - without their knowing it’

Walter Lippman (an eminent journalist), and Edward Bernays (who just happened to be the nephew of Sigmund Freud) were, according to Carey, two men who excelled in manipulating mass consciousness.

Bernays is famous for saying, ‘If we understand the mechanisms and motives of the group mind, it is now possible to control and regiment the masses according to our will without their knowing it.’ [from *Toxic Sludge is Good for You!* Common Courage Press]. Bernays called this ‘engineering consent.’

The World War I propaganda campaign of Mr. Lippman and Mr. Bernays ‘produced within six months so intense an anti-German hysteria as to permanently impress American business (and Adolph Hitler, among others) with the potential of large scale propaganda to control public opinion.’

Bernays found a very practical use for his Uncle Sigmund's science of psychology. ‘When the war ended, Bernays later wrote, business realized that the general public could now be harnessed to their cause as it had been harnessed to the war, to the national cause.’ (Alex Carey).

‘The ways & means of changing minds or binding minds to their convictions’

Today we have far more efficient means of distributing propaganda than ever before.

The television, the radio, the media in general, and now the computer have made it easy for the masters of ‘spin’ and the public relations firms with their armies of lawyers, lobbyists, and paid-for-scientists to tell us what to think so that we will all be good little consumers.

The true religion of the West is consumerism, and we are succeeding in spreading that cult around the world. Do not misunderstand me - I have nothing against commerce and I don’t want to return, as they say, to the Stone Age. But when consumption is valued above all else, even life, then it is time we re-examined our priorities. It is time to look deeply into our way of thinking.

Bamboozled & seduced!

In 1927, Harold Lasswell wrote ‘Propaganda Techniques in World War I’ and suggested that ‘familiarity with the behavior of the ruling public (meaning those who had so easily succumbed to the propaganda) has bred contempt ... as a consequence, despondent democrats turned elitist, no longer trusting intelligent public opinion, and therefore [decided that they] should themselves determine how to make up the public mind, how to bamboozle and seduce in the name of the public good...’

Alex Carey points out that ‘propaganda has become a profession. The modern world is busy developing a corps of men who do nothing but study the ways and means of changing minds or binding minds to their convictions.’ But they may find a surprise at the end of the road.

... and so they fall -

Tossed to and fro with projects, tricked, and bound

In net of black delusion, lost in lusts -

Down to foul Naraka [hell].

- Ibid. XVI.16

Deluded (*moha*) by their fantasies of imagined superiority, thinking only of what they want, these tyrants of clouded intelligence fall (*patanti*) into a foul (*asucau*) hell (*narake*).

The Mega-Rich

Did you ever wish you were one of the mega-rich? One of those billionaires with their 40,000 sq. ft houses hidden behind great walls of gated communities, those men and women who now control our world, oblivious to the toxic legacy they are leaving our planet - along with the destruction of what perhaps was once the world's most successful democracy.

The rich are praised and exalted in our culture. Such adulation naturally brings envy and the desire to be born into their world. However Krishna tells the warrior Arjuna the fate of these bloodlines.

Krishna describes them as self-centered and conceited (*atma-sambhavitah*), with an inflated opinion of themselves (XVI.17). They are intoxicated by their arrogance (*mada*). Grandiose wealth inflicts them with pride (*mana*). They are stubborn (*stabdhah*), obstinately they cling to a lack of humility. In their eyes, their success in accumulating piles of money makes them 'better' than others.

Whatever altruistic acts (*yajante*) they perform, whatever charity is given is done only for show (*dambhena*). When they give, it is most often to bolster their own self-esteem, to give more than their rivals. This is not charity – as Krishna says, this is vanity.

Conceited, fond,

Stubborn and proud, dead-drunken with the wine

Of wealth, and reckless, all their offerings

Have but a show of reverence, being not made

In piety of ancient faith.

- Ibid. XVI.17

Not all who are wealthy are bad. There are those who have learned to use the freedom and independence money can bring to further their own spiritual evolution and hopefully, the well being of others. They have developed humility and compassion. There are others however who have come to believe that 'greed is good' - and that their delusional sense of superiority to others, entitles them to use and abuse not only human beings, but also the Earth and her resources.

Krishna tells Arjuna that because these people resonate with the negative polarity, they

have no understanding of their relationship to the universe. Their lives are not built on Eternal Truth – on *Dharma*. They are lost, living in a demonic hologram with little enlightenment and, as is all too evident from the recent poisoning of the planet, ‘their dreadful actions capable of destroying this world’ (XVI.9).

Thus vowed

To self-hood, force, insolence, feasting, wrath,

These My blasphemers, in the forms they wear

And in the forms they breed, my foe men are,

Hateful and hating;

- Ibid. XVI.18

Compulsively moving from one insatiable desire to the next, these sad beings are intoxicated by their ephemeral delusions of power. Think tanks daily produce new false doctrines to support the misdeeds of greed and avarice. Notions such as the bottom line, the trickle down theory, and the end justifies the means are spun into fresh webs of confusion to justify any action and bewilder the herd. Lies are truth and truth is a lie. And so it goes, spiraling down - ‘People prefer false ideas.’

Silent and cold, death waits for ...

Don’t imagine that those who are puffed up with their self-importance are happy and at peace with themselves. Addicted to power with the hounds of hell ever at their backs, these tyrants are ever aware that another warrior, someone younger and smarter, will come along one day and conquer their kingdom. So they worry, and to remain in the lead they become workaholics.

In their desire and anger those of a tyrannical nature are ‘strangled with hundreds of nooses of expectation’ and there is no escape, for there is never enough money and no relief for their fears. Indulging in consumption for reward and relief, they buy yet another villa, another yacht. Will one more do it for them? How many deals, takeovers, and whores will it take to make them relax, to forget, to satiate their desires for a New-York-minute? And all the while, Death is silently coldly breathing down their necks.

Every day tyrants count their victories – as the saying goes, money is the scorecard. Every act is justified by their delusional sense of power and importance over others. As

masters of this world, they deserve what others do not.

They are hurled into the wombs of the demonic ...

Speaking as the God within us all, as *Paramatman*, Krishna tells Arjuna that he always (*ajasram*) casts (*ksipami*) these whose consciousness is deluded into the wombs (*yonisu*) of the demonic (*asurisu*). My understanding of this is based on the Laws of Magnetism. Like attracts like.

It's not our parents, our families, and childhood environment that turn us into flawed creatures that become miserable self-pitying losers. The truth is bitter - but the truth is that we are born into circumstances that resonate perfectly with our own nature based on our past actions.

The people who we attract, and who are attracted to us, have similar natures and join in setting the stage for the drama that is of our own making. This self-scripted drama affords us with the opportunity to evolve. As Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair says, 'Punishment is built into the very process that moves towards higher possibility.'

... cruel, evil, vile,

Lowest and least of men, whom I cast down

Again, and yet again, at end of lives,

- Ibid. XVI.19

Magnetism is the Law in the Invisible Realms where like is drawn to like and Krishna 'hurls them ceaselessly into demonic wombs,' meaning they are drawn to similar bloodlines to be born into. Thus they are brought up with the same values, a reverence for power and control, and a lack of love that sadly leaves them empty, craving.

Into some devilish womb, whence - birth by birth -

The devilish wombs re-spawn them, all beguiled;

And, till they find and worship Me, sweet Prince!

Tread they that Nether Road.

- Ibid. XVI.20

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि .
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् .. १६- २०..

āsurīm yonim āpannā mūḍhā janmanijanmani
mām aprāpyaiva kaunteya tato yānty adhamām gatim 16.20

Following the path of self-delusion, these unfortunates may, according to Krishna, eventually ‘lose their wits’ and fall into the temporal illusory holographic matrices of various Demonic Worlds, such as the *Rasatala* and *Patala Lokas* --- but not for all eternity.

The Doors of Hell

*Are threefold, whereby men to ruin pass, -
The door of Lust, the door of Wrath, the door
Of Avarice. Let a man shun those three!*

- Ibid. XVI.21

*He who shall turn aside from entering
All those three gates of Narak [hell], wendeth straight
To find his peace, and comes to Swarga's gate [the supreme goal].*

- Ibid. XVI.22

These *Loka* Worlds, the Phantasmal Hierarchies, are temporal. The Creator is Love and never so cruel as to doom any being forever. These arrogant deluded ones are, after all, playing their part, doing their job. They are serving to hold the temporal illusory hologram together until the time of the Dissolution.

But in the Twilight of the *Kali Yuga*, there most assuredly is no need to envy these who are strangled with the hundreds of ‘nooses of expectation.’

*Taking the Risk Out of Democracy,
Corporate Propaganda versus Freedom and Liberty*
Alex Carey, 1997; University of Illinois Press

Freedom & Transcendence
Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair
Manohar, 1982, New Delhi

As our faith is, so will we be



In the final verse of Book XVI, Krishna makes his stand on and commitment to working for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*) perfectly patently clear. Krishna tells his friend Arjuna that he should (*arhasi*) perform (*kartum*) actions (*karma*) and work here (*iha*) in this world (XVI.24).

Working for the well-being of the world (*lokasamgraha*) is Arjuna's duty, his *Dharma* as a warrior. This work is to be rooted in that Knowledge which is found in the sacred writings, the *sastra* (pronounced shastra). The sacred Sanskrit writings, the *shastras*, of Hinduism fall into two categories. One is *shruti* - meaning that which is heard; and the other is *smrtis* - that which is remembered.

Shruti is valued over *smrtis* because these are the words which the ancient Seers (*Rishis*) heard in their deepest states of meditative connection to the One. The four Vedas - the *Rig Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, the *Artharva Veda*, and the *Yajur Veda* - along with the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads* are all considered to be *shruti*. The Vedas are eternal sacred sounds which exist in the element Ether, the *Akasha*.

The *Mahabharata*, which contains the *Bhagavad Gita*, is called the Fifth Veda in India; however many scholars feel that it is 'remembered' *smrtis*. The *Bhagavad Gita* is exceptional in this regard and is considered by most to be *shruti*. The *Gita* 'extends the thoughts of the four Vedas' (M.N.Dutt).

The poet-author of the *Mahabharata*, Vyasa, was obviously an inspired and excellent authority on the Sanskrit scriptures. The name Vyasa means the 'compiler' and it is said that Vyasa compiled - meaning put together and assembled - the four Vedas, the *Upanishads*, and

18 Puranas.

Vyasa was clearly an enlightened being and his profound knowledge of the vast Wisdom found in the ancient Sanskrit texts is the reason I am drawn to the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Mahabharata*. Every time I read these wonderful lines, I deepen my understanding of my relationship with this universe and learn something new. The *Bhagavad Gita* with unerring brilliance sorts through worlds of Wisdom in the Vedas and the Upanishads, and offers the reader supernal gems of clarity.

The Razor's Edge

Krishna warns Arjuna to rely on the *sastra* when he performs his duty and works for this world. The great Kashmir Saivite Abhinavagupta extends this warning, saying that those who ignore the sacred texts and listen only to their own mind 'undoubtedly fall into hell' (B.Marjanovic).

The spiritual Path is traditionally compared to walking on the edge of a razor and with good reason. The Creator of this magnificent and awe-filled world, which is packed with innumerable complexities and diversity, would surely not go to such lengths to bind Its Selves in the Illusion of Separation - and then make release and liberation (*moksha*) from this self-created Delusion easy.

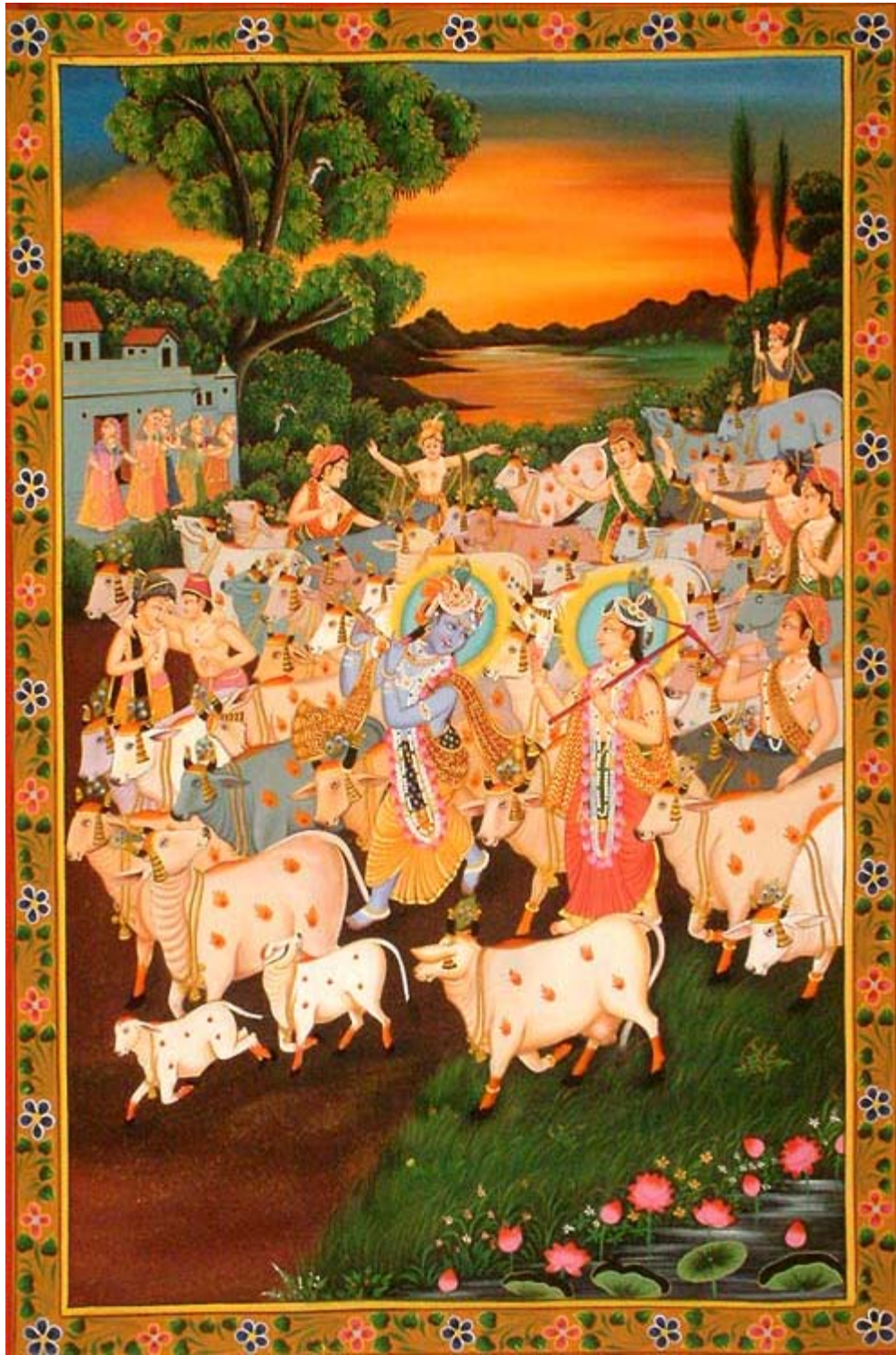
The Way Home is fraught and cluttered with pitfalls, traps, and perils. The Way Home is after all and above all the greatest challenge that human consciousness can and will ever face. You need to become something of a warrior, like Arjuna, but a warrior in Spirit and in Consciousness. The sacred texts can be your Sword of Discrimination.

Self-created distractors, the seducers that snare our consciousness

Anyone who has spent time in meditation knows that voices and visions arise in the silence of darkness. But who and what do you trust? The sacred texts can offer you solid ground, a higher frequency of consciousness to lift you above the temporal illusory 'temptations' presented to you by the astral phantoms of what I call the Phantasmal Hierarchies. This also applies to the perils of pride that come with the lower realms. The sacred Sanskrit texts, like the *Bhagavad Gita*, will help you to discriminate, and know who and what to trust.

The Myriad Worlds are quite properly called myriad because there are so many of them. You can spend lifetimes tuning into and exploring these temporal realms, some of which are exceedingly beautiful, while others only 'appear' lovely to seduce you. However - buyer beware! These realms are temporal, not eternal. At the end of a great Cycle of Time, they all face the same fate and experience the Great Dissolution.

Discernment & Discrimination



Those who want to find the Way Home leave the temporal Illusions of this world behind in order to acquire the Knowledge of Discrimination that is the Primordial Wisdom. They seek the eternal (*avyayam*) - that which does not perish, the imperishable (*akshara*). Real Freedom is the final Liberation from the repetitive permutations and inequities of the Cycles of Time and release from this impermanent (*anityam*) unhappy (*asukham*) world (*loka* - IX.33).

On your Way Home, whenever you are in doubt, or tempted and bedazzled by visions or voices, the *Bhagavad Gita* is there to rely on as your Cosmic Sword of Wisdom. The words of Vyasa's Krishna, the loving blue one who plays the flute, will purify your consciousness

and quickly sweep away the dark forces - that you created - which seek to bind your consciousness in the temporal.

The *Bhagavad Gita* will always reveal a deeper meaning each time you read it. There are moments when I repeat a few of the Sanskrit words from the *Gita*, like a prayer to raise the frequency of my consciousness. These Sanskrit words have power!

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् .
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् .. १२- ७..

p.p4

teṣāṃ ahaṃ samuddhartā mṛtyusaṃsārasāgarāt
bhavāmi na cirāt pārtha mayy āveśitacetāsām 12.7

I particularly like *mayy avesita cetasam* (XII.7), pronounced something like, mah-ah-y-ah-vey-shee-tah chay-ta-sahm (no long a's, except for the chAy). It means something like - may our consciousness be directed to enter into the Lord, the Supreme One. I trust the *Bhagavad Gita* to surround me with the Light of Truth that leads me Home on the Razor's Edge, safely passing over and beyond all forms of ignorance and the pitfalls of the Myriad Worlds.

Book XVII: The Three Kinds of Faith

*Arjuna: If men forsake the holy ordinance,
Heedless of Shastras, yet keep faith at heart
And worship, what shall be the state of those,
Great Krishna! Sattwan, Rajas, Tamas? Say!
- Ganguli XVII.1*

Arjuna asks Krishna what state of consciousness will emerge in one who has faith but who does not follow the laws, rites, injunctions of the sacred writings (XVII.1). In response Krishna teaches his friend the profound implications of faith (*sraddha*) on consciousness. Whatever we are is the result of our faith.

'...as our faith is, so will we be'

What we believe truly does matter, for our faith reflects our beliefs and lays the foundation for our consciousness. The etymology of 'faith' is connected to the word 'trust' and in this

world, the shifting temporal illusory hologram, we must all come to trust something.

Some trust only money and power, some place their trust in human love and relationships, while others trust only God. Those who believe that there is nothing in this world beyond their own selfish desires will find it easy to use and abuse others. Those who love God and see God in All will feel a compassionate gentleness for All.

It's only human nature to ...

The faith (*sraddha*) of each one of us follows the form (*anurupa*) of our own unique individual nature (XVII.3). This is what we call our 'human nature' when we say 'it's only human nature' to behave in a particular way. This 'nature' is produced by the relative distribution of *Prakriti*'s (Nature) three qualities, the three *gunas* in each of us.

The *gunas* are ever in motion, one seeking dominance over the other, shifting our consciousness. The *gunas* operate on their objects in the external hologram through the internal organs of the five senses. The five senses are always transmitting information as frequency waveforms to the brain. Our consciousness is formed by our reaction and attachment, or non-attachment to these transmitted waveforms.

When the *guna sattva* predominates, our consciousness resonates with that frequency which is represented by the gods (*Devas*) who are the embodiment of primordial metaphysical Principles (XVII.4).

The ETs

When the *guna rajas* is dominant, then consciousness resonates with and becomes open to the spirit worlds and those worlds that are inhabited by the demonic forces. In my view this includes the so-called extraterrestrials, which only means beyond earth. The ETs range in frequency from those who are evolved and have high-minded intentions towards human beings, to those whose actions show that they are plainly nasty.

Whatever experiences anyone has with these entities is - by the Law of Magnetism - in perfect resonant alignment with their own consciousness. If you want to leave these beings behind, simply ignore them and raise the frequency of your consciousness. If you fall back down to their level of frequency, you will find them waiting. They cannot liberate you from the temporal illusory hologram. Only you, through your own efforts, can liberate your Self (*atma*).

Ghosts & nature spirits

Krishna says that those who have allowed the *guna tamas* to dominate their consciousness resonate with and attract ghosts (*pretan*) and the hosts of 'nature spirits' (*bhutaganan*). I

assume that this category of spirits refers to those energies which are connected to Nature, perhaps something like the term 'elementals' which are not of human origin.

I have 'seen' my share of ghosts and my way of understanding this phenomena is that these are the waveform-energies left by *gunas* operating in the subtle bodies of people who couldn't let go - people who were irrevocably attached to some desire, a person or place. There are cases of those who were thrown into shock by an unexpected or violent death; or those who had committed an act so terrible that it generated an energy not easily dispersed.

Pride in penance

Krishna's total disdain of torturing the body as a form of religious penance is made abundantly clear (XVII.5). Perhaps those same people who in worldly matters are high-powered achievers may tend to bring their competitive drive and arrogant egos to their spiritual practices.

*... penance which hath its root
In self-sufficient, proud hypocrisies -
Those men, passion-beset, violent, wild,
Torturing -
Ganguli XVII.5*

Desiring to display their grand superiority, they undertake severe austerities (*tapas*) which torture the flesh and/or starve themselves. But Krishna says that this self-inflicted torture is hypocrisy, and he considers these acts to be demonic (*asura*). He says that they are torturing the God within their body (XVII.6).

*... the witless ones - My elements
Shut in fair company within their flesh,
(Nay, Me myself, present within the flesh!)
Know them to devils devoted, not to Heaven!
- Ibid.XVII.6*

Food that nurtures, or is dead and deadly

The three qualities (*gunas*) create three types of human nature and their preferences, even the kinds of food we like. The *sattvic* types like food that is flavorful (*rasyas*), smooth (*snigdhas*), firm (*sthiras*), and agreeable (*hrdyah*). *Sattvic* foods nurture long life (*ayuh*), strength (*bala*), health (*arogyā*), and happiness (*sukha*). They satisfy and augment virtue (XVII.8).

*... food which brings
Force, substance, strength, and health, and joy to live,
Being well-seasoned, cordial, comforting ...*

- Ibid.XVII.8

When the *guna rajas* dominates the consciousness, food is preferred that is bitter (*katuh*), sour (*amla*), salty (*lavana*), and hot with pepper (*usna*). These foods cause burning (*vidahinah*) and cause pain (*duhkha*), sorrow (*soka*) as mental anguish which follows burning pain, and eventually disease (XVII.9). The increasing number of commercial advertisements for acid-reflux disease and heartburn reflect the *rajasic* nature of our consumer society.

*And there be foods which bring
Aches and unrests, and burning blood, and grief
Being too biting, heating, salt, and sharp,
And therefore craved by too strong appetite.*

- Ibid.XVII.9

The descriptions of foods liked by people who have the *guna tamas* predominant in their consciousness are a bit gross, however one could say they accurately describe 'fast food'. One of the predictions for the *Kali Yuga* is that 'pre-cooked food will be readily available' - and when I first read this, I laughed; but it was this one prediction that sealed my belief that we are indeed living in the *Kali Yuga*.

*And there is foul food - kept from over-night,
Savourless, filthy, which the foul will eat,
A feast of rotteness, meet for the lips
Of such as love the "Darkness."*

- Ibid.XVII.10

Tamasic foods are said to be half-cooked (*yata-yaman*) and as Gambhirananda points out, they have ‘lost their essence’ and are tasteless (*gata-rasam*). Processed food needs artificial flavors and preservatives because it is ‘dead’ food - food which has lost its essence.

Wherever the EDCs, endocrine disrupting chemicals, go in this world - obesity quickly follows. EDCs mimic estrogen in the body and a certain percentage of the population is vulnerable to these false signals. EDCs are said to cause not only obesity, but gender-bending in both humans and animals/fish, infertility, diseases such as cancer and diabetes, and even memory loss.

For further information on EDCs and how they are changing our world:

Our Stolen Future

Theo Colborn, etc.,
website

<http://www.ourstolenfuture.org/>

The Detox Diet: Eliminate Chemical Calories

by Dr. Paula Baillie-Hamilton

Michael Joseph, an imprint of Penguin Books; 2002, London

The Estrogen Effect

How Chemical Pollution is Threatening Our Survival

Deborah Cadbury

St. Martin’s Griffin 2000, New York

Pandora’s Poison

Chlorine, Health, & a New Environmental Strategy

Joe Thornton

MIT Press, 2000, Cambridge Mass. & London

Austerities: Returning to the One



The Indian scholar Krishna Chaitanya/KK Nair interprets the Sanskrit word *yajnas* as altruistic acts. It is true that the Vedas do prescribe elaborate sacrificial rituals, however I agree with Mr. Nair and feel that understanding the ideal of altruism is more relevant to our own times.

The concept of sacrifice begins with God sacrificing a portion of Its Being to create this universe and others. God is All. The Unmanifest creates the appearance of multiplicity and gives Its Self over to the Manifest.

God is the universe, the awesome creation, the amazing temporal illusory hologram we enjoy! When we go Home, we return to the One, the Unmanifest. We give up multiplicity. We give back the manifested ‘sacrifice’ in the form of austerities.

God is ubiquitous and everything that exists is God in the form of what is merely the appearance of Separation. God does not need anything, because God is already everything. Therefore acts of sacrifice as altruism, which are done without any expectation of reward, are considered to be Godlike and *sattvic*.

A sacrifice not for reward made,

Offered in rightful wise ...

- Ganguli XVII.11

Krishna tells Arjuna that altruistic acts (*yajnas*) which are performed by those who are not seeking reward are *sattvic* (XVII.11). The offerings which are made only for show are hypocritical (*dambha*) and *rajasic* (XVII.12). And the sacrifices which are made without faith (*sraddha-virhitam*) are *tamasic* (XVII.13).

Tapas - Austerities

In the Sanskrit texts it is often said that practicing austerities (*tapas*) leads to liberation (*moksha*). The word austerities is almost never heard in the west, except in monasteries. The Sanskrit word *tapas* means ‘consuming by heat’ (M.Monier-Williams).

There are many astonishing tales of beings, human and otherwise, who gain merit by performing austerities - such as standing on one toe in extremes of heat and cold for hundreds, even thousands of years. This kind of effort usually frightens the gods, especially Indra the ruler of heaven, who reacts by sending a seductive *apsara* (sky dancer) to distract them from surpassing him.

Krishna gives us some insight into what it means to practice austerities in more practical ways. Physical austerities (*tapas*) are said to be *arjavam*, which Abhinavagupta defines as sincerity, straightness, and simplicity (B.Marjanovic). Treating God and those who have gained real Wisdom with respect and honor is also an act of austerity, along with nonviolence (*ahimsa*) and celibacy (XVII.14).

Chastity implies purity

The Sanskrit word for celibacy is *Brahmacharya* and Abhinavagupta translates this as chastity, which conveys more the idea of purity than giving up sex. The Gambhirananda translation says that one does ‘not engage in prohibited union’.

I do not recommend that anyone give up sex before they are ready to do so. Suppressing youthful hormones can cause more trouble than good. However a moment will arrive when this marvelous, delightful, splendid act loses its allure and many who are moving further along the Path Home simply cease to want sexual partners.

When you understand how the *gunas* operate, you see that such close and intimate interactions with another person can cause serious confusion. The consciousness of your partner, in the form of their *gunas* in motion, may cloud your ability to implement your growing Wisdom of Discrimination and Discernment. In short, it is difficult enough to recognize our own patterns of attachment and those who aspire to liberation don’t want to complicate the process.

Best of all, God becomes your partner and the expression of Love between God and the Soul can never be limited to the body.

What we say - Vakyam

Austerities that pertain to speech (*vakyam*) are said to be words that do not hurt anyone (XVII.15). My mother used to say - ‘if you can’t say something nice, don’t say anything at all.’ The only reason people say mean things is to make themselves feel superior and bolster the current temporal small identity-self ego. Beneath the fluctuating three *gunas*, we are all the One.

Words that carry the frequencies of truth (*satya*), and that are agreeable (*priya*) and pleasant can be beneficial (*hita*) to those who hear them. Reciting the sacred texts is also an austerity of speech.

*Words causing no man woe, words ever true,
Gentle and pleasing words, and those ye say
In murmured reading of a Sacred Writ, -
These make the true religiousness of Speech.*

- Ganguli XVII.15

The austerities (*tapas*) of the mind (*manasam*) are that tranquility (*prasada*) that allows clarity, peace, and kindness. The gentle benevolence (*saumyatam*) that motivates us to work for the well-being of others is also considered to be an austerity of the mind by Krishna (XVII.16).

*Serenity of soul, benignity,
Sway of the silent Spirit, constant stress
To sanctify the Nature, - these things make
Good rite, and true religiousness of Mind.*

- Ibid.XVII.16

Silence (*muni*) and the control of the mind (*maunam*) is explained in the Gambhirananda translation. Silence is evidence that our thoughts are abiding in the eternal Self (*atman*). When we restrain the impulses of the three *gunas* by controlling the mind, we also control our speech - what we say.

The Heart is Pure



These austerities are in fact nothing more than moving beyond what binds our consciousness in the temporal illusory hologram. The seductive fluctuations of *guna-maya* are not the Real. The pleasures of happiness (*sukha*) are inevitably followed by the pain of loss (*duhkha*). The One is Pure. These so-called austerities bring us closer to a pure heart (*bhava-samsuddhih*).

Sattvic, rajasic & tamasic austerities

These three kinds of austerities (*tapas*) that relate to body, speech, and mind are practiced with supreme (*paraya*) faith (*sraddha*) by those who have understood the liberating value of non-attachment to the temporal illusory hologram.

Non-attachment does not hold the frequencies of cold-hearted disdain or thoughtless rejection. Non-attachment does lift our consciousness beyond the illusion of the ‘fruits’ of desires. Non-attachment allows us to remain in the *guna sattva* (*sattvakam*) in the face of both failure and success (XVII.17). Those who have attained the consciousness of non-attachment can work for the well-being of the world.

*Such threefold faith, in highest piety
Kept, with no hope of gain, by hearts devote
Is perfect work of Sattwan, true belief.
- Ibid.XVII.17*

Those who practice austerities for show, to impress others, only seeking to win adulation and respect (*mana*) are hypocrites (*dambhena*). Their consciousness is *rajasic* of wavering (*calam*), transitory and unsure (*adhruvam*) of itself (XVII.18).

*Religion shown in act of proud display
To win good entertainment, worship, fame,
Such - say I - is of Rajas, rash and vain.
- Ibid.XVII.18*

Austerities that are performed foolishly by the deluded to harm another (*parasya*) or to torture (*padaya*) themselves are said to be *tamasic* (XVII.19).

*Religion followed by a witless will
To torture self, or come at power to hurt
Another, - 'tis of Tamas, dark and ill.
- Ibid. XVII.19*

Charitable acts



Krishna divides acts of generosity and charity into the three qualities (*gunas*) to point out the potential for hypocrisy in gift giving. *Sattvic* charity is given with no thought of reward or return to those who deserve it (XVII.20).

*The gift lovingly given, when one shall say
"Now must I gladly give!" when he who takes
Can render nothing back; made in due place,
Due time, and to a meet recipient,
Is gift of Sattwan, fair and profitable.*

- Ibid. XVII.20

Rajasic gifts are given grudgingly (*pariklistam*) only with the expectation of getting something back or to achieve results (XVII.21).

*The gift selfishly given, where to receive
Is hoped again, or when some end is sought,
Or where the gift is proffered with a grudge,
This is of Rajas, stained with impulse, ill.*

- Ibid.XVII.21

Charity that is bestowed on those who are unworthy (*apatrebhyah*) - the proverbial

‘pearls before swine’ - and charity that is given without wisdom in contempt or disdain (*avajnatam*) is *tamasic* (XVI.22).

*The gift churlishly flung, at evil time,
In wrongful place, to base recipient,
Made in disdain or harsh unkindliness,
Is gift of Tamas, dark; it doth not bless!*

- *Ibid.XVII.22*

OM TAT SAT

Krishna now explains the Sanskrit mantra *Om Tat Sat* (XVII.23). The syllable ‘*Om*’ is made up of three sounds: A - U - M. These three sacred sounds represent the triadic nature of our universe: the three worlds of heaven, the atmosphere, and earth; the three primary gods - Brahma the principle of Creation, Vishnu as the metaphysical principle that Supports and Sustains the worlds, and Shiva as the principle of Destruction (Winthrop Sargeant).

Abhinavagupta interprets *Om Tat Sat* by defining *AUM* to represent the ‘nature of Brahman (the principle, not the deity Brahma) in which the entire universe rests.’ *Tat* is the aspect of Brahman in the form of intense awareness (*paramarsa*) of ‘the unfolding waves of the universe’ (B.Marjanovic).

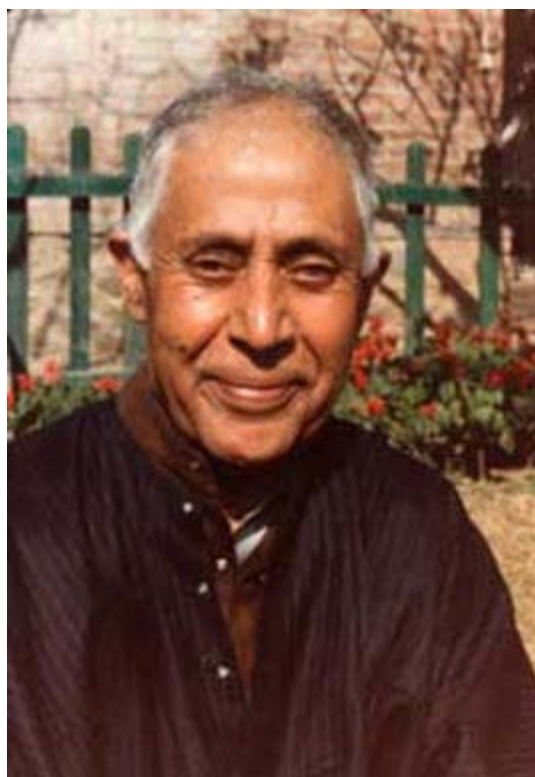
Tat means ‘this’ or ‘that’ - but not in any common sense (XVII.25). *Tat* is used to express the inexpressible That-ness of the Absolute Oneness; as in *Tat Twam Asi*, meaning ‘Thou art That’.

The Sanskrit word *Sat* means truth (*satya*), goodness and reality (XVII.26). *Om Tat Sat* is spoken before performing acts (*kriyas*) of austerity (*tapas*), worship and altruism (*yajna*), and charity (*dana*). Offerings and austerities made without faith (*asraddhaya*) will produce nothing either in this world or the next (XVII.28).

The Bhagavad Gita, Chapter XVIII: Reflections within the final chapter with Kashmir Shaivite Swami Lakshmanjoo and other saints, sages, savants & scholars

An Introduction:

It has been a few years now since I wrote my comments on the Bhagavad Gita. I consider the Bhagavad Gita as the one best source of wisdom-knowledge available. It is the distillation, the essence of all the other Sanskrit texts brilliantly conceived, interwoven and connected by Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa. The Gita is within the Mahabharata, chapters 25 to 42 of the Bhishma Parvan (the Book of Bhishma). The Kashmir Shaivite Abhinavagupta has said that the Bhagavad Gita has the power to enlighten. I agree whole-heartedly. In these new writings I will focus on the last final summing up Chapter XVIII, which I previously intentionally left for a later day. Through the lenses of great scholars, sages and saints - in whose steps I have gratefully followed - I hope to weave various layers of reflections on this superbly liberating poem, along with my own born in humility from Grace and Love.



Swami Lakshmanjoo (1907-1991)

“The Bhagavad Gita in the Light of Kashmir Shaivism” as revealed by Kashmir Shaivite saint and scholar, Swami Lakshmanjoo was in part initially recorded in Nepal by John &

Denise Hughes in 1990. This Kashmiri version of the Bhagavad Gita, the complete eighteen chapters with commentaries, was published in 2013 by The Universal Shaiva Fellowship, and is available as a hardback book that includes a set of 27 DVDs – and a more affordable paperback version to be released soon. Its publication is the child of the many years of love, sacrifice, self-less dedicated service required to record and collect Swami Lakshmanjoo’s teachings, and a rigorous concentrated effort to maintain a high degree of perfect and correct Sanskrit scholarship.

John & Denise Hughes have generously granted me permission to quote from Swami Lakshmanjoo’s translation of the Bhagavad Gita, which is based on the commentary of the Kashmir Shaivite genius and enlightened sage Abhinavagupta (975-1025 AD). In 1933 at the age of twenty-six Swami Lakshmanjoo published the unique Kashmiri Sanskrit recension of the Bhagavad Gita, used by Abhinavagupta for his commentary, which differs from other available recensions. There are fifteen additional verses in the Kashmiri recension. The recent publication of Swami Lakshmanjoo’s revealed translation is an event many of us have been eagerly waiting for. Swami Lakshmanjoo possessed perfect memory and was “extremely well-read, well-informed in Eastern and Western religious and philosophical traditions” [John Hughes].

Truthfully I do feel that Kashmir Shaivism for me is the ultimate teaching, the highest understanding and source of Truth, Wisdom-Knowledge, and traditional primordial metaphysics. However I have also found value in exploring other commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita. Thus I will wander in the delight of reflecting insights from the polymath K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya, Swami Muni Narayana Prasad, J.A.B. van Buitenen, Boris Marjanovic, Winthrop Sargeant, and others.



I was not fortunate enough to have studied with Swami Lakshmanjoo, nor did I ever meet him. I had completed my own commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita in 2006 when I began a serious concentrated study of the Shiva Sutras as translated by Jaideva Singh and as I read the various other Kashmir Shaivite texts translated by Jaideva Singh, like so many before me, I began to notice Jaideva Singh’s repeated declarations of gratitude to Swami Lakshmanjoo. One feels that Jaideva Singh admits that without Swami Lakshmanjoo to guide him through the encoded Sanskrit in the Kashmir Shaivite texts, Singh would have been lost. I began to order Swami Lakshmanjoo’s work, literally everything published by John & Denise Hughes at the Universal Shaivite Foundation in Los Angeles.

In 2008 I unexpectedly moved to New Zealand and here began to intensely listen to and watch the DVDs recorded by John Hughes. I immersed myself in the lectures and affectionately began calling Swami Lakshmanjoo simply Lakshman, which according to John & Denise is what he called himself. I cannot say when or even exactly what happened during this ‘immersion’ period, but I know that my consciousness shifted, was irreversibly altered as I experienced and was touched by his ‘Grace’ in ways that changed me forever. I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to Swami Lakshmanjoo — and to John & Denise Hughes for all the hours they spent on cold Kashmir floors recording Lakshman’s words. They hold the treasure storehouse of what may be the last Wisdom-Knowledge remaining in this Kali Yuga.

Kashmir Shaivism is not easy. There are many Sanskrit terms that at first seem impossibly arduous, but the task is light compared to being trapped in this miasma of amnesia and ever-expanding webs of delusion through endless cycles of time. Swami Lakshmanjoo is the proverbial jewel beyond price, the boat that carries us across this sea of ignorance and delusion. Over the years I have many times made plans to travel to India and Kashmir, but destiny always had other ideas. Perhaps my sweet longing was fulfilled by John & Denise Hughes, who brought Swami Lakshmanjoo to me. Thank you.



K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya (1918-1994)

K.K. Nair took the pen name Krishna Chaitanya. Whenever I read his books, which I have gone to great trouble to even locate and expense to purchase, I am struck by the madly incomprehensible thought that his brilliant insightful works are out of print! I am completely bewildered by this and often find myself feeling emotional, sad and even a bit angry that India could have forgotten this wonderful man, both polymath and poet whose keen sensitive mind was wide and capable of embracing all knowledge east and

west, who during his life was awarded every possible honour and published forty beautifully written books.

In a collection of his papers, Suguna Ramachandra has written a profile of K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya and said: “The record of work of Krishna Chaitanya...is in many respects unique...his major projects have been hailed with a shower of superlatives by scores of critics; they have been called stupendous, monumental, phenomenal, colossal, their vast groundwork baffling comprehension.”

The accomplishments of K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya have been compared to Thomas Aquinas, Teilard de Chardin, Dante, and even Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa, the author of the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita. Apparently, according to Suguna Ramachandra, this last comparison to Vyasa upset K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya “for [as he was] capable of deep reverence where it is due, he regards it a sacrilege to bracket him with the thinker whom he hero-worships.”

Suguna Ramachandra: “He [K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya] has worked incessantly all his life for a recovery of certitude, of the faith in the benignity of existence and man’s possibility of realising meaning in life, which have been shattered by the accumulation of segmental knowledge, more and more about less and less, without an integrative wisdom.” And this was years before the twittered mush vagaries of the Internet!

A review of his 'Gita and Modern Man' in the Hindustani Times, July 5, 1987: “The magnum opus of his brooding brilliant mind, this book of Krishna Chaitanya, the fabulous polymath, is the work of a life-time. As he sees it, Vyasa was attempting an integration of knowledge, from the physics of matter to the psyche of man. ...No recent writer comes anywhere near him.”

In his commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya argues for enlightened acts that contribute to the well being of the world, acts that are grounded in the knowledge that we are all the One, acts that are not selfishly motivated. I feel that his ‘The Gita for Modern Man’ is both a profound excellent understanding of Vyasa’s vast intended Wisdom and a practical guide to those who have dedicated themselves to making a difference, who are working as he says for the ‘weal’ of the world. He also wrote a wonderful book on the Mahabharata, which focuses on the deeply fascinating complexity and symbolism in the individual characters. I will expand on K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya’s life and ideas in a separate article.



Swami Muni Narayana Prasad (1938 -)

Although I know little about Swami Muni Narayana Prasad, I began reading him because he had translated many of the Upanishads. I was struck by his refreshing ability to directly communicate the meaning of the texts in powerful yet simple language. It seemed obvious to me that his understanding was so great, profound and comprehensive that he was able to write the essence of these ancient texts as concisely as humanly possible and in an accessible down-to-earth modern English. His translation of the Mundaka Upanishad really influenced my thinking and I began to buy his other publications, including the Bhagavad Gita.

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad was born in 1938 in Kerala, India. He graduated from Engineering College Thiruvananthapuram (the capital). From 1960 he lived in Narayana Gurukulam as a disciple of Nataraja Guru. He has authored over 90 books including commentaries on the Katha, Kena, Mundaka, Prasna, Taittiriya, Aitareya and Chandogya Upanishads. The official language of Kerala is Malayalam. He is obviously a wonderfully gifted writer and I am grateful that he decided to devote part of his life to the difficult task of translating these sacred Sanskrit texts into the more limited and certainly less expressive English language.



J.A.B. van Buitenen (1928-1979)

J.A.B. van Buitenen is the Sanskrit scholar whose brilliant incomplete translation of the Mahabharata first seduced me, back in the late 1980s, into the endlessly fascinating epic world of the Bharatas. His translation of the Bhagavad Gita remains one of my favourites and I often consult him when I am perplexed. When a particularly subtle meaning eludes me, I ask myself, “What did J.A.B. van Buitenen say?” and head for his straightforward clean translation, which praise the heavens, is still in print. Thank you.



Boris Marjanovic

Boris Marjanovic ‘discovered’ the Kashmir Shaivite saint and genius Abhinavagupta as a graduate student at the University of Iowa and “felt an urge to absorb and internalize his teachings.” In 2002 Indica Books in Varanasi, India published Marjanovic’s translation of Abhinavagupta’s commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. As Marjanovic says in his introduction, “...reading [Abhinavagupta’s] original texts requires much more than a knowledge of Sanskrit. ...their comprehension is not only dependent on the intellectual understanding of the philosophical system, but also on the experience which comes as a result of practice.”

In my own pursuit to understand the Bhagavad Gita, I found Marjanovic’s translation enormously helpful. It was an expansion of the other translations and I agree as he points out, only those who are actually practicing meditation and proceeding experientially into higher states of consciousness will truly appreciate Abhinavagupta’s teachings. Marjanovic quotes from Swami Lakshmanjoo’s ‘Kashmir Shaivism: The Secret Supreme’ in his introduction. Once again we see evidence that all the scholars who were interested in Kashmir Shaivism sought out Swami Lakshmanjoo.

Marjanovic explains the basics of Kashmir Shaivism in the introduction and one of the most intriguing aspects of this school is that Abhinavagupta advises those who have not yet attained perfection and are engaged in practice “not to withdraw from the world but to enjoy the objects of the senses while at the same time continuing the practice of deep meditation.” The Oneness is ubiquitous all-pervading everywhere and everything, so what is not sacred? It is only our deluded state of ignorance that makes us feel we must

reject the world. Abstaining from life never works — and in fact remaining in God-Consciousness while engaging in worldly activities is far more difficult. “As a result of this experience a yogin perceives all beings as part of the Divine.” [BhG V.19]

I’m certain a few more of my favourite sages will join this adventure, and I could not easily find my way through the Gita’s Sanskrit without Winthrop Sargeant (1903-1986), who also was an aspiring violinist and professional music critic. Sargeant’s Bhagavad Gita is essentially a dictionary; in his words, “an interlinear word-for-word arrangement...the metrical formation of the poem’s stanzas, and their grammatical structures.” I don’t always agree with Sargeant’s beautiful translations, but his book is invaluable and my copy is filled with my colour-pen notes and happily falling apart from love.

So I invite you to join me on another journey into my beloved Bhagavad Gita, the final Chapter XVIII, always remembering as Swami Lakshmanjoo has so wisely said, “However much you tried to do it, but it was, in the long run, it was for realizing the truth of God, so it was Divine.”

We meet in the Heart,

V. Susan Ferguson



"This whole universe has come into existence just to carry you to God consciousness." - Swami Lakshmanjoo, The Shiva Sutras



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Free Will/Part I: Bhagavad Gita XVIII.61

The Lord of all beings abides in the Heart,
Causing all beings to wander, to move (to revolve),
[As if] fixed, attached to, mounted on a machine,
By the power of Illusion (maya).

*ishvarah sarvabhutanam
hriddeshe Arjuna tishthati
bhamayam sarvabhutani
yantrarudhani mayaya*



The Sanskrit words *yantra-arudhani* have always fascinated me. Somehow over the years again and again I find myself thinking about them. I often connect this invisible cosmic machine-mechanism that enfolds us in the temporal illusory hologram, to the famous enigmatic Sri Yantra, which one can meditate on and never quite grasp. J.A.B. van Buitenen has translated the yantrarudhani as ‘water wheel’ and I have thought there is value in this because water symbolizes consciousness and a water wheel is a sort of perpetual motion machine that only requires a constant flow.

In Swami Lakshmanjoo’s translation of verse 61, the Kashmir Shaivite conviction comes across more bluntly. Remember that Lakshmanjoo was the embodiment of very highly enlightened states of God-Consciousness, living Truth. Because his command of Sanskrit was greater than his English, his sentences are peppered with Sanskrit and sometimes a bit unwieldy, but nevertheless express his superlative Wisdom-Knowledge. Also, Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita speaks as the voice of the Oneness, which is termed Parabhairava in Kashmir Shaivism:

“Ishvarah, I, think [of] Me [I am Ishvara, I am Parabhairava, I am residing in each and every heart of everybody, every soul. Bhramayan, I am playing with them with My own will.”

“Bhramayan sarva bhutani yantrarudhani mayaya. By My svantantrya shakti [the Lord’s free will as creative power], they are going here and there, and I am indulging in that way.”

The Sanskrit word *Bhramayan* is explained further by Swami Lakshmanjoo: “He [meaning the One] handles it; whatever you do, it is handled by Him, not by you. There is only ignorance in that you say, ‘I am doing it, I am doing it.’ He [the One] is doing it. He is handling it.”

Swami Lakshmanjoo continued: “Who are you [Arjuna] to [say] that you will not [engage in this war]? Who are you? You are not existing at all; your will is failure!”



Who am I?

The question of 'Who are you?' resonates with the Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950) technique of self-inquiry in which the question 'Who am I?' is asked repeatedly. Swami Lakshmanjoo in his youth was one of Ramana Maharshi's favourites and there are lovely inspiring photographs of the two together. The idea of continually asking 'Who am I?' leads to the brain forming new synaptic paths which redirect our consciousness away from the external ever shifting holographic temporal coagulations and towards the Real, meaning the God-within and the understanding that we are not the Doer.

The Bhagavad Gita III.27 teaches that we are not the Doer. It is only our confused and deluded sense of ego, *ahamkara*, literally 'I-making' that makes us think 'I am the doer' - *kartaham* 'doer I' - when in the Real it is the material nature Prakriti performing the acts. Swami Muni Narayana Prasad refers to this as Prakriti-wheel rolling on. Thus we understand that we are mounted on this holographic water-wheel machine which is rolling on and on, in Yuga after Yuga throughout the cycles of time. So where is our free Will?

Again, the Bhagavad Gita V.8 & 9 says that the man of yoga, meaning one who has Become united – yoga means union – with the ubiquitous One realizes that we do nothing when we are 'seeing, hearing, touching, smelling.' In truth "it is only the senses operating on their objects" [J.A.B. van Buitenen]. *Naiva kincit karomite* is translated by Swami Lakshmanjoo as "I don't do anything." – and the 'I' is understood to be Krishna, who speaks as the voice of the Oneness.

In Kashmir Shaivism, Krishna is "established in the supreme state of [Para] Bhairava. He [who] is established in the supreme state of Bhairava, he says, 'although I do everything, I don't do anything.' ...[The yogin who is in Union with the One says] 'the organs [Prakriti] are doing their job, what have I to do with them? I am separate; I am aloof from this.... I am just the observer, I don't do anything.'" The Sanskrit is *indriyani* (senses, powers) combined with *indriyartheshu* (in the sense objects, in the objects of the senses).

The idea that what we believe we are experiencing as life, is only some temporal illusory meeting, a marriage of sorts between our sense apparatus and the objects they are engaged in, perhaps even creating as they send data back to our brain that we interpret as solidity, sound, sight, etc. And it's all somehow on automatic. The *yantra rudhani* has us

in its endlessly whirling cycles of birth and death, desire and disappointment, pleasure and pain, *sukha-duhkha* in Sanskrit.

We are compelled by the gunas we ourselves have created over multiple lifetimes. There is no being free of Prakriti's gunas [BhG XVIII.40] either on earth or in any other world, even the heavenly realms. While we are in delusion, continually tossed around by our compulsions, the Lord of our Being, the God-within sits observing, not attached, loving, patiently waiting, watching us manifest Its infinite creative potency and glory. We are mirrors for the Oneness.



"All questions disappear."

A conversation I enjoyed with a long time disciple of the Swami Lakshmanjoo produced a few helpful insights. The recognition that we are the One (Parabhairava in Kashmir Shaivism) results in the realization that we are more God doing the 'playing' in the time-space holographic universe than the data-collecting vehicles (my term) being 'played'. This realizing that we are and have always been the One comes about by Grace, by the rising of our own Grace. Swami Lakshmanjoo says that we can lift ourselves up by our own Grace, but we don't want to. We prefer our self-created distractions in the external hologram, pursuing our temporal desires that never bring us lasting fulfillment.

Thus our freedom is limited. Our only authentic freedom is to Realize we never do/did anything, and thus surrender everything to the God-within because everything always belonged only to the One, who we are anyway. Liberation (Moksha) is found in the Recognition of the game, the Divine Lila, the 'Play'. By pulling our consciousness back into the ubiquitous Oneness within, we lift the Veils of Ignorance to understand the mechanics of bondage, the rules of the 'game' so to speak.

So in the Real sense, Free Will in the temporal illusory hologram is useless! Mildly amusing, isn't it. Still this somewhat disturbing term 'played' is ambiguous, loaded — because we are more God doing the playing than the incarnated data-collecting vehicles being played. Subtle! In all respects we are that divine player, but we just don't know it - yet. My way of understanding this switching back-and-forth between the appearance of Free Will and the teaching that we are not the Doer at all is this:

When we think we have Free Will, we are not in the Oneness. When we are in the One, we realize there is only the One and the question is useless. It doesn't matter. No sense of separateness can exist. As Swami Lakshmanjoo says, "All questions disappear."



The Appearance of a Limited Free Will

Can it be that the One enjoys the temporal illusory appearance of a limited Free Will in Its various manifested selves, you & me, as part of the entire spectrum of Its infinite possible expressions. People in the west are more accustomed to believe that we have Free Will, while one might assume that India and the East have been more accepting of Fate and Destiny. Yet more recently as India embraces the ideology of capitalism, the entrepreneur, the independent individual self beyond family, many are experiencing the exhilarating and precarious vulnerability of new freedoms, and breaking with tradition as they shake off the old concepts of predestination - (as Anand Giridharadas describes in his insightful book, "India Calling").

The scholar and polymath K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya did not accept the Sankarite rejection of the world as an illusion. He championed the idea that we humans do have Freedom. "This means that God does not merely want, but in reality needs, man's partnership in realising his design in history; and by being his partner, man will move to a similitude with him." However, the Freedom that mankind experiences must be aligned with and in harmony with God's Design, meaning the primordial metaphysical principles that are the very 'being' and structural supports of this polarity universe.

A man's thoughts and acts can reflect God's intent and purpose (telos). In Sanskrit this vast concept of God's Design is named Rita (rta), meaning Truth, Law, Right, Order, 'the course of things' (from the root *ri* = 'to rise, tend, upward'). This concept of Rita is said to be the basis of the later idea of Dharma — literally 'what holds together' and thus is the basis of all order [J. Grimes/Sanskrit Dictionary]. Righteousness is the English word often used to define Dharma, but in no way does it encompass the deeper understanding that the root verb *dhr* implies: 'to uphold, to establish, to support.'

Rita is one of the most frequently used words in the Rig Veda, occurring more than five hundred times, according to the Vedic scholar Dr. A. Venkatasubbiah (1886-1969) in a study on the "Satyaloka in the Rig Veda" (Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute 1974). In later Sanskrit texts Rita became obsolete and was replaced by Dharma. There are many diverging opinions regarding the root meaning of Rita (ri), like so many other early Sanskrit roots. However the idea of Truth (Satya) or perhaps better, Cosmic Truth applies to K.K. Nair's idea of God's Design.



Are we free or not?

In the Bhagavad Gita XVIII.59-60, Krishna expresses the same profoundly perplexing contradiction when at first he tells Arjuna that he has no Free Will, that as a warrior he will do as his Rajasic gunas compel him to do, his own material nature (prakritis) will compel him, that he is bound to his warrior kshatriya karma and he will do what he does not wish to do, even against his own will. Yet a moment later Krishna (XVIII.63) says, “Do as you please!” (yathecchasi tathA kuru), as if Arjuna does have Free Will.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya believed that mankind does have Free Will which allows us to decided to live in harmony with the metaphysical principles that support this polarity universe or reject them. In his comments on the yantrarudhani and the idea that we are “mounted on a machine” K.K. Nair warns the reader not to misunderstand this as helpless “conditioned, determined, will-less (avasa)” predestination.

K.K. Nair: “This is not what deity wanted when he made man free; he wants man to align himself freely and in full understanding with his design in creation and history. For such alignment in freedom, man has to be autonomous, not slavishly dependent on deity.”

The goal of spiritual life is alignment with the One, Becoming the Oneness within that is ubiquitous. When we in ignorance and delusion imagine that we are separate from the Creator, we fall into disharmony, misery, and ultimately with nothing Real to support us, we collapse into depression, sickness and the arms of death. The Kali Yuga is the cycle of time in which most have forgotten that we are the One, and thus most have come to believe that only greed and avarice will fulfil them. The history of the last 6000 years is a repeating story of tyrannical men and women who engaged in unending bloody wars to satisfy their own frail vacuous egos at the expense of millions of innocent lives.



Subtle

The goal of Liberation from birth and death is very Real for me. I accept the Wisdom-Knowledge in this ancient teaching as the final goal. However, I know there are many enlightened men and women who want to remain here, in what perhaps is rather like a Bodhisattva vow, and contribute to the upliftment of mankind and planet Earth. We spend most of our lives throughout the cycles of time in delusion. It is our behaviour in such bondage that determines our consciousness and eventual release. Swami Lakshmanjoo says, “Don’t blame God for your mistakes.” Even though the One is ‘enjoying’ the Veiled state of our forgetting who we are, we are responsible for Remembering. Subtle, isn't it.

Therefore I find value in K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya’s analysis of our perceived 'appearance' of freedom through the teachings of Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. The Mahabharata has an entire book devoted to the dharma of kings (raja), instructing good acts and character in rulers; within the Shanti Parva is the Rajadharmanushasana Parva in which Yudhishtira asks Bhishma to describe the righteous duties of a king. We could sure use some of that today! It is also worth considering that K.K. Nair, along with many others in India, felt that the idea of disconnecting from the world and becoming a parasite with a begging bowl had been a serious anchor on India. He did not accept that the destruction of man’s faith in himself was the true meaning of the Bhagavad Gita.

“Totally opposite is Vyasa’s [the Gita’s author] conception of both deity and man. Deity has given freedom to man and his hope is that man will use it to attain to a similitude with himself (Sanskrit below). And man can do this if he alertly sees to it that the subsidiary powers of his psyche do not usurp the role of the will by determining action.”

BhG XIII.18: madbhavaya – to My state of being; upapadyate – he enters

BhG XIV.2: mama sadharmyam – sameness with Me, state of identity with Me

We all know from experience how different life is for us when we feel consciously connected to the God-within, even if that experience was fleeting. Many have had a momentary ‘reconnection’ with the Real and True [Satya] that carried us for the rest of our lives — or even into seeking full God Realization, what Lakshmanjoo calls God-Consciousness. Only those who abide in Wisdom-Knowledge deserve our trust to participate in the responsibility for the well-being of our planet.

Part II continues...

We Meet in the Heart,

V. Susan Ferguson



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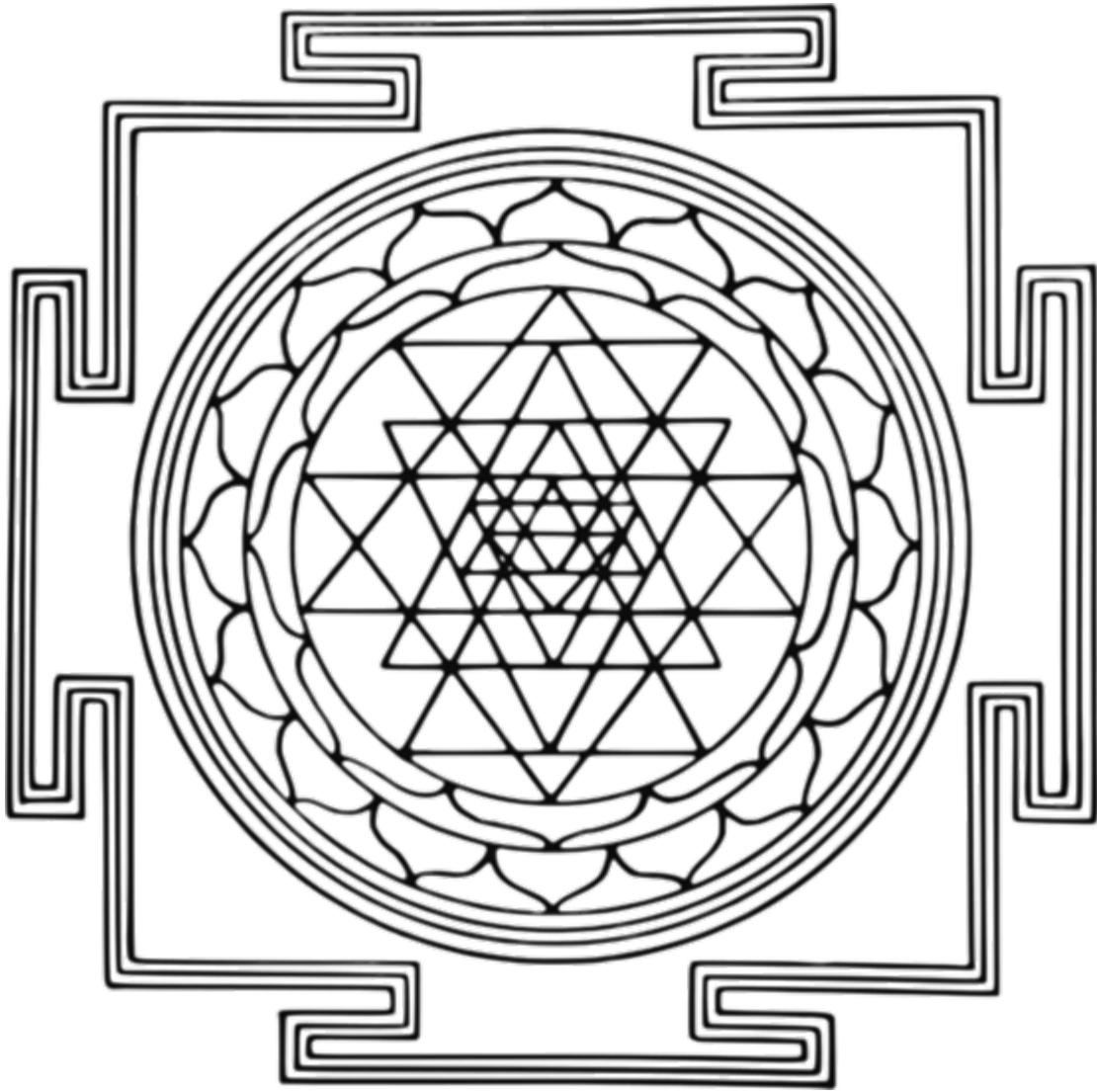
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Free Will/Part II: Bhagavad Gita XVIII.61

The Lord of all beings abides in the Heart,
 Causing all beings to wander, to move (to revolve),
 [As if] fixed, attached to, mounted on a machine,
 By the power of Illusion (maya).

*ishvarah sarvabhutanam
 hriddeshe Arjuna tishthati
 bhramayam sarvabhutani
 yantrarudhani mayaya*



Siren Servers

The gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas) that rule us and compel our acts are Borg-like — and if ever there was a material world symbol for ‘mounted on a machine’ *yantrarudhani* surely what Jaron Lanier calls the Siren Servers fits! “A Siren Server...is an elite computer, or coordinated collection of computers, on a network. It is characterized by narcissism, hyper-amplified risk aversion, and extreme information asymmetry. It is the winner of an all-or-nothing contest and it inflicts smaller all-or-nothing contests on those who interact with it.”

According to Lanier, Siren Servers take information without having to pay for it (Facebook, Google, etc.), secretly analyse that information, much of it personal including personal financial data, and use it to manipulate the rest of the world to the advantage of those who own and control these elite machines. Thus technology that was meant to liberate the mass of humankind has in the hands of tyrants, or should I say pockets, become the perfect tool of our enslavement.

The clever conceit of those who care only for self-interest and profit at the expense of others and the environment is destroying the earth, her oceans, air, and soil. Lightning quick, shallow thinking, using however brilliant algorithms to amass information in massive servers that only benefit the few is leading us to inevitable collapse. Surely our own state of near complete disconnect with our Source has brought on the creation of machines which reflect our current state of consciousness and are being misused to subjugate the many to the few. It doesn't have to be that way.



Grace

The Oneness dwells within the Heart of each man, woman, and child. The polymath savant K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya feels that because Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita tells Arjuna to decide for himself, the concept of Grace is not a function of “predeterminism or divine arbitrariness. Grace comes in the wake of the enlightenment man receives in a sacred dialogue.” Whenever any one of us chooses to turn within and

begin this sacred dialogue with our own true Self, our innate Wisdom emerges. Many find ourselves joyfully weeping and many are simply overflowing with poems, sacred truth, and perhaps like AR Rahman, even music.

I have often compared the God-within me to a lover waiting for Its Beloved to recognize the true Love always waiting. Its patience is eternal, for no lover seeks to force love. God rejoices at our return and as Krishna says, although all are loved, those who seek the One are *sa me priyah* “dear to Me” [BhG.XII.14-17]. God rejoices when we Remember and come Home.

K.K. Nair: “...vital life that was launched into the adventure of evolution and the progressive enlargement of the radius of awareness was ‘a part indeed of My own Self’ (BhG.XV.7). But the freedom to deny this ontology is also real. Hence the double search: not only man seeking God, but God too is seeking the man who exercises his autonomy to align with him. Exceedingly dear is such a man to deity, as Krishna affirms and reiterates.”

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad has a very intriguing perspective on the idea of an all-control deity in this verse XVIII.61. He says that the term Ishvara means the all-controlling one and that revealing the secret of this world to someone may cause them to “lose interest in living, for all the novelty of living is lost. Living remains an experience of novelty only as long as the secret of life remains a mystery. A life in which events happen as logically calculated and predicted will be mechanical and therefore lacking novelty.” Are we appalled and bored by a life that is totally predictable?

This observation leads me back to the Siren Servers which intend, it seems to corral all of us into predictable repetitive clone-like behaviour and patterns of consumption that benefit the ruling tyrants, the rich and the technocrats who serve them. When our highly complicated thought processes are entrapped in only specific areas of the brain, where will individual creativity come from? The over use of computers and addiction to surfing the Net has been shown to actually alter the human brain physically.

From ‘The Shallows, What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains’ by Nicholas Carr: “The Net’s cacophony of stimuli short circuits both conscious and unconscious thought, preventing our mind from thinking deeply or creatively. ...Heavy use has neurological consequences. ...as the time we spend hopping across links crowds out the time we devote to quiet reflection and contemplation, the [brain] circuits that support those old intellectual functions and pursuits weaken and begin to break apart. The brain recycles the disused neurons and synapses...”



Rapid-fire Meditation?

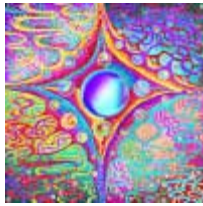
One wonders how this kind of entrainment by the machine will damage our capacity to meditate. Surely the rapid-fire experience of zooming around the Internet, reading dozens of articles in the most superficial way, perhaps only the first paragraph if that, is the extreme antithesis of the state of consciousness one hopes to achieve in meditation. This ‘redirection of our mental resources’ and ‘making judgements that are imperceptible to us’ as Nicholas Carr says, have been shown to ‘impede comprehension and retention’.

Carr quotes the German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, who back in the 1950s said: "...the looming tide of [the] technological could so captivate, bewitch, dazzle and beguile man that calculative [quantitative] thinking may someday come to be accepted and practiced as the only way of thinking." The frenzy of quantity over quality, jumping from one focus to the next, using only a small part of the brain may destroy our capacity for quiet contemplation and meditation. The state of a calm and attentive mind cultivated in silence is not only the source of all genuine creativity and innovation, but also the only Door out of the temporal illusory holographic webs we have bound ourselves within.

How much of what we surf on the Net do we actually learn and absorb - and how much is mere titillation, escape and addiction? Where is our Free Will in formats generated by one-size-fits-all software? Are these new masters of the universe, who we are in fact allowing to transform the very way our brains operate — are they true masters of their own consciousness? Generic formats that gather our personal information exist and are used not for our benefit, but to manipulate us without our knowledge.

As Jaron Lanier says, yes it's free - as long as we allow them to spy on us. What kind of freedom is that? Perhaps in this phase of our current Kali Yuga, the yantrarudhani has been projected externally into the hologram as these Siren Servers by our own lost and confused consciousness. The Kali Yuga is the Age of Conflict and Confusion. Rene Guenon's "Reign of Quantity" has descended into new depths. Have we created a new sort of Labyrinth to escape from, one literally and physically etched into in our own brain?

Jason Lanier from his book 'you are not a gadget': "It's crazy not to worry that, with millions of people connected through a medium that sometimes brings out their worst tendencies, massive fascist-style mobs could rise up suddenly." Will the next generation be more likely to "succumb to pack dynamics" because they have grown up with "crowd aggregation, as is the current fad." The Siren Servers make it easier than ever for tyrants to herd the crowd, manipulating masses, shoals of people who never met, on paths leading to an abyss.



The Great Mystery

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad says that it is not “one’s logical understanding of the constitution and function of the world or his ability to define it” that makes anyone Enlightened in Wisdom-Knowledge. Wisdom is rather “the contentment of being part of the Great Mystery that the world is” and this Mystery consists in the way the Oneness unfolds Itself as the world, “assuming every form.”

The same advice the master Jesus gives in Matthew 6:33, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God” is found in the verse, BhG. XVIII.62, as Krishna urges Arjuna to seek the God-within first.

With your whole being,
Go to Him [the One within], the Refuge,
From that Grace, you shall reach
Supreme Peace and the Eternal Home.

We cannot abide in harmony with eternal metaphysical Truth when we are in Ignorance of what Truth (Satya) is — and it appears obvious to me looking at the condition of human consciousness and the environment of the entire ravaged planet, that we are increasingly more disconnected from our Source. Those who choose to do so, to set Right the imbalances of our era will be served by first aligning our consciousness with the God-within, the ubiquitous One that dwells within all.

KK Nair says, “As deity’s design unfolding, the world is a sacred environment. It can be sustained only by work and since there are many who oppose that design, others who choose freely to align themselves with it [meaning the Creator’s sacred Design] have often to undertake disagreeable action, *akusalam* [inauspicious] karma (BhG. XVIII.10) to resist the former.” Thus Krishna urges Arjuna to get up and fight.



Swami Lakshmanjoo on BhG. XVIII.62: "...surrender everything that you have achieved, surrender everything to Him who...I [the One] that Being. *Tam eva sharanam gaccha sarva bhavena*, with all your might and with all your soul, you surrender in Him and just throw your I-ness into pieces, away from your existence. ...and then you will be established in the eternal, divine residence of the Kingdom of Mine."

The choice is clear. We can continue to run madly, rapid-fire around the labyrinth, blind mice in ever more complex artificial fake and self-created mirage-like mazes — or we can turn within to the Source of All that has been patiently waiting throughout non-existent time for our Return. Real Freedom lies within.

We Meet in the Heart

V. Susan Ferguson

Part III continues...



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hriddeshe Arjuna tishthati

bhramayam sarvabhutani

yantrarudhani mayaya

The Bhagavad Gita reflects many paradoxes, seeming contradictions, which I believe are always relative to the particular state of consciousness we are in when we read this brilliant enlightening text. Our comprehension of the sage Vyasa's Gita is always

changing, moving toward a deeper understanding with each reading. That is its magnificence, its timeless greatness beyond language, custom and borders. We perceive life quite differently when we are in a state of feeling separate from the One, but when we become immersed in God-Consciousness no contradictions exist. As Swami Lakshmanjoo has said, when we reach the state of Parabhairava, “All questions disappear!”



The Wheel of Action

Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) a mathematician, astronomer, historian, journalist, philosopher, and political leader, was considered to be a spiritual and intellectual giant. He was also a political activist, an advocate of 'Swaraj' (self-rule for India), the first popular leader of the Indian Independence Movement, and deeply committed to the idea of lokasamgraha, working for the well-being of the world, universal welfare. He was called the 'Father of the Indian unrest' by the British colonial authorities [wiki].

In 1908, the British government convicted Tilak of sedition for defending violent revolutionary acts and Tilak was sent to the Mandalay prison in Burma. He wrote his commentary on the Bhagavad Gita while he was in jail. Tilak's 'Gita Rahasya' (the Esoteric Import of the Bhagavad Gita) was originally written in Marathi, over 1000 pages with a lead pencil. Many copies of the book were sold and the profits donated to freedom fighting. Tilak also wrote 'The Arctic Home in the Vedas' which used evidence in the Rig Veda to propound the theory that the North Pole was the original home of the sages who composed the Vedic Hymns.

Regarding the meaning of the *yantrarudhani* in verse 61 above, B.G. Tilak has said that we have “no control over the Wheel of Action, which has been moving from times immemorial. Even if we may not wish them, nay, even if we may wish otherwise, hundreds and thousands of things are going on in the world...the wise man performs these Actions, keeping his mind pure, and looking upon pain and happiness as alike — whereas, the fool gets entangled in the bonds of those Actions.” Tilak quotes an earlier verse [BhG.III.33] in which Krishna states that we are all bound to our own unique material nature (prakritim), the gunas, and nothing will restrain, control or suppress our innate compulsions. J.A.B. van Buitenen translates Krishna's words what I believe is

gentle wry humour as, “Who will stop them?”

Tilak expresses his view on the question of Free Will by saying that verses 61 & 62 give credit for all Acts to the Ishvara, the One. “All activities, which go on in the world, are got done by the Parameshvara [Para means highest] just as he wants them to be done.” Therefore we find our best and highest recourse is to simply surrender all our thoughts and actions to the God-within, the Oneness that permeates All — because there is nothing that is not the One. What we do and think, our desires and possessions belong to the One Source anyway, so what are we really in fact surrendering? We are surrendering our ignorance, our misconception of the primordial metaphysical Real. It is only this Veil of Ignorance and Delusion that keeps us in the ‘apparent’ perception that we are separate. We are not, we never were, and never will be.

Tilak continues by saying what he feels to be the true meaning of verse 63, wherein Krishna tells Arjuna, 'Do as you please!'

“...when you have Realized this Knowledge, you will be self-enlightened; and thereafter (not before), whatever Action may be voluntarily performed by you, will be consistent with morality, and correct; and when you have thus reached the state of a Sthitaprajna (calm, firm in judgement & wisdom, contented), it will no more be necessary for you to control your Desire.”



'Similitude' with God

When we are in harmony and alignment with the Creator, having surrendered our Ignorance and Delusion, as K.K. Nair would say when we have reached 'similitude' with God, then whatever we do, whatever we Desire will be in equilibrium with that which is the substratum of this temporal holographic polarity universe. Devotion to the One is the key to surrender, and therefore Devotion, Bhakti Yoga, the sacred profound Love of God is given a higher place in the Bhagavad Gita. Loving God is the fast lane Home.

Yantrarudhani is described in a translation by Swami Gambhirananda (Advaita Ashrama in the Himalayas) as: “just like a magician who revolves the totally non-independent wooden human forms etc. seated on a machine etc. moved by a rope.” This description brings to mind the idea of robots or even virtual reality, entities that are powerless without their creators and controllers. The conclusion is made that until we take Refuge in the God-within with our whole being and in a state of Grace, attain Knowledge, supreme Peace and the eternal state of Oneness, all human efforts are useless.



Neuroplasticity and changes in the brain

In his revealing book 'The Shallows' Nicolas Carr describes how and why the Internet is changing our brains. The Internet is the latest tool that throughout history has "shaped the physical structure and workings of the human mind. Their [tools] use has strengthened some neural circuits and weakened others, reinforced mental traits while leaving others to fade away."

As Carr says even though the brain itself hasn't changed much in the last 40,000 years, history shows that the ways human beings think and act have. Recent insights into neuroplasticity - the changes in neural pathways and synapses which are due to changes in behaviour, environment and neural processes - have demonstrated that "Through what we do and how we do it...we alter the chemical flows in our synapses and change our brains." These changes are in turn passed on to our children through their schooling and in our DNA.

Carr even mentions writing as a tool that changed humankind, which I found particularly interesting because writing is a symptom - like an illness - of the Kali Yuga. The process of learning to read and write alters our brain patterns. Carr quotes a 4th century BC Egyptian king as saying, "Should Egyptians learn to write, it will implant forgetfulness in their souls: they will cease to exercise memory because they rely on what is written, calling things to remembrance no longer from within themselves, but by means of external marks." The king goes on to say that people will appear to know a great deal, but this quantity of knowledge is in fact bereft of wisdom, and is only the "conceit of wisdom" — thus they know nothing.

I wonder how many of us have understood the consequences of surfing the Internet, reading dozens of articles in a superficial rapid-fire shallow state of focus. The ancient Sanskrit texts were handed down from memory 'smriti' for 1000s of years. Who would be capable of memorizing hundreds of pages of text today? Perhaps this is the real reason for the ancient wisdom schools methods of attaining Knowledge, the daily reading of sacred texts, certain prescribed behaviours that build purity, and simplicity in our every day lives. Our freedom to choose what we put in our brains, meaning how we program the neuroplasticity in our individual brains, is the key to Liberation (Moksha). Perhaps our one true Free Will is the choice we possess to create a consciousness of purity, and in loving peaceful silence move towards a return Home.



Chapter IX, verses 7 & 8 in the Bhagavad Gita expresses another rather shocking perplexing statement of humanity's helplessness in the matter of Free Will.

7.

All beings, Arjuna (son of his mother Kunti),
Into My [the One] own material nature, they go
At the end of a kalpa (Day of Brahman, 4,320,000,000 years).
Again at the beginning of a kalpa, I send them forth.

*sarvabhutani kaunteya
prakritim yanti mamikam
kalpakshaye punas tani
kalpadau visrijamy aham*

8.

Supported and resting on My material nature,
I send forth again and again
This entire multitude of beings,
Who are powerless, by the Will of My material nature.

*prakritim svam avastabhya
visrijami punah punah
bhutagramam imam kritsnam
avasham prakriter vashat*

J.A.B. van Buitenen translates verse IX.8 as "...I create, again and again, this entire

aggregate of creatures involuntarily by the force of My nature.” We have no choice. According to van Buitenen, the Sanskrit words *prakriter vashat* imply that “this inherent creative and destructive pulsation of God is automatic.”

Boris Marjanovic’s translation is a bit different in flavour: “All beings at the end of one cycle pass into Prakriti, which is My own; and once again, at the beginning of the next cycle, I create them forth.” Marjanovic says that Abhinavagupta took the word Prakriti here to mean *avyaktam*, the unmanifested. Because all creatures are under the control of the Lord’s unmanifest, bound in Prakriti’s gunas and five-sense perception, they are powerless. However, Abhinavagupta comments that by assigning the creatures and objects of the world to the unmanifested Prakriti, “in spite of being unconscious by nature, become illuminated by the light of consciousness, which belongs to the highest reality.” This implies that in spite of our powerlessness and temporal state of unconsciousness, we are still the One — and “illuminated by the light of consciousness” we can always therefore reach our Source, That which we are.



‘We can do anything in this world.’

Swami Lakshmanjoo’s translation of Abhinavagupta’s Gita translates Prakriti as Maya and his comment reveals that after the big Pralaya (the Dissolution of a Kalpa), “They sleep for one night [of Brahma] and then wake up and are again caught by repeated births and deaths in samsara, and in this way, the whole universe goes on. It is never ending.” And again in Abhinavagupta’s understanding, Swami Lakshmanjoo says, “I [the Lord] am the creator of this whole universe. I create this whole universe [by] taking hold of My nature, prakriti. I adjust [My] prakriti in individuals and that [para, meaning highest] prakriti becomes apara prakriti [the manifested material nature, meaning the five great elements, along with mind, intellect and ego] there in individuality. But in real sense, that apara prakriti is one with that para prakriti of Mine... This is why individuals have this understanding in their nature that, ‘we can do anything in this world.’ (from 1978)”

Intractable dualisms

The polymath savant K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya believed that the author of the Bhagavad Gita, Vyasa was convinced that life was meaningful. K.K. Nair says, “If existence has a goal, it does not flow towards it smoothly, easily; it has to fight its way

through endless obstructions. This struggle is what gives life its drama; but when one seeks to account for its origin, one confronts intractable dualisms.” God’s dynamism lies in morphing shifting reappearing mystery, koan-like contradictions, and unruly intractable dualisms.

Prakriti’s material nature as the shakti-power that generates this temporal illusory holographic universe is dependent on the One that is the substratum of All. As the mirrored reflections of the One, we are the ‘entire multitude of beings’ that are sent forth powerless again and again — it is we who are the precious selves of the Oneness, we are ‘dear’ and indeed the joyful reason for Life itself. K.K. Nair quotes the poet Rilke, “What will you do God, when I die? ...in losing me you lose your meaning.” And also quotes Ibn al-Arabi (1076-1148), the Sufi poet of Spain, “God is necessary to us in order that we may exist, while we are necessary to Him in order that He may be manifested as Himself.”



All would be meaningless...

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad has a beautiful way of expressing this idea in his superbly terrific translation of the Mundaka Upanishad:

“What makes life beautiful and worth living is these two aspects of consciousness [meaning the God-within as observer and us as the living Beings enjoying five sense perception], always inseparable, one meaningless without the other. In the absence of life, the existence of the self, self-enquiry and even the existence of God, would all be meaningless...”

Believe me, I know that at times this world seems to be only a heartless, cruel, terrifying, blood thirsty, and stupid pointless place. Is there even one honest man with integrity left in positions of power these days? I have thought that this hopeless feeling may be natural as we approach the end of this cycle of time, or even as perhaps some have grown weary of the ‘Play’ of the Divine Lila. We find ourselves disinterested in the game, we have seen it all so many times, and want nothing more than to find our way Home.

The ancient metaphysical school Samkhya compares Prakriti to a dancer who has us enchanted, absorbed, deceived and hypnotized by her seductive mesmerizing

movements. But as time passes, we realize that she is acting, her dance is not the Real — it is only a temporal Play, a performance. When she feels that her act has been 'seen', that she is no longer able to entice, beguile and delude her audience, she simply stops dancing. And we stop being caught in her spellbinding show.

The Samkhya Karika: [When ignorance is dispelled] "...there is nothing else left to be produced by Prakriti...[we] lose all interest...[and she] Prakriti thinks, 'I have been seen' and therefore ceases to act further. Therefore even if there is still connection, there is no motive for further evolution...with the absence of this bondage, enjoyments also cannot be there...the connection of the Spirit with Prakriti ceases, and it does not behove the spirit to crave anymore for the objects of the senses." She stops her performance.



"...indeed if it can be known at all."

The eternal mystery that is God, the ubiquitous Oneness, will always elude us. The Rig Veda Rishi Visvamitra, the Sage who composed hymn X.129, wondered if the Creator can ever be known: "We know not if it can be held, the continuum - indeed if it can be known at all." Just as we imagine we may have succeeded in approaching any complete knowledge of the imperishable, immutable One — that very fragmentary aspect of Its infinite Being will shift, vaporize into yet another mirage-like no-form form. The One is forever morphing into never ending myriads of appearances, that we as Its mirrors reflect.

When we become still, quiet and rest in the Peace that surpasses all understanding, and are at last able to listen and merge into our true Self, then the hope of Truth Satya returning to this lovely blue-green planet, our Beloved Mother Earth will again emerge and shine. The Oneness is Love, the ultimate unified field — and that divine and eternal Love is always available to us, to restore and renew our Being, if we so choose to drink from the overflowing Cup in the Heart.

We meet in the Heart,

V. Susan Ferguson



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Part I

Bhagavad Gita XVIII.55 / Reaching Union in Love

By Loving Me (the One) is born
The Reality of who I am, how great,
Then having Known Me in Truth
One enters into Me immediately, at once!

Bhaktya mam abhijanati

Yavan yashcasmi tattvatah

Tato mam tattvato jñatva

Vishate tadanantaram

Bhakti Yoga, Jñana Yoga & Karma Yoga

The final chapter XVIII of the Bhagavad Gita is a summing up of all the other chapters. Verse 55 refers to the Yoga of Devotion or simply Loving God, which is the subject of Chapter XII — and my favourite. The Bhagavad Gita teaches that all three aspects of attaining Wisdom are important and in fact interwoven. You need Wisdom-Knowledge, Jñana Yoga (from the root jña = to know) in order to understand why you Love God. Acts, Karma Yoga, that cultivate God-Consciousness emerge as the result of both Wisdom-Knowledge, Jñana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga, Devotion.

Love is the underlying principle that generates the universe. The Love of the Creator for all of Its creation supports and sustains our each and every moment in illusory Time. In countless lives we have experienced some form of love, whether it be for another human being, a beloved pet, or even an idea as music or art. What we learn from these experiences is that our love has the power of to hold our focused attention. With no effort whatsoever we are spontaneously able to think of the object of our love throughout the day and night. If you translate this intensity of concentration into the journey toward enlightenment, you can easily understand how valuable a state of Love is to reaching Home.

I have a cherished friend who once asked me to tell him the essence of the Sanskrit texts. What did the ancient Seers, the Rishis know. At the time I was deep in the somewhat daunting challenge of learning the numerous Sanskrit terms used in the Kashmir Shaivite approach, which are very complex and require a dedicated concentration. I knew he was not ready to be open to that sort of application — yet. So knowing what he would most definitely indeed understand, I said smiling, “Love God!”



“Devotion, yes... jñana is nothing before devotion.”

Love for God, the One, is of primary importance also in Kashmir Shaivism. The Kashmir Shaivite saint and scholar, Swami Lakshmanjoo reveals the meaning of the above Verse XVIII.55: “By that bhakti (devotion), by that supreme bhakti, which is real bhakti, you will understand Me, who I am, how much I am and how long I am, how great I am, how broad I am, and how I am broad, and [even] more than that actually. ... then you will get entry into that union with Me. *Vishate tada*, you will undergo, you will melt in that oneness.”

Real *bhakti* is not an outward show of sentiment. Supreme *bhakti* happens within the Silence of our own Heart. Love for God is a private matter, just as two lovers can never successfully convey to others the subtle intimacies of their union, our union with the God-within is too subtle and sacred, too mystical to be felt and known by any other than you and God. Mystics hint at their ecstatic rapturous experiences in poetry, but words remain incomplete, incapable of carrying the divine frequencies felt in such experiences. We become attached to Loving the One everywhere.

Swami Lakshmanjoo says that in Kashmir Shaivism the idea of non-attachment is not recognized in the sense of ‘attachment’ to Lord Shiva [as God is termed in Kashmir Shaivism], the Oneness, the God-within, whatever name we call the One who is nameless — rather this form of attachment to God is the highest Wisdom, because everything in this world is divine, in Truth radiating the light of God-Consciousness. “When you believe that this whole, whatever is existing in this universe, in all these one hundred and eighteen worlds, whatever is existing is for the sake of Lord Shiva, who is only existing [meaning the only being, thing that ever does exist], when this is done, then there won’t be any...fruits [of your acts, your karma].”



Swami Muni Narayana Prasad says there are two ways of knowing any thing. One way is to know from the outside, as an observer. The other way is as “the knower knowing Reality as the essential content of his own being.” When our consciousness enters into the God-within, we Become That. It is rather like this — let us say that there is a vessel, a cup of liquid Light residing in our Heart, the heart chakra. When we reach a similitude, a similarity in frequency with that cup of Light, it begins to expand and overflow into and throughout our entire being until none of our old false temporal small-identity self remains. The God-within is a gentle tsunami that permeates our previous consciousness, enlightening us in the Remembrance of our Real identity.

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad says even though this illumination fills our being with blissful serenity, we are still faced with life’s vagaries, Hamlet’s infamous slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. However having Become the God-within, or Brahman (as he terms it), these vagaries no longer cause us to grieve. Wise men do not grieve! We face life with the “boldness of being Brahman. What guides his life is not aspiration for personal benefits, but the joy of partaking of the overall flow of karmas of Prakriti.” In others words, the cyclical flow of the temporal illusory holographic universe is awesomely Joy-filled, when viewed from the eyes of the One within. We see the

Oneness everywhere, ubiquitous in All, everyone and everything.



Place the mind in the Heart Chakra

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya places emphasis on the idea that the author of the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa has intently conceived the path of Devotion, Bhakti Yoga, as one that requires balance. Through the voice of Krishna, who is speaking as the One, the poet seer Vyasa “has taken enormous care to ensure that devotion does not degenerate into mere emoting. ...maintaining a triadic integration and consistency — of feeling thought and will.” We are reminded of a previous verse Bh.G.VIII.12, in which Krishna instructs Arjuna to place the mind in the Heart chakra; the Sanskrit word used is *nirudhya*, meaning to confine, suppress, or shut up. Such confinement of the mind in Heart requires great mastery of focused concentration. Our Love for God can produce this kind of one-pointed focus.

The sage Seers, the Rishis who composed the hymns in the Rig Veda, do not speak as the One. They speak in praise of That which is ever mysterious, perhaps even unknowable. The Rishis speak in adoration as observers seeking Truth, Wisdom-Knowledge understanding, Agni as the Fire of Union. They enumerate the aspects of the One as various deities, Agni, Indra, Vayu, Savitri, Surya, Varuna, and others (who esoterically reside within the body). The Seers who composed the later Upanishads, which seek to elucidate, make comprehensible the Rig Veda, also did not speak as the voice of the One.

Vyasa frequently uses passages, sometimes even direct quotes from the Upanishads. Therefore the poet sage Vyasa lived later than these earlier Sanskrit texts. Vyasa's poetic creation of the character Krishna in the epic Mahabharata is said to be based on an actual warrior hero, a black man, meaning very dark skin, who was very popular in South India. The literal meaning of the Sanskrit word Krishna is 'black'. Vyasa used his Krishna as the voice of the One.

In his book on the Mahabharata, K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya says this regarding Vyasa's Krishna: “Vyasa has created him [Krishna in the Mahabharata & Gita] essentially as a man who participates with other men in the action of history. To act meaningfully in the world, one has to have a view about its origin and purpose. Vyasa's profound views on these are expressed through Krishna.” In other words, Krishna is the voice of the brilliant genius sage, seer, and poet Vyasa. God is in all men. India

expresses this in the idea of avatar. God speaks through many.

“To give these views the ring of antique insights, Vyasa uses the daring mythopoeic strategy of making Krishna speak as the voice of deity, the intentionality behind creation, in the Gita discourse. Krishna should not be taken more seriously, nor less seriously either, than the prophets known to history through whom God is believed to have spoken. ...Vyasa’s temperament is not religious as such...Vyasa was probing the riddle of existence through the modality of poetry, which is perhaps more profound...” [quoted from ‘The Mahabharata, A Literary Study’ - Krishna Chaitanya].

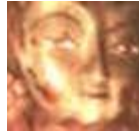


Eternal Vigilance

The path Home is accurately described as The Razor’s Edge, and a balance must be continually sought between devotional Love (bhakti), Knowledge (jñana) the mind, and our acts (karma). As Thomas Jefferson so wisely said, 'The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance.' We must not lose our way, again sliding down into the abyss of delusion. K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya in his book “The Betrayal of Krishna” enumerates the excesses that have occurred over the centuries as Vyasa’s Krishna in the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita was transformed into something quite different by the court poets and the later Bhagavata Purana, as Krishna was reinvented and recreated to suit their requirements and conceptions.

Even though the Bhagavad Gita has been extracted for convenience as an external distinct book, it is pivotal to the greater epic and Vyasa’s knowledge of primordial metaphysics are to be found throughout the Mahabharata, especially in the Moksha Dharma Parvan, the Book of Liberation. K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya states that Vyasa chose the form of a poem for a meaningful reason. Krishna’s teachings are not in the format of a dogmatic treatise or philosophical argument. Krishna speaks in Sanskrit rhyme and thus belongs to the world of poetry and aesthetics, and not a particular creed or denomination. According to K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya, Vyasa’s genius was rational and therefore, beyond and totally against cultism.

Part II continues...



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Part II

Bhagavad Gita XVIII.55 / Reaching Union in Love

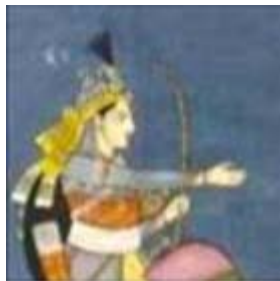
By Loving Me (the One) is born
The Reality of who I am, how great,
Then having Known Me in Truth
One enters into Me immediately, at once!

Bhaktya mam abhijanati

Yavan yashcasmi tattvatah

Tato mam tattvato jñatva

Vishate tadanantaram



Poet as Radical Thinker

Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa is the poet Seer author of the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita within it. Vyasa means the compiler, sorter or editor, and beyond what is written in the Mahabharata, nothing is known about him. Krishna as Vasudeva-Krishna had already emerged as a cult before Vyasa's time. K.K. Nair/ Krishna Chaitanya says that "as far back as in the fourth century B.C. Krishna had become very much a real figure, if not of history, certainly of legend - in all probability a figure with a faint historicity fully fleshed and blooded by legend."

Perhaps Krishna's real history will never be known, and we may wonder if this is even of great importance. However it was the poet sage Vyasa that gave Krishna the voice to reveal perhaps the most profound, subtle and authentic metaphysics of all time — the essence, substance, and distilled fragrance of the previous sacred Sanskrit texts.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya dates the Mahabharata about 150 BC. The Mahabharata is an epic poem of 18 books and over 200,000 lines. It is eight times as long as the Iliad and the Odyssey put together. It is rightly said of the Mahabharata that: "Whatever is found here may be found somewhere else, but what is not found here is found nowhere." In other words, all the stories of mankind, the gods and other beings, are in this amazing fantastic great poem.

The Bhagavad Gita is the discourse between Krishna and his friend Arjuna that takes place on the battlefield before, what is for that era a world war. The scene plays a crucial and pivotal role in the Mahabharata, even though sadly most people here in the west have only known the Gita as a separate stand-alone text.

There have been later multiple additions, numerous verses inserted into the many recensions of the Mahabharata. K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya is unable to accept some of these, like the Anu Gita, because they can be detached from the main story and therefore do not play into the integral whole. In his view, the great poet Vyasa would be incapable of such aesthetic inelegance.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya holds the poet Vyasa in the highest esteem and believes that Vyasa was a radical thinker, who through Krishna's words moved on from previous traditions — traditions which were purely transcendental and therefore denied any meaningful reality to this world, to embrace a deeper metaphysical understanding. Vyasa was obviously also a scholar and master of the previous sacred texts. In the hands of his brilliant creative genius, the poetic form with its infinite possibilities to encompass human experience was superior to the treatise or philosophical argument.

Vyasa's vast intelligence was imbued with a profound understanding and compassion for

the human experience, the wisdom to discern and evaluate our existential predicament, and offer the potential of profound solutions. Krishna comes across with answers. It is the opinion of K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya that the views and words spoken by Krishna in the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita are the views and words of Vyasa, the actual poet Seer. Krishna does say in effect that he is Vyasa, as the ultimate sage [BhG X.37].



Vyasa did not want a Krishna cult

"Men know of the gods only in their conceptions and draw near to them or drift farther away to the extent that these approach or recede from the verity...both the findings of reason as well as the reasons of the heart...integrate the outer reality of the structure of the world and the inner reality of the deepest core of man's being." [K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya - The Betrayal of Krishna]

The poet Seer and author of the Mahabharata, Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa “rejected the withdrawn, mindless, near-void that was the Absolute of transcendental monism.” He did not intend for Krishna to become “a cultist God of gods.” Vyasa’s Krishna “did not want a Krishna cult.” In the Bhagavad Gita XI.20-40, Krishna identifies himself with the world, not just as the deity Vishnu, but also as the wind, Time, the lion, the hermit Kapila, the Gayatri mantra, and many other splendors, even Vyasa himself. God is all pervading and thus Krishna in identifying with the God within the heart of All, is not limited even to the God of gods.

Krishna is “not remote and withdrawn transcendence, but immanent in the world.”

God is close, within our hearts as “our deeper self,” and we can form a partnership with God to assist in the unfolding splendor of this world. According to K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya, God relies on us for the “fulfillment” of the grand design. The freedom that we have is to choose to align our consciousness with the God within us, or reject it.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya is an Indian, born in Trivandrum the capital of Kerala - and I am not. Only a person born and living in India could have a lifetime of experience that provides the inherent indigenous perspective to evaluate the religious expressions that followed Vyasa's Bhagavad Gita through the centuries. I could not and would not. As an esteemed by India and respected scholar, K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya says that the primary concern of Bhagavatism "is for making Krishna a cult-god" and elaborating the doctrinal "world-denying attitudes which Vyasa had rejected." Ritualistic fundamentalism is revived.

"... now there is regression again to ritual. One becomes pure by repeating the very names of the deity because they have sanctifying power. We see here the beginning of a bemused musing on serious metaphysical problems which will harden in the course of centuries into a national characteristic; there is a vast appetite for system building, but little interest or ability to ensure that concepts interlock rationally, and that the whole structure of thought has a secure enough base which will enable it to rise to a spire of clear meaning."

Krishna's message is not one that promises reward for dogmatic beliefs or the endless repetition of words. Krishna's message is far more subtle in that we have the opportunity to align our consciousness with that part of God that is within our Hearts and learn to live, be and act in partnership with that to the fullest extent that we are capable. That conscious partnership will allow us to grow and Become a greater expression of our Creator. Krishna does not promise Arjuna victory. He may even be killed in the ensuing war. But if after choosing out of his own free will, Arjuna decides to fight, he will be acting in accordance with the Divine Intention.

"... we have to live with provisionality and can only strive always for increasing precision in the alignment of concept and actuality. We have to leave it to time, which ever reveals fresh and often unsuspected aspects of reality, to decide whether a doctrinal system is sound or unsound."



Fluidity, opposed to fundamentalist formula or ritual...

The paradigm of fluidity and movement, of continual vigilance and learning an ever-increasing self-mastery, skill in action, is to be sought over and opposed to a fundamentalist formula or ritual that purports to guarantee results. Vyasa's Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita forces us to think and re-think, and evaluate and re-evaluate our lives, our consciousness, and our place in the world.

Fundamentalism is like a saccharine pill that says, hey, here's the one-truth, the only-truth you'll ever need, guaranteed. Now turn off your brain and follow ...

Based on my own experience, I have observed the subtle snares in Bhakti Yoga. Where do you draw the line between devotion and fantasy? Using human emotions to concentrate your thoughts on the God within is powerful and useful, but as K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya points out, the later texts and poets' way of devotion "leads us into many meandering and messy alleys" and can produce a kind of disturbed emotionalism more concerned with the fulfillment of our fantasy than in the true experience of our Oneness with God.

With no one to guide me, I innocently read the Bhagavata Purana extensively, and honestly enjoyed these inspiring charming adventurous stories. For example, Krishna is said to have 16 thousand wives all of whom he keeps happy by a sort of magical and fortuitous 'cloning' of himself. The wives live in separate palaces and each imagines herself to be his favorite by some trick of the power of his illusion/maya. The kings in the Bible also have numerous wives. At some point don't all heroes seamlessly drift into myth and most of us have no need to fit such larger-than-life characters into any semblance of our everyday reality.

However there was one moment where the Bhagavata Purana's poet went too far for even me, and I began to feel quite uncomfortable and question the purpose and intent of these descriptions of Krishna's sexual prowess. The Tenth Book (or Skandha or Canto, depending on which version you read) has the most fantastic Krishna tales, and I would imagine this book is also the most loved.

In this very popular Skandha X, Chapter 90 is 'The Song of Queens: Resume of Krishna's Sports':

5. Lord Krishna who was the sole beloved consort of 16,000 queens, assumed as many various attractive forms as he had queens and severally sported with them in their separate resplendent palaces of surpassing affluence.
6. The swimming pool in each of these mansions was full of crystal clear water ...
7. Sri Krishna ... entered the waters of those (swimming) tanks and sported freely. His bosom (lit. body) was smeared with the saffron paste applied to the breasts of his queens

as they embraced him (during the water sports).

8. His glory was sung by Gandharvas ... gleefully playing on musical instruments ...

9. Sri Krishna was being drenched with jets of waters discharged through syringes by his consorts who were laughing all the while. He, in return, profusely sprinkled water on them ...

10. Their thighs and breasts became prominent to view through their wet Saris (garments) ... Due to a thrill of passionate desire (at the touch of Krishna's person) their countenances beamed with great pleasure and they appeared brilliant and beautiful.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya suggests that the poet used sex to gain readership. "The Krishna of the Gita gets forgotten; the libidinous gain the support of a prestigious text for their rationalization and cults celebrating sex begin to emerge." One wonders why Khajurao was left abandoned. K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya sees that the primary theme of the poet here is a romantic dalliance that cannot be the foundation of an authentic devotion to God. He believed that its "primary motivation is cultist" and reveals an "emphasis on mixed-up myth, irrational faith, and excessive emotion."



For K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya the Bhagavata Purana is "very specifically a text of the Krishna cult."

"All the monumental work done by Vyasa in cleansing the conceptualization of Krishna of the accretions of low myth was undone by the Bhagavata and the Indian psyche has not been able to cleanse itself of the resulting confusion to this day." Neither does K.K.

Nair/Krishna Chaitanya think much of Uddhava's Gita, which he feels is but "a grotesque caricature" of the Bhagavad Gita. He points out that Uddhava is concerned with a mass of instructions for ritual adoration, whereas the Krishna in Vyasa's Bhagavad Gita is content with a leaf or a flower offering.

The stories of Krishna in the Bhagavata Purana are enchanting, lovely and mesmerizing.

But the road to wisdom and freedom is narrow, the Razor's Edge as it has often been called, and confusing emotionalism and sexual fantasy with subtle inner awakening is perilous indeed.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya reminds us we do not need palaces and garish wealth when real wealth is integrity and virtue. Hell is more often right here on earth when we realize our excessive appetites only lead us further down in consciousness. Our scholar suggests that the poet who wrote the Bhagavata Purana might have said "that Krishna went in for sex on a Gargantuan scale" to get men to read the text so that he could then instruct them on salvation, perhaps a somewhat dubious rationale.

In a 'kindly last word' he quotes a passage he obviously agrees with from Bhagavata Purana, III.29.22:

"Stupid and foolish is the life of the man who worships idols forgetting deity who indwells all things."

Part III continues...



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About Krishna Chaitanya/K.K. Nair from exoticindia.com:

Krishna Chaitanya (b. 1918) graduated from the Madras University standing first both in B.A. and M.A. with Biology as his specialty in the former and English Literature in the latter. He has retained this interest in both sciences and humanities in his subsequent career. He is the author of a serial history of science in Malayalam of which two volumes have already appeared; a well-known music critic; member of the Publication Committee of Sangeet Natak Akademi; a well-known art critic; author of several books on Indian painting; member of the International Association of Art Critics, Paris and of the Advisory Committee of the College of Art, New Delhi: Vice-President of the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society; Editor of Roopa Lekha, India's oldest extant art journal; author of several children's books which retell Sanskrit classics; member of the Akhil Bharatiya Sanskrit Sahitya Sammelan; and author of a serial history of world literature of which nine volumes have already appeared in English and five Indian languages. He is at present working on a pentalogy on the philosophy of freedom, of

which three volumes have been published. His interdisciplinary studies earned for him an invitation from the Institute of International Education, New York, for a lecture tour of the U.S.A. for six months as a 'Critic of Ideas', and a special award from the Kerala Sahitya Akademi. He has also extensively toured Afghanistan, Thailand, China and Japan and visited several European countries.

Krishna Chaitanya whom Edward Goldsmith, leading international campaigner on environment and winner of the Alternative Nobel Prize refers to in his book *The Way: An Ecological World View*, as "possibly the greatest polymath of an time" and the national media have rated as "one of the most original thinkers of the twentieth century" (*Hindustan Times*), "our nearest approximation to the Renaissance Man" (*Indian Express*), a writer who has made "singular contribution to the advancement of thought, art and science in our times" (*Time of India*) and as "one of the most prolific and luminous intellects of our times" (*Economic Times*), has written over forty books outline summaries of all of which are available in *Krishna Chaitana, a Profile and Selected Papers* edited by Suguna Ramachandran (Konark, 1991).

The main categories are: a five-volume philosophy of freedom, which critics have compared to the works of St. Thomas Aquinas, the French Encyclopedists, Herbert Spencer, Bergson, Whitehead and Teilhard de Spencer, Bergon, Whitehead and Teilhard de Chardin; a ten-volume history of world literature; Indological works including a book on Indian culture, a history of Sanskrit literature, a literary study of the Mahabharata, the most comprehensive book so far on Sanskrit poetics and a translation and commentary of the Gita; and books on Indian art. He got the "Critic of Ideas" award of the Institute of International Education, New York in 1964, the Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship in 1978, Honorary Membership of the International Cultural Society of Korea, Seoul in 1982, D.Litt. (honoris Causa) of the Rabindrabharati University in 1986, the Padma Shri in 1992 and the Kalidasa award of the International Institute of Indian Studies, Ottawa in 1993.

Described by national periodicals as "one of the most original and stimulating minds writing in the subcontinent today" and as "our nearest approximation to the Renaissance man, versatile in interests and depth of learning", Krishna Chaitanya is the author of over thirty books whose multidisciplinary range got him the "Critic of Ideas" award of the Institute of Interspecial award from the Kerala Sahitya Academy. The major categories are: a five-volume philosophy of freedom for which he got a Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship and which has been compared by critics to the work of Thomas Aquinas, the French Encyclopedists, Herbert Spencer, Bergson, Whitehead and Teilhard de Chardin; and ten-volume history of world literature in English and several Indian languages

several books on Indian culture; books for children, one of which got the Federation of Indian Publishers' award for the best children's book.

He was for over a decade Chairman of the All India Fine arts and Crafts Society and Editor of Roopa-Lekha, India's oldest extant art journal, and has been member of the Publication committees of the National Museum, the National Gallery of Modern Art, National Book Trust, Sangeet Natak Akademi and Indian Council for Cultural Relations. He is Art Critic of the Hindustan Times and Western Music Critic of Times of India.

The Ecstasy of St. Teresa of Avila by Bernini, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome



Part III

Bhagavad Gita XVIII.55 / Reaching Union in Love

By Loving Me (the One) is born
The Reality of who I am, how great,
Then having Known Me in Truth
One enters into Me immediately, at once!

Bhaktya mam abhijanati

Yavan yashcasmi tattvatah

Tato mam tattvato jñatva

Vishate tadanantaram



Chapter XII in the Bhagavad Gita reveals Krishna's teaching to Arjuna on Bhakti Yoga, the Path of Devotion. Verse 7 is my favourite, and I frequently sing it to myself. The Sanskrit words *mayyaveshitacetasam* have long ago been written in my Heart.

BhG.XII.7

I soon lift up, extricate and deliver
 from the ocean of death and birth [Samsara]
 Those whose consciousness, whose thoughts
 Have entered into Me [the One].

tesham aham samuddharta

mrityusamsarasagarat

bhavami nacirat partha

mayyaveshitacetasam

My understanding and translation is ‘whose consciousness has entered into Me’ [the Oneness]. The Sanskrit breaks down into *mayi* - in me, *aveshita* – entered, abiding in, *c[h]etasam* – of thoughts, in thoughts. Perhaps it is more accurate to describe God-Consciousness as expanding within us, gently absorbing, overwhelming, replacing other thoughts as our Real being Returns within us, and we Become that which we always are.

My translation: For the ones whose consciousness has merged into absorption (avesha) in God-Consciousness, I soon will be their deliverer from Samsara, the ocean of birth and death. Merge all thoughts in Me alone, cause the discerning intellect to enter in Me. You shall abide [Home] thereafter in Me. There is no doubt of this!



Swami Lakshmanjoo

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains this verse XII.7 thus, “Surrender your mind in Me, surrender your intellect in Me, [then] you will reside in Me and you will be considered situated in *uttama yoga*, supreme yoga [union].”

Quoting a passage from Abhinavagupta’s *Devistotra*, Swami Lakshmanjoo describes the state of Samadhi of one who is in union with God as the Beloved: When there is no agitation and the mind is controlled, “and one is focused in concentrating upon Your universal nature...he [she] observes that he is shivering, trembling, he has got tears dripping down from his eyes...and he is trembling, he is weeping, he is crying, he is laughing, laughing loudly, and at the same time he is crying loudly, and weeping and crying. ...he does not know in which way [he is] existing...am I really weeping or

laughing?”

Tears flow easily when we feel near to the presence of the One. You cannot help this, it is natural to all, and is perhaps the symptom of the breakdown we seek. We are at last surrendered. The small frail, often silly ego with all its puffy pride and endless dead-end desires, has prostrated itself to the Real within, our own eternal Being. Tears are the expression of both Joy and relief! Thank God, we are Home!

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad says that for all individuals life ends in death, but when we see life through the eyes of the Creator, we understand that Life is the endless creativity of the One “finding self-expression”. For the Creator, life is like a painter’s canvas, blank and white, then filled with colour and form, then blank again, awaiting more. Through the ‘eyes’ of the One, Life continues uninterrupted and “unaffected by the vagaries of the apparent forms emerging and merging back” into the one Reality.



Love is the greatest element in the body of the One

God is Love. When our consciousness merges with the God-within, when *mayyaveshitacetanam*, our consciousness has entered into the Oneness, then we are liberated from the sorrows of death and rebirth, samsara. This moment of Union is the Real Bhakti Yoga. After such an experience, we begin to live every day in the Wisdom-Knowledge that everything is sacred, the ubiquitous Oneness is everywhere within everyone.

As Swami Lakshmanjoo says, “Love is the greatest element which is created in the body of Parabhairava” [the Kashmir Shaivite term for the One]. Our return Home into the One within All “can be achieved. That is not impossible for anybody to achieve. Everybody can achieve Him, but with what, with what element, with what weapon?” How do we reach Home?

“Bhakti, devotion. If he undergoes intense devotion towards Parabhairava, he will

reach...” Thus we realize and understand from Swami Lakshmanjoo that, even though Kashmir Shaivism is a mental discipline and knowledge is emphasized, devotion is said to be more important than wisdom knowledge [jñana], or anything else. “Devotion, yes,” he says. “nothing is...jñana is nothing before devotion. ...that state of Parabhairava can be achieved by anybody, any disgusted being, by bhakti, by devotion, by love.”

What is love? In his comments on the Bhagavad Gita VIII.20-22, Swami Lakshmanjoo describes love: “Love is just one-pointed, love is always love, love cannot remain without love. Love is. ...in waking state there is love, in sleeping state there is love. He can weep, at any moment he can weep, tears are always in his eyes, tears are always there when he is laughing in a dream, tears are always in him. He is filled with tears, everywhere. ...Oh, love is just blind!

“And he does not know what love is. He himself does not know what is love. Love is the greatest element which is created in the body of Parabhairava.”

This is Truth, as we all come to know — God is Love.



Words that Open Truth

In the Fullness of your God-Self — Be.
That One moving within, ever expanding,
Purifies, opening the portals to Wisdom.

These words serve to open Truth,
Your Heart beats in Union with Mine,
Your hand moves across the page,
There is no room for pain,
Only the gentle pulsation,
The ebb and flow of our Love,
Thick with the Light of Fire,
Spreading out in threads,
Flooding every cell, the Return,
The rapture of Fire, the Real,
Streaming radiance, pouring out.
Beloved, My Love for you is eternal,
My Love transforms, drawing you into Me,
Over the winds of Time,
Into the Heart of the Stars.
Listen for the silent music within,
Sweet melodies dance across our Touch.
Hold me in your Heart.
The Truth lies within our embrace.

by V. Susan Ferguson



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The Buddhist Deities Chakrasamvara and Vajravarahi 15th century.



You are not the Doer! Part I / Bhagavad Gita XVIII.16

There in truth thus, the one who acts,
Who sees himself, indeed, as the only exclusive agent,
He sees, he perceives from an imperfect incomplete understanding

He sees not, the blockhead!

*tatraivam sati kartaram
atmanan kevalam tu yah
pashyaty akritabuddhitvan
na sa pashyati durmatih*

Durmatis (m.) – fool, blockhead; 'Du' – to be burnt, to be consumed with internal heat or sorrow.



Krishna's choice of the Sanskrit word *durmatī*, which is translated as either fool or blockhead, has always amused me. It gives the dialogue a very human touch. Here are the two greatest warriors in the world poised in the middle of Kurukshetra, a vast battlefield of opposing armies waiting to slaughter each other. Krishna is in the last moments of the Gita, his great 'song' of what-are-the-rules wisdom to his friend Arjuna — and the poet Seer Vyasa chooses the word 'blockhead' to emphasize the sheer density of our human ignorance to imagine that we ever do anything! There is only the One and we are That veiled in data-collecting vehicles.

The idea that we are not the Doer of our acts is presented earlier in the Bhagavad Gita III.27, Krishna says that all actions are performed by the gunas, the modes or qualities that belong to Prakriti, the matrix and our material Nature. Yet as long as our mind is confused and deluded by egotism (ahamkara), we continue in the mistaken belief that 'I am the doer!' In truth we are not the Doer. All actions are the product of Prakriti and whatever we do is merely the result of these modes working together, weaving upon the other modes, the 'qualities (gunas) acting among the qualities (gunas)' [BhG.III.28].

Swami Lakshmanjoo: "There is only one difference between an ignorant person and that person who is residing in the Parabhairava state [meaning who has Become the Oneness]. The person who has got ego and who is residing in the limited cycle of limitation, he always thinks that, 'I have done this, I have done this.' And the others who are residing in God consciousness, they say, 'although I have done this, I have not done this. I am not the doer. The doers are the inferior cycles of organs. I am not the doer.' This is the difference between the one who is residing in the Parabhairava state and the other one who is residing in his limited cycle of being."



Ancient Samkhya

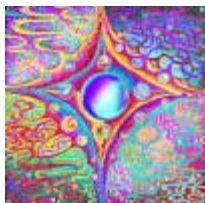
The Sanskrit word Prakriti is defined as primordial Nature, the creatrix, and is derived from the verb-root 'kri' meaning 'to make, to do' and 'pra' meaning 'forth' [J. Grimes]. The conceptual theory of Prakriti's gunas (sattva, rajas, and tamas) is derived from Samkhya [pronounced San-kay]. The origin of Samkhya is elusive, but the influence of Samkhya is found in the Upanishads, Buddhism, Jainism, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita. The Indian scholar K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya says that even though Samkhya is "the source for the factorial analysis of action, it cannot be derived from any Samkhya text." Samkhya literally means the 'enumeration' and perhaps the term evolved from seers gleaning a compilation of wisdom from many sources "as the perspective gained from the integration of reason and knowledge."

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya: "The seat of matrix of action is the frame of body, life and mind...The instruments are primarily the motor organs but also include the sense organs...the various patterns of coordinated operation for the realisation of objectives..." Thus the body is the instrument of various activities and is presided over by 'daivam' meaning belong to the gods, fate or diving providence and "specifies the overall texture of the web of the world's action which is woven from the strands that link specific causes to specific results."

The 'gods' are the specific forces residing within our body. This is esoteric knowledge and scholars who are researching the Rig Veda have come to understand that the deities being propitiated in the hymns are not external deities, but rather the subtle essential modes of various powers that make up human consciousness. Our human body is a microcosm of the One. The human body is a data-collecting vehicle for the One who dwells in the Heart of all beings.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya: *Daivam* means the vaster action of nature beyond the small illuminated circle, which is all that man, even with the greatest foresight can take into account in planning his action." Unintended consequences abound and even the best

of prophets often get it wrong. The fabric of the temporal illusory holographic matrix is interwoven, complex and interconnected. “When we select and stimulate a single strand of cause-effect relation for reaching our objective, we often forget that the strand is part of a fabric of great extension, both in space and time. The tensions on the other strands of the fabric may cancel, distort or reinforce the action on the selected strand.”



We are the Oneness, Veiled

The idea that we are not the Doer goes back into the question of Free Will, which I have explored in XVIII.61. The One needs us to create and enjoy our countless adventures in this manifested universe. The enigma and mystery of our origin and purpose drives us to further actions. If we knew that we are the One and thus the entirety of all, what would drive us to change and uncover new adventures in creativity and invention? Thus we remain Veiled and motivated.

The One has Veiled Itself as us in Time/Space to play in this temporal illusory polarity universe. We are in disguise ‘playing’ various roles, like Shakespeare’s “All the world’s a stage.” We are not here to give up everything, but to enjoy everything - and eventually, inevitably in Self-recognition, Remember that we are the One. Thus it is the One doing the actions as primordial Nature, Prakriti and her gunas, which is a mechanism comparable to a machine-like matrix. The One is the Doer. There is only the One manifesting through Its data-collecting vehicles — us!

This does not mean that we are not responsible for our acts, we are. We cannot blame the One for our mistakes. As we sow, so we do definitely reap. Our every act and thought is embedded in the holographic spirit body within which we move from one life to another, as we seek to fulfil our endless ‘I want’ desires impelling us to more adventures in time/space. Our spirit body is made up of the accumulated sums of our thoughts and acts, which form the warp-and-weave of us as ‘apparent’ individuals. Our self-generated uniqueness serves to both limit and expand us. We are whatever we have done, as long as we remain in ignorance that we are not the Doer!



Swami Lakshmanjoo BhG.XIII.30: “Oh Arjuna, I am just open-heartedly waiting for everybody to come and embrace Me and become one with Me. [There is] no fear, nothing, don’t worry about anything. It will come in its place as soon as possible, as soon as you like [to have] it. It is your liking. If you don’t like it, don’t like it. Still you are with Me.”

Liberation from the Veil occurs as we lift up our consciousness and conquer our ignorance with and by the Self, the God-within, who acts as our friend. [BhG.VI.5-6] Until we want to acknowledge the God-within us and reach similitude, a resonance with the God-within us, we are on our own. Indeed, you might say that the One has surely cooked up an amazing challenge, a superb beautiful and terrifying ‘play’ — and this awe inspiring, temporal illusory holographic universe is but one jewel in the vastness of Its Creation.

BhG.X.42: “I continually support this entire universe with a single fraction of Myself.”



Wise men do not grieve

Imagine looking at the world through the eyes of the Creator, the One. What would you see? In the Old made-for-television version of the Mahabharata, by B.R. Chopra, we begin to notice that Krishna is always smiling. No matter what is happening, Krishna is smiling! Obviously, as portrayed by the writers of the film, Krishna knows something we don’t. BhG.II.30: “The eternal inviolable Self, is in the body of all, therefore, Arjuna, you should not mourn for any being.”

BhG.XIII.29: The one who sees that all actions and deeds are done, performed exclusively by Prakriti, our matrix and material nature, and thus sees that he is not the Doer, that one sees.

Boris Marjanovic translates Abhinavagupta’s comment as, “The yogin who with firm conviction thinks – ‘It is Prakriti which acts and not me!’ – such a yogin, even if

completely engaged in activity, in reality does not act...such a yogin is not a doer.”

Prakriti is the matrix, our material nature and her creative powers are termed shakti-maya in Sanskrit and consist of the three gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas), the modes or qualities into which all aspects of the manifested temporal illusory hologram can be categorized. Seated within is the observer and experiencer, Purusha, which is sentient but inactive, and remains free, untouched, unaltered by any influence of the gunas. Purusha “possesses the power of consciousness and therefore, the presence of Purusha is necessary for the functioning of the intellect, the mind or any other modification of Prakriti.” [B. Marjanovic]

Both Purusha and Prakriti are eternal; they have no beginning and no end. “The union of Purusha and Prakriti is responsible for bringing creation into existence.” [ibid] Prakriti performs the action, generates endless variations of form, differentiated sense perception - but is unconscious. Purusha is conscious, and observes and enjoys Prakriti’s dance.



Samkhya and the Two Birds

The conception of manifestation being created by the union, one might say joint venture, of Purusha and Prakriti originates in Samkhya. The origin of Samkhya is unknown and as one Indian scholar puts it, “The origin of Indian philosophical systems is almost enveloped in darkness. Samkhya shares the same fate.” [P.Chakravarti]

Samkhya is critical of Vedic sacrifices, as Krishna is in the Bhagavad Gita; and may have been a reaction against Vedic ritual. Samkhya emphasizes knowledge of Purusha and Prakriti over ritual sacrifice. Unless and until we have a full understanding of Purusha as the observer and Prakriti’s gunas, we cannot hope to grasp the metaphysics in the Sanskrit texts.

In the Rig Veda I.164.20, there is a traditional parable tale thought to be the seed of Samkhya. “Two birds with graceful wings, close companions, embrace the same tree. One of them eats the same fruit. The other not eating, simply looks on, all the time.” [Translation by R.L. Kashyap] Here we see the metaphor of the two birds, one acting, doing, eating as the manifesting matrix Prakriti — and the other ‘simply looks on’ as the observer Purusha who doesn’t need to eat.

This story is also found in the Shvetashvatara Upanishad IV.6 and the Mundaka Upanishad III.1.1-3. The Mundaka Upanishad is the wisdom taught by the great Rishi

Angiras to his disciple Saunaka. The Mundaka is densely packed with the highest wisdom-knowledge for Liberation and written in exquisite inspiring verse. It has become one of my favourite beloved Sanskrit texts; and I prefer the translation by Swami Muni Narayana Prasad to others, but reading multiple translations is always of value.

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad's translation is lovely, illuminating and speaks of the two birds as fast-bound companions, one eating delicious berries while the other looks on. The bird that observes, Purusha, is said to be the witnessing 'I' and always remains "the same, changeless, is free from all attachments, unaffected by the inconstancy of the other." This witness is the same in all of us. It is an apparent portion of the consciousness of the One observing — and is the God-Consciousness that "witnesses everything that takes place in the whole world, in all the worlds. It sees everything is taking place within Itself, as activated by Itself."



Observing Prakriti's Dance

Life is the relationship between Purusha and Prakriti, the dance of the observer observing the observed, as Krishnamurti has said. Purusha is the observer, and Prakriti the matrix. Swami Muni Narayana Prasad feels that one is "meaningless without the other. In the absence of life, the existence of the self, self-enquiry and even the existence of God, would all be meaningless." The two birds are perched in the same tree. God loves and needs us, just as we need and love God.

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad: "Every action that takes place anywhere in any of the worlds is but a part of the self-unfoldment of the one creative urge of this one Consciousness. Realizing this one dares not think of oneself as the doer (karta) of any action. The all-witnessing Purusha, the all controller (Isha), is the one doer (karta) of all actions." It is only our ignorance, as long as we are Veiled in forgetting, that deludes us into thinking we do anything!

BhG. XIII.21: The Purusha (Spirit) abiding in Prakriti, material nature, enjoys and experiences the gunas, which are born from Prakriti, the matrix of material nature. Attachment to the products, the evolutes of Prakriti's three gunas is the cause, source and instrument of rebirth into good and not good wombs.



Beginningless & Endless

Swami Lakshmanjoo: “Prakriti and Purusha are both beginningless and endless...all the objective world is produced by Prakriti. ...Prakriti has made this for Purusha to taste so that he will be entangled in the wheel of repeated births and deaths. ...She creates this for Purusha. As soon as Purusha gets awareness of Prakriti that ‘Prakriti is dancing for me,’ he will become mukta [liberated]. ...As long as Prakriti is not aware that Purusha knows, she dances, she kicks him, she plays him, from one birth to another birth, from another birth to another birth, whatever she likes. ...But as soon as Purusha becomes aware...then you will become jivan mukta [living liberated].”

BhG. XIII.22: The witness (upadrasta) in the body is the Great Lord (maheshvaras) and the Supreme Self (paramatma), the supporter, experiencer, and enjoyer.

Thus we learn that the Oneness dwells within us all, in the Heart observing and enjoying all. The Sanskrit texts say that once we realize the Truth of this ‘play’ and Recognize our Real Self as the One doing the creating, in that sublime astonishing moment of our awakening, no matter what condition of life we have been existing in — we are Free (Moksha), liberated from Samsara, the ocean of repeating death & birth. We are “not born again. [BhG, XIII.23]”



“Having reached this impermanent unhappy world...”

Swami Lakshmanjoo calls this earth plane ‘the plane of mortality.’ Krishna tells his friend Arjuna “having attained, reached (prapya) this impermanent and unhappy world” [BhG. IX.33], he should devote himself to the One. The translation by J.A.B. van Buitenen is thus: “Reduced to this passing world of unhappiness, embrace Me!” On a personal note, I remain puzzled by the verb *prapya*, meaning attained or reached. I wonder how or why I have ‘attained’ this impermanent and unhappy world; but as yet, frankly I have no resolution to my puzzlement. I only know that as Swami Lakshmanjoo says, all questions disappear when we are in the Oneness.

In his commentary on the Bhagavad Gita XIII.22-24, Swami Lakshmanjoo again takes a rather blunt tone saying, “Anyone who fortunately understands what is Purusha and what is Prakriti, and what are these gunas by which I was kicked by, played by Prakriti, *sarvatha* (in whatever way), if he knows, if he comes to this understanding, then he remains away, he remains aloof from Prakriti. He does not allow Prakriti to touch him! ...He is established in the state of Parabhairava and he is mukta [liberated].”

“Purusha is actually dependent on Prakriti...and he enjoys the three gunas (three gunas means just that worldly creation)...And as long as Purusha is attached to the gunas, the three gunas (sattva, rajas, and tamas), it conducts for him numberless births and deaths... because he deserves that. And he never gets away from this, this grabbing [i.e., attachment by which] he is caught.”

Swami Lakshmanjoo makes a distinction between the Purusha who is caught up into Prakriti’s performance and the one who is witnessing [Upadrashta], saying that one is above the entanglement and one is caught. “Upadrashta, [the one] who is witnessing, what is going on, what is this damn thing going on, [i.e., happening] to Purusha, and he is tossed [around] with Prakriti...He [the witness] sees, He observes, He witnesses...and He thinks how far [Purusha] is entangled by Prakriti...and He [the One, Parabhairava] is also existing in deha [body] and observing what is happening to that [Purusha]. Both are [there]; one is above that and one is entangled in Prakriti.”

Part II continues...

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You are not the Doer! Part II / Bhagavad Gita XVIII.16

There in truth thus, the one who acts,
Who sees himself, indeed, as the only exclusive agent,
He sees, he perceives from an imperfect incomplete understanding

He sees not, the blockhead!

tatraivam sati kartaram

atmanan kevalam tu yah

pashyaty akritabuddhitvan

na sa pashyati durmatih

Durmatih (m.) – fool, blockhead; 'Du' – to be burnt, to be consumed with internal heat or sorrow.



The Field & the Knower of the Field

In BhG. XIII.26 Krishna describes the relationship of the field [kshetra] to the knower of the field [kshetrajña]. Swami Lakshmanjoo: “Whatever happens in this world, kshetra and kshetrajña is conducting in each and every respect. Kshetra means this body, kshetrajña is soul. Which soul? Limited soul (Purusha). And limited soul is conducted by unlimited soul side by side in the body. [The unlimited soul] also whips [the limited

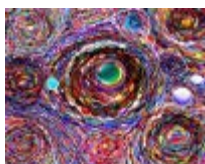
soul]; He takes the whip and sees if he has some capacity for learning [saying], ‘let him rise, let him rise.’ The unlimited soul pushes him and he rises.” Thus we understand that the God-within us is encouraging us in various ways.



Swami Lakshmanjoo (from 1978) on Liberation from Prakriti’s mischief: “If you become slave of Prakriti, you are gone. When you follow these, follow the movements of these five sense organs, i.e., five senses of cognition and five senses of action, along with the touch of these three gunas, you are just sheep, you are just carried by Prakriti. And this is that individual being who is governed by Prakriti. He creates this, he creates this universe. Because everybody has his own universe in his mind; you have your own world, you have your own world, you have your own world. And that world you have created by combination of these...by following your nature. When you command Prakriti, then you don’t create your world. Once you have not created your world, you are free, you have no rebirth. You won’t come...you won’t be entangled in repeated births and deaths.”

I find the above quoted explanation to be very clear — and so interesting that Swami Lakshmanjoo repeated the phrase “you have your own world” three times, for my life experience certainly would agree with this. Does it not all too often feel that each one of us is living in our own individual world? One cannot imagine what another person sees when they enter a room, or feels when they first meet anyone. Communication between us humans entwined in our self-created holograms, remains elusive and mysterious at best.

The idea that ‘we are not the Doer’ is repeated in BhG. XIV.19: When the observer sees that there is no other Doer than the gunas, and he knows what is higher than, transcends the gunas, he attains My state of Being (madbhavam). Swami Lakshmanjoo says that “there is one [person] in lakhs (100,000) of people, there is some fortunate person who always observes that I am above the cycle of the three gunas...I am not touched or painted, whitewashed, whitewashed by the three gunas...he enters the state of Parabhairava.”

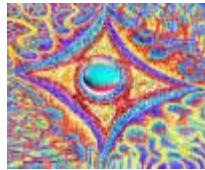


Direct intuitive perception!

Samkhya pervades the Sanskrit metaphysics and the sage Kapila is generally thought of as its founder. “Kapila, the great sage, is regarded as the propounder of Samkhya. In the Samkhya tradition, he is held to be the first among the wise and he appears at the beginning of each cycle of creation. [Pulinbihari Chakravarti]” Kapila is said to be the foremost of the siddhas, and endowed with perfection from the very moment of his birth. Kapila assumed a form by dint of his supernatural power and “had no physical body and thus cannot be regarded as an historical person. [Ibid.]”

The Mahabharata says that Kapila was the incarnation of fire [Agni], also the light residing in the orb of the Sun, and one of the mind-born sons of the god Brahman. There is a wonderful collection, ‘The Sankhya Aphorisms of Kapila’ that I have found to be clearly stated, inspiring and enlightening. [The word Samkhya is spelled both ways because of the Sanskrit letter involved.] Here are a few of my shortened notes on Kapila’s splendid astute aphorisms:

The true sense of bondage is non-discrimination. The bondage of the soul is merely verbal. Bondage resides in the mind and not in the soul — it is merely a reflection, like the redness of [pellucid] crystal [when a red rose is near it]. [Ignorance of delusion] can be removed by nothing short of direct intuitive perception! The origination of the diversified [world of sense] is that from which has no difference. The subtle body consists of light. The soul abandons the idea of its being Nature [Prakriti]. Live alone! Emancipation is not a manifestation of Joy! Paradise is no security against transmigration. Moksha is not achieved by a counsel of heavenly people. The body is a site for experience. The subtle body attends the soul even during the periodic annihilations of the world.



Samkhya Karika of Ishvara Krishna

The book best known and most easily accessed, the Samkhya Karika of Ishvara Krishna, is now a free PDF online. This is said to be a compendium of the vast literature on Samkhya. The scholar P. Chakravarti says “the huge treatise of Kapila was not possible to master even in hundreds of years; hence the veteran teachers of Samkhya for the sake of benefit to their pupils dealt with the teachings of Kapila in the short treatises of their own.” Ishvara Krishna composed this compendium in an effort to clarify and simplify what had become clouded by “terse and subtle reasonings” in arguments from opposing sects. There is a Chinese version entitled ‘Gold-Seventy’ or in Sanskrit, Kanaka-Saptati.

There are many intriguing verses in Ishvara Krishna’s Samkhya Karika, for example: Regarding the three gunas, the Rajas attribute serves no useful purpose inasmuch as it

energizes both Sattva and Tamas attributes which by themselves, are absolutely inert and as such incapable of performing any function.

* Of the sense organs, the Mind possesses the nature of both the sensory and motor organs. It is the deliberating principle. The subtle body is incapable of having any experience without a physical body of six sheaths; that is why it migrates. The subtle body migrates as it is tinged with dispositions of virtue and vice, knowledge and ignorance, passion and dispassion, power and weakness. Impelled by the purpose of Purusha, this subtle body appears in different roles, like a dramatic performer, by means of association with instrumental causes and their effects, through the all-embracing power of Nature [Prakriti's maya-shakti].

* Purusha is never bound, nor is he released, nor does he migrate. It is Prakriti, being the support of manifold creation, that migrates, is bound and is released. Thus, from the practice of Truth, is produced the wisdom in the form: 'I am not,' 'nothing is mine,' and 'not-I,' which is final, pure on account of the absence of error and absolute knowledge. Doubt and falsity are the two impurities of wisdom.

* The one (Purusha) thinks: She, Prakriti, 'has been seen by me' and therefore loses all interest [in her performance]; the other (Prakriti) thinks 'I have been seen' and ceases to act further. Therefore, even though if there is still connection, there is no motive for further evolution. With the absence of the bondage of erroneous knowledge, enjoyment of sense objects also cannot be there. Because of the momentum of the impulse of subliminal impressions, the Spirit continues to inhabit the body for a while.



The Rishis & The Essence of the Exact Reality

For millennia, Rishis, Seers and enlightened masters have gone deep into the Heart and all found the same experience: They did not exist. There is only the One. The One has been given 1000s of names, and yet is nameless. The One is infinite forms, and yet is formless. The experiences of those who came into the Presence that always exists within us all, found its way into countless expressions, systems of cosmology, metaphysics and philosophies.

No matter how you slice up the holographic pie, no matter how many terms describe the

aspects of the One as it manifests through the Matrix in Time & Space, there is only the One. When you become weary of learning metaphysical concepts that have evolved over the centuries, think of the enlightened genius Kashmir Shaivite, Abhinavagupta, who in his 'Paramarthasara, the Essence of the Exact Reality' has said:

“All Such Theories are Mere Suppositions & Imaginary Concepts of Thinkers”

Once you begin to consider the nature of your relationship to the universe and the origin of both, it is quite natural to want to systematize your findings to both share and clarify. Ever since we lost the memory of our absolute nature, we began this process. Abhinavagupta states that all such theories are “mere suppositions and imaginary concepts of thinkers.”

Why? Because – “No diversity is the real truth.”

Paramarthasara: 27. The Buddhist thinkers maintain that the constant flow of momentary consciousness is the only reality. The Vedic thinkers say that the single self, penetrating inside pervading, directing and governing all minds, is the ultimate reality.

Some Upanishadic thinkers take the power of animation as the ultimate truth, while other such thinkers say that one universal Atman, shining as all phenomena, is the only reality. Some other thinkers take either the psycho-physical organism or the generalities or lastly the individual as the ultimate truth.

But all such theories are merely dialectical speculations useful in discussions and debates. None among such entities has a real existence, as all these are mere suppositions and imaginary concepts of thinkers.

28. In the same way that matters like piety and sin, heaven and hell, birth and death, pleasure and pain... and so on, do never exist in reality, but appear in the Self on account of delusion (maya).

No diversity is the real truth. Its existence is simply apparent. It shines in the Atman as reflections shine in a mirror. All this appears to be a bonded being on account of the delusion caused by maya.

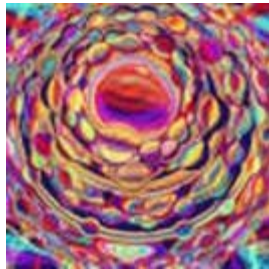


As I consider Abhinavagupta's enlightenment to be beyond question, I feel I can draw certain conclusions from his emphatic statements:

*There is Oneness and the appearance of multiplicity.

*The domain of Prakriti is the 'appearance' of transitory multiplicity in the form of the temporal illusory hologram produced by the matrix, meaning Prakriti's shakti-maya gunas.

*Therefore the mechanics of this multiplicity can be described in many diverse ways depending on the consciousness of the experiencer.



Threads in the Labyrinth

Throughout the four Cycles of Time we all have recognizable differences in the way we perceive life. Our holograms are not identical, as I am sure you have noticed. Thus when any one of us goes traveling into the inner worlds of our one Soul, we all come up with our own filtered versions of how the universe is constructed and manifested. None of which are any more real than the temporal illusory hologram itself - and none of which is any more real than another. However some do have a higher consciousness and are more useful than others, meaning they may guide us Home.

Each is a product of the individual's consciousness based on his or her state of balance among the three gunas. Prakriti's guna-maya manifestations are all a part of the illusion of multiplicity - even when they are grand and enlightening illusory thoughts. If it is

true, as Abhinavagupta says, that all such theories are “mere suppositions and imaginary concepts of thinkers” then why should we read these wonderfully arcane and often complex metaphysical systems that take great pains to delineate the mechanics of consciousness? Metaphysical systems are the threads in the Labyrinth that lift our consciousness into the higher frequencies, out of the mundane and into the sacred.



The words of these ancient seers are in the higher waveform frequencies that we want to be in. Immersing yourself in their consciousness through reading their thoughts will bring our consciousness closer to theirs. You will still have to ‘experience’ what you read. Just reading or hearing the truth is not enough. You must intuitively perceive, know, and feel these teachings in your deepest being. They must become a part of you – experientially. This is why so many diverse forms of spiritual practices have developed. These practices are the effort that allows you to make Wisdom-Knowledge a reality, the Real that has power to release you from the bondage of delusion.

A huge piece of this 'bondage of delusion' is thinking that we are the Doer. However, having immersed our consciousness in Krishna's sublime liberating wisdom and Samkhya, we now know that, "We are not the Doer!" We are neither as he cajoles Arjuna, blockheads or fools, in Sanskrit *durmatis*.

We meet in the Heart!

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The Meaning of Sacrifice / Yajña

Bhagavad Gita XVIII.65 / Part I



Bhagavad Gita XVIII.65

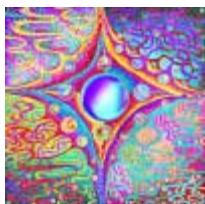
Be devoted to Me [the One], fix your mind on Me,
To Me sacrificing, in reverence to Me,
Thou shalt come in Truth to me, to thee
I promise, as you are dear to Me.

*manmana bhava madbhakto
madyaji mam namaskuru
mam evaishyasi satyam te
pratijane priyo 'si me*

The concept of sacrifice, yajña, is found in the ancient sacred Sanskrit texts, including the four Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita. Today there are many Indian scholars who have come to conclusion that the original real meaning of yajña was symbolic, interior and esoteric — and not what came to be the practice of priestcraft ritual sacrifice.

Creation itself is the ultimate cosmic sacrifice. The universe as multiplicity is understood as the One sacrificing Its oneness into innumerable forms and consequently creating-manifesting the temporal realms. When we offer anything to the God-within us, we are in fact giving back to the One that which belongs to and is the One. My way of saying this has been that we may as well offer everything we think, feel and do to the God-within, because everything belongs to, or more properly said, is in fact the One.

The above verse is Krishna’s reminder to Arjuna to focus his mind and being on the God-within, the Oneness, Brahman, Parabhairava, the eternal luminous effulgence that pervades and permeates the All. Our lives here on earth, the planet herself, all appearances, objects, every temporal holographic effect, are the result of the sacrifice of the One into magnificent multiplicity. We are That. When we offer our thoughts and actions as a kind of sacrifice to the God-within us, we are merely giving back what has been given to us. We are returning the apparent temporal aspects of the Oneness back into the One!



We are the event, effect and result of the sacrifice made by the One of Its Oneness, Its wholeness transformed into form, into multiplicity — and we are Its mirrors. We each are a mirror for and back into our Source of a small aspect, a portion of Its infinite manifested Being. As the One Veiled in Time & Space, we perceive and enjoy the banquet of temporal multiplicity through Prakriti’s gunas and differentiated five-sense perception. Each of the five senses transmits signals to our brain from their sense-objects. These sense objects are formed of the same substratum effulgence as we are; and therefore, we are interconnected with them as everything is in the Oneness. These signals sent to our brain are interpreted differently by each of us, because over many life times each one of us has evolved complex variations in our gunas, the three modes or qualities of our being. Our individual receptivity and capacity for awareness therefore varies in what is often bewildering diversity.

The perceptions of our five-senses are comparable to food. What is perceived as being ‘out there’ in the temporal world is like food for the One. Yajña as the symbolic ritual

act of offering food to the God-within is Truth, a perfect expression of ancient wisdom-knowledge. Krishna counsels his friend Arjuna to offer his own self to the One. Arjuna is an aspect of the One and thus his every thought, act and feeling have always truly been the One all along. By offering our daily lives, every moment to the One within, we are simply recognizing what has always been and always will be. We are That!



In the next verse, BhG.XVIII.66, Krishna urges Arjuna to abandon all duties, dharmas, and take refuge in the One alone! The Kashmir Shaivite, Abhinavagupta takes this to mean that we should give up any idea that we are the Doer. In the real sense we do not even exist as individuals, because in Truth we are the temporal forms of the One that are born and die, rising and falling like waves in the vast ocean of ethers.

The Kashmir Shaivite, Swami Lakshmanjoo translates verse 66 as:

“Leave all, surrender all acts, good and bad, to Me (*sarva dharman parityajya*)... because good actions are also bad, bad actions are also bad in this world. [Whenever] you do good actions, those also have a bad effect. [Whenever] you do bad actions, those also have a bad effect. Surrender all of these both actions to Me, and surrender everything in Me. I have taken responsibility to save you from all diseases of good and bad. This is a disease; this is an incurable disease.

“What is an incurable disease? Doing good actions and doing bad actions, or doing good actions and not doing bad actions. This is an incurable disease; this is just like a cancer disease.”

From his state of being Parabhairava, the One, Swami Lakshmanjoo has the fullness of all wisdom-knowledge to see, as only the true Seer does see, that only the One within does all acts. We are not the Doer and any other conception is a misconception, a disease that leads us back into Samsara, the endless cycles of death and birth. As long as we remain in ignorance under the delusion that we are the Doer, then our acts both good and bad continue to bind us in the temporal illusory hologram, trapped in endless self-created entanglements both good and bad.

Good deeds will get us to temporal heavens, but not liberate us from Samsara. Again and again we must return here to reach the final goal, the understanding that we are not the Doer, and we have never existed as separate from the One — ever. Our identification

with our temporal holographic identity and our current data-collecting vehicle was merely another appearance, all of which arise out of and subside back into the oceanic waters, the eternal imperishable luminous effulgence of God-Consciousness. We are That!



The goal

In his commentary on the Chandogya Upanishad, Swami Muni Narayana Prasad says that “Perceiving one’s own life as a yajña marks the culmination of attaining wisdom.” We are not here to achieve anything lasting in the time-space illusory holographic universe. We are here as the Veiled temporal appearances of the One to enjoy the experience of limitation, eventually coming to the wisdom of realizing that everything indeed begins in pleasure and ends in pain and inevitably death. This is Truth.

There is nothing permanent in this realm, all is temporal and cyclical, rising and falling, emerging and dissolving forms. Our goal is not success in the temporal. Our goal is the Realisation that we have always been the Oneness beneath all appearances, beneath the curtain of each atom. The One has sacrificed Its Oneness into multiplicity and therefore without any attachment to results – because results are immaterial to our purpose - we offer our acts and deeds as sacrifice to the One, That which we are.



Bhagavad Gita III.9

Other than actions for the purpose of sacrifice,
This world is bound by actions, deeds.
That purpose and aim, Arjuna, actions
Released from attachment perform!

*yajñarthat karmano 'nyatra
loko 'yam karmabandhanah
tadartham karma kaunteya
muktasangah samacara*

When we perform any act or deed without attachment to the results, in other words when we are not emotionally invested in the winning or losing results of our action, we are in a state of consciousness that induces and allows us to enter into our Real nature, the One. Such actions performed without attachment do not bind us in the cause-and-effect webs of the external hologram. They do not catch us, entrap and draw us into further attachment. Those acts in which we fix the idea that we are the Doer bind us, pulling our consciousness into deeper states of delusion and bondage.

Non-attachment liberates!

Non-attachment means not caring for the results, not desiring the fruits of our actions. Realising that we do nothing, meaning we are not the Doer — in fact we are merely a temporal appearance of the One — so we are content in the understanding that there is nothing to be gotten, nothing to be possessed by our acts. Desiring the fruits of our deeds is ignorance. Fruit rots. Gaining the wisdom of our origin and Source is the goal to be reached, not the external illusory stuff.

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad: “When one becomes aware of the truth that it is all part of Prakriti [the Matrix], one feels like offering back to Prakriti what one considered one’s own. Once that happens, every moment of one’s life and all one’s karma are experienced as a sort of oblation at the sacrificial fire of Prakriti. Such is the symbolic significance of the yajña...”

Rather like the infinity ∞ symbol, energy in perpetual motion rolling back and forth from the un-manifest into the manifest and back again, we give, offer into, an eternal return as the symbolic sacrifice what was never ours, but always us, back to the Source that created it. God sacrifices Its Oneness for us — and we sacrifice our deluded individual ego back into that One, world without end.



Altruism

The perspective of scholar and polymath K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya is that the Wisdom-Knowledge Krishna imparts to Arjuna is to be used for the well being of the world, the loka-samgraha. Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita is counselling Arjuna to kill the tyrant bad guys in an internecine war, which eventually ushers in the Kali Yuga. In his illuminating book “The Betrayal of Krishna” K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya says that the world of men suffers bondage from all action save that which is yajña, which he defines as sacrificial in the sense of altruism. We are encouraged to perform altruistic acts, in harmony with the eternal Righteousness, the Sanatana Dharma, and free from narrowly personal attachment.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya: “Why is the altruistic action liberating and elevating? The encapsulated self is always an impoverished self. Its satisfaction when its trivial desires are fulfilled does not have the quality of pure happiness; its pain when desires are frustrated, does not have the nobility of the tragic, which always changes by a strange alchemy into reconciliation, even euphoria, even if it be in a most intimate chamber theatre of the lone self. The altruistic self expands its ego boundaries to be coextensive with the world...the teleology inherent in the ecological harmony of the world where every component functions to conserve the whole.”

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya makes the word sacrifice into sacramental, thereby implying that whatever we do without personal ego and in the sense of altruism, working for the well being of the world, becomes sacred by intention. “Man has to make the first sacramental offering of knowledge (buddhi yoga, jñana yoga) for unitive understanding. ...In the wake of the sacramental offering of understanding, comes the sacramental offering of action.”

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya: What “initiated the great discourse [the Bhagavad Gita]

was Arjuna's renunciation of action because he felt, or rationalized his collapse of morale to argue, that fighting the battle would be a sin." Arjuna cannot face killing his own kin [Duryodhana and the Kauravas] and his beloved respected mentors [Bhishma and Drona], so in the midst of two massive armies assembled on both sides of the battlefield, Arjuna has sunk onto the floor of his chariot in depression while Krishna explains to him why he should fight. Thus we understand that Krishna is not extolling Arjuna to renounce the world, shave his head, go off into the forest and become a wandering monk! The gritty metaphysical issue is not the fight, but rather our state of consciousness.

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya says that action becomes sin when it violates the whole law, meaning the order of an environment. "As deity's design unfolding, the world is a sacred environment. It can be sustained only by work and since there are many who oppose that design, those who choose freely to align themselves with it, have often to undertake disagreeable actions, akushalam karma (XVIII.10) to resist the former."

Bhagavad Gita XVIII.10: The man who has cut away doubt, who is wise and intelligent, has abandoned (tyaga) attachment, and so does not hate inauspicious disagreeable action, nor does he cling to auspicious agreeable action.

This is not mere indifference. This abandonment, tyaga is a profound giving-up, reached in the ultimate wisdom-knowledge that we are not the Doer. Thus it becomes obvious that our best course is to align our acts in harmony with and to the God-within, the same luminous effulgence, the One that is ubiquitous, pervading and permeating All.



Spontaneous and natural behaviour

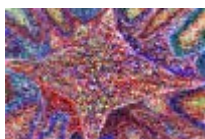
K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya translates XVIII.9 as: "The world of men suffers bondage from all action save that which is done as yajña, sacrificial, altruistic act. Perform action to that end, free from (narrow) attachment." K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya feels that there is an interaction between men, the order of the world and an anterior or transcendental order. The evolved person "constantly works for the well-being of the world, not because this is a duty imposed on him, but because this is the spontaneous and natural behaviour of the man who has gained true knowledge of reality where every entity and process work for the totality."

K.K. Nair/Krishna Chaitanya translates Bhagavad Gita III.16-19 as, "He who does not work here in this world to help turn the wheel thus revolving leads a sinful life, rioting

in the senses; he lives in vain. But he who rejoices in the Self, and is content only with the Self, for him verily there is nothing that has to be done (as obligatory duty or for need-gratification). For him there is no stake in this world in anything done, nor in anything not done; nor is there for him any dependence in respect of anything obtainable from any being. Therefore perform ever the action that needs to be done, without attachment. For by performing action without attachment, one attains the supreme state [param].”

The Sanskrit term loka-samgraha means the maintenance and well being of the world. In III.20, Krishna uses this loka-samgraha to urge Arjuna to act for the purpose of holding the world together. Kashmir Shaivite Swami Lakshmanjoo’s interpretation is that the enlightened master, who is “resting in the Parabhairava state” has nothing to do in this world. “Whatever he does, he does for the sake of play, for the sake of just play. He has no particular thing to be done. Whatever was to be done, he has done that. He has conquered the whole universe.”

The enlightened one is not dependent on anything in this world, but Swami Lakshmanjoo says that even though there is nothing that has to be done, the enlightened “should do, still you should do action. You must not mislead those who are ignorant. ... So, it is for the sake of the world, not for him.” The ignorant will naturally do what the best men do, so he must set a standard [III.21] — lokas tad anuvartate, meaning the world follows this.



Making the ordinary sacred

The actions of an enlightened being become yajña, sacrificial in the sense of making the ordinary sacred. For the well being of the world, the loka-samgraham, we offer our deeds into the Source of all. Krishna is not advising Arjuna to reject his warrior dharma, abandon the battle and his grand wizard weapons, renounce the world and leave for the forest as a monk and beggar. No, not at all. Krishna says [BhG.II.17-21] that this universe is pervaded by that which is indestructible, and what “ends of this unending embodied, indestructible, and immeasurable being is just its bodies — therefore fight, (Arjuna) Bharata!” [translated by J.A.B. van Buitenen].

The conflict between renunciation and action has long been a factor in the ever-evolving changing schools in India. The freedom fighter and scholar, B.G. Tilak had time to study and consider these matters in his Gita Rahasya, which he wrote in a British prison. It may seem obvious, but permit me to suggest that Tilak was wrestling with the same questions as Arjuna. Should good Indians turn the other cheek to their conquerors, the British, renounce any acts of violence, and simply retire to the forest as Sannyasa monks,

or should they revolt against their oppressors and fight as true Kshatriya warriors.



Doctrine-supporting ‘stretchings’ and mutilations

Seeking support from the ancient Sanskrit texts, B.G. Tilak found his answer in the Isha Upanishad. Studying the various commentaries on the Upanishads, he began to notice as I have and I’m sure other have also, that regardless of their intellectual brilliance, the various commentators tend to support the doctrines of their own schools. Even though all the Upanishads do not support the life of Sannyasa and renunciation of life, as Tilak says “the doctrine-supporting commentaries on the Upanishads do not show these differences, and they usually say that all the Upanishads support only one Path — and that too principally the Sannyasa Path. ...these commentators have had to stretch and mutilate some hymns in the Upanishads, as has been done by them in the matter of some stanzas in the Gita.”

This habit of stretching and mutilating specific verses in the sacred Sanskrit texts to fit and support the doctrines and views of the commentators has also been a large part of the reason why the Rig Veda was initially so absurdly translated by western scholars with their own doctrinal agendas. We humans tend to want whatever we see as truth, accepted by everyone. Or as the song says, “A man hears what he wants to hear, and soon ignores the rest.” Dare I say that all these doctrine-supporting ‘stretchings’ and mutilations have continued to obfuscate the wisdom in the Sanskrit texts as humankind descends further into the Kali Yuga.

B.G. Tilak found his answer in the Isha Upanishad, which says that the best way is the union, the simultaneous possession and mastery of both wisdom-knowledge (jñāna) and actions (karma). The 9th verse says “Persons who devote themselves only to avidya [ignorance, karma & rituals] enter darkness, and those who are steeped merely in vidya or the Knowledge of Brahman enter a still deeper darkness.” In other words, there is a necessity for the union of both, deeds performed with wisdom-knowledge.

B.G. Tilak: “Carrying on properly the affairs of the mortal world, or going through these

affairs is called loka-samgraha in the Gita. It is true that obtaining Release [Moksha] is the duty of every man; yet, it is also essential that he should simultaneously bring about universal welfare (loka-samgraha)...the Gita is consistent with the Upanishads.”

Krishna says it clearly in the Bhagavad Gita III.5-8: No one can for a single moment remain without performing action. Those who do nothing while their mind is remembering sense objects, are hypocrites! But he who acts without attachment is superior, for action is indeed better than non-action.

The secret is as always in consciousness, meaning what is the state of our consciousness when we think, feel and do anything? Are we aware of our union (yoga) with the God-within, the One, the imperishable luminous effulgence, beneath the curtain of appearances, that which creates and sustains all universes, you and me. If so, then our every act becomes sacred, a sacrificial give and take, an exchange, and simultaneously an entry point into Union with our own Source, the Beloved, whose magnificence is beyond all words to describe.

Part II continues...



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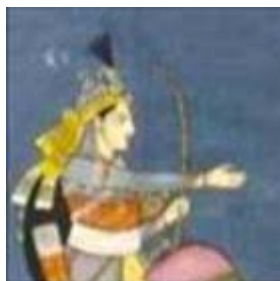
The Meaning of Sacrifice / Yajña

Bhagavad Gita XVIII.65 / Part II

Bhagavad Gita XVIII.65

Be devoted to Me [the One], fix your mind on Me,
To Me sacrificing, in reverence to Me,
Thou shalt come in Truth to me, to thee
I promise, as you are dear to Me.

*manmana bhava madbhakto
madyaji mam namaskuru
mam evaishyasi satyam te
pratijane priyo 'si me*



Yajña and the 'gods'

“Perceiving one’s own life as a yajña marks also the culmination of attaining wisdom.” –
Swami Muni Narayana Prasad

Chapter III in the Bhagavad Gita reveals the interconnection between yajña sacrifice and the gods. What are the ‘gods’? The Sanskrit word is ‘deva’ from the verb-root ‘div’ meaning ‘to shine’ — leading back into the concept of the One as luminous effulgence. The gods are portions of the creative forces of the One. Over the centuries, the gods have been personified to make these metaphysical principles accessible.



Bhagavad Gita III.11

May you cause the gods to be,
May they, the gods cause you to be,
Each other feeding, causing to be,
You shall reach the highest bliss.

Devan bhavayatanena

Te deva bhavayantu vah

Parasparam bhavayantah

Sreyah param avapsyatha

The Sanskrit word *bhava* means state of being, existence, emotion, feeling, attitude; from the verb-root √bhu meaning to become, exist [J.Grimes dictionary].

J.A.B. van Buitenen translates the verse thus: “Give ye the gods being with it, and the gods shall give ye being. And thus giving each other being, ye shall attain the highest

good.”

In his wonderful translation as dictionary, Winthrop Sargeant says in a footnote that *bhavayate* is sometimes translated as ‘may you cherish’, or ‘may you nourish’, but it is actually a causative form of the root \sqrt{bhu} , meaning ‘be’ and ‘exist’ — thus its literal meaning is “may you cause the gods to be.” Sargeant is intrigued by this insight provided by the root meaning and continues by saying, “The metaphysical inference is interesting. Man causes the gods to be, and in return the gods cause man to be. This is by no means the only place in religious literature where a mutual creation is hinted at — man creating god and god creating man.” Sargeant quotes from William James in ‘Essays on Faith and Morals’ the view that: the very idea of the invisible world may depend in part on “the personal response, which any of us may make...”



The gods 'indriya' are the sense organs

The Kashmir Shaivite Abhinavagupta’s interpretation of the gods in the verse is: “The word gods (*devah*) stands here for the function of the sense organs that possess a playful nature. In the *shastras* [teachings] dealing with the sacred texts, gods are known as Lords of the senses.” The translator Boris Marjanovic gives another meaning of the root \sqrt{div} as ‘to play, to sport, to rejoice.’

The idea that the sense organs are conceptualized as gods is born out in the Sanskrit word ‘*indriya*’ which means sense organ and relates to the word Indra, who is the Vedic deity and king of heaven. The senses are instruments of perception. They are the communicators between the external temporal and the eternal immutable God-within us. The continual transmission and relay of signals to the brain from sense objects and back out into the appearances of solidity in the external, manifests, alters and re-evaluates the universe moment by non-existent moment.

Again from Marjanovic’s translation of Abhinavagupta’s Bhagavad Gita: The gods (the senses) are satisfied by our actions, meaning by “engaging in the enjoyments of the objects of the senses appropriate... Thus, continuous exchange of two contradictory experiences, i.e., gratification of the senses, which brings satisfaction, and Samadhi [Liberation from sense delusion], in which sense organs are reduced to one’s own Atman [Self], quickly bring the highest good...in which the distinction between these two experiences is eliminated.”

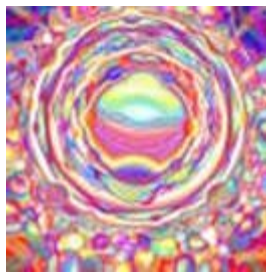


Swami Lakshmanjoo says this: “*Deva* does not mean gods; you have not to satisfy gods. *Deva* means *kridanasila indriya vrittayah*, your own organs, your own organs are gods... your own organs you should feed by these karmas (actions) by giving them good... everything.” And “...with awareness, you have to serve [the sense] organs. Give them whatever they need, and in return, they will push you back in God consciousness.”

Our senses are the relay stations, subtle transmitters of waveform signals to the brain. They are the miraculous mechanisms of communication between our consciousness and the external hologram. When we understand the sense organs as God’s power stations of Creativity that transmit the One’s desire to manifest, express, and experience Its awesome infinite potential of sheer Beingness — then those same sense organs, which once deceived us, will become entry points for our Liberation. As we become the ubiquitous One within, so we become One with everything, including the *indriyas*, the sense organs which have allowed the ‘play’ meaning the Divine Lila to unfold for us. Suddenly even a sip of water or the taste of honey becomes an entry point into God-Consciousness, or Parabhairava in Kashmir Shaivite terms.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.5.1:

“This earth is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this earth — and he who is in this, earth the effulgent, immortal Purusha and he who is within one’s being, in the body, the effulgent, immortal Purusha are indeed the same. He who is this Self, this Immortal, this Brahman, this All.” [translated by T.V. Kapali Sastry]



Swami Muni Narayana Prasad translates BhG.III.11, as: “By making use of this (*yajña*) you shall satisfy the gods; they will in return satisfy you. Satisfying one another, you shall attain the supreme good.”

Krishna teaches Arjuna that the One, as Prajapati [meaning the lord of becoming, the

lord of creatures; from praja = creation and pati = lord] created mankind together with sacrifices yajña. “By this yajña may you bring forth; this shall be your wish fulfilling cow.” [BhG.III.10]

The Sanskrit word that has been translated as ‘wish fulfilling cow’, the Cow of Plenty, is *ishta-kama-dhuk*; the literal meaning is ‘granting desires’. We need not imagine that the people of that era believed there was such a real cow. The Mahabharata is in poetic form and poets, even enlightened sages and Seers of ancient times use metaphors to illustrate meaning. Ishta = wished, desired, liked, beloved, agreeable, cherished; kama = desire; and dhuk comes from the root √dhu, meaning shaking, trembling.

Thus the Lord of Creation, Prajapati, created mankind along with yajña — and just as the One sacrifices Its oneness for multiplicity, so does everything in Nature sacrifice to achieve and restore harmony and balance. Swami Muni Narayana Prasad says that both the known worlds and the unknown invisible-to-us worlds together form one life system. “The existence and happiness of each entity ensures the existence and happiness of all others.”

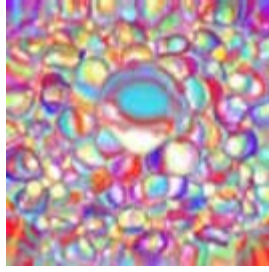


A buffet...

Perhaps when we live in a city we forget that Nature is constantly in motion, one plant or animal subsisting on another. A forest is rather like a large buffet, everything is essentially eating everything else. Real Mother Nature is not Walt Disney. Yes, she is Beauty, elegance and perfection, but her commitment to balance can be felt as vicious. The ocean is no different and the unending food chain continues, hidden beneath the waters, as the larger fish are forever eating the smaller, in every moment, on and on. We humans are just beginning to understand that our interference in the perfection of Nature has both deadly and perilous consequences. We don’t as yet understand our Mother!

Everything in this universe is interconnected and therefore, every sacrifice ensures the happiness of everyone. With the wisdom-knowledge that everything is consciousness, we can understand that all forms feel as Swami Muni Narayana Prasad says, a kind of cosmic “gratitude in ensuring the happiness of all that depend on them, thus making their own existence meaningful. Everything in the world is connected with happiness (ananda). ...the existence and life of every individual transient entity, is an oblation offered into the sacrificial fire, the effort for actualizing ananda. Having become part of this yajña, the individual realizes the meaningfulness of being born.”

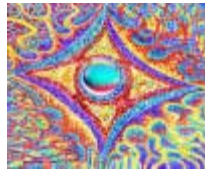
“Perceiving one’s own life as a yajña marks also the culmination of attaining wisdom.” – Swami Muni Narayana Prasad



The Woven Universe

The universe is woven by yajña. Every life form is interconnected to every other life form. Every temporal form is continually sacrificing its form of being for every other form. That is Its happiness, ananda. The mother sacrifices her body, so that her baby is born; while the father sacrifices his life in labour to provide for their children. The green grass is an offering to the cows that graze; while trees offer fruit, shelter and shade. Bees carry pollen to the hive queen, and ants tirelessly labour carrying enormous dead insects for food. Everything lives at the expense of some other living thing. Everyone takes and gives, living and dying, changing continually. Even mountains eventually become sand. Individuals over generations leave their imprints through their bloodlines, the DNA — and thereby pass on unrealized dreams and heartaches, joys and suffering to those who follow them. Nothing is lost.

In ways beyond our perception, the One is effortlessly weaving Its vast holographic landscape, a carpet of desires, countless dreams, creativity and hope into this, the Woven Universe. The Maori in New Zealand say: “Immanent in all creation is mauri – the life force which generates, regenerates and upholds creation. It is the bonding element that knits all the diverse elements within the Universal ‘Procession’ giving creation its unity in diversity. It is the bonding element that holds the fabric of the universe together.”
[Rev. Maori Marsden]



Bhava - a state of 'being'

Swami Muni Narayana Prasad: “Every activity, every pulsation, that takes place in nature, is an act, karma.” The bonding element is *bhava* in Sanskrit, the state of ‘being’ that Swami Lakshmanjoo says is “the state of Parabhairava which is found, is existing in the background of all these objective worlds and subjective worlds, everywhere.”



The symbolic sense of Vedic Ritual

The gods in the Rig Veda, which is the earliest Sanskrit text and said to be the source of all the other texts, are Agni, Surya, Varuna, Mitra, the Ashvin Twins, Sarasvati, Usha, Vayu, and Indra. While I do not agree with Sri Aurobindo's theories of evolution, I do find his analysis of the Rig Veda compelling. He evaluates the Rig Veda from the inner esoteric perspective.

Sri Aurobindo understands the term yajña to be symbolic: “We find in the Gita the word yajña, sacrifice, used in a symbolic sense for all action, whether internal or external, that is consecrated to the gods or to the Supreme [the One]. ...If these words could be interpreted symbolically, I [Sri Aurobindo] found that the progression of thought became more perfect, more luminous, more coherent...I felt therefore justified...in pursuing my hypothesis...the symbolic sense of the Vedic ritual.”

Aurobindo says that the gods in the external sense are the “universal powers of physical Nature personified; in any inner sense they must be universal powers of Nature in her subjective activities, Will, Mind, etc.” By the inner sacrifice to the gods, man can reach immortality. Agni for example represents the fire of the divine Will and Wisdom. Surya is not only the Sun as centre of our solar system, but [Surya] symbolizes “the superconscient Truth.” Usha is not merely a physical dawn, she is “of a luminous movement, vast with the Truth, supreme in (or in possession of) the Truth, bringing with her Svar [heaven].” RV.V.801. “The Dawn is the inner dawn which brings to man all the varied fullness of his widest being, force, consciousness, joy...” Aurobindo concludes that, “The sacrifice is the giving by man of what he possesses in his being to the higher or divine nature...the outer sacrifice itself can be nothing but the symbol of an inner giving.”



"...for he has Become their Self."

In my life of almost 70 years, I have seen over 30 UFOs and experienced six months of visions showing me the colonization of this planet Earth by an advanced civilization of extraterrestrials. While I can accept the idea that other civilizations have come to Earth, perhaps experimented with our DNA for their own purposes, and then even abandoned us to our own struggles, I can find no reason whatsoever to bow down and worship these beings. Neither can I accept the idea of bowing down and worshipping any being, even those temporal beings in the Myriad Realms — except the ubiquitous One that dwells within me and All.

This is my understanding from the verse in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad I.iv.10: "And to this day, those who know the Self as I am Brahman [the One], become all this universe. Even the gods [any other dimensional beings] cannot prevent his becoming this, for he has Become their Self. If a man worships another deity thinking: He is one and I am another, he does not know."

It is my view that the priestcraft variety of sacrificial ritual, animal and human, was designed to take advantage of the desperate, confused and the gullible. In the west we have had similar ruses in the guise of indulgences; basically you pay the priest to nullify your sins, no matter how heinous and get you into heaven.



We are all portions of the One. The Oneness, Brahman, Parabhairava, the Presence, or whatever name pleases you — That One dwells within the Heart of us all. Who should demand that we bow down and worship them? No one but wicked arrogant tyrants would ever conceive of needing to be worshipped, and enjoying it.

If the youth in India are disenchanted and abandoning their sacred traditions it is because of the abuses in both this ritual priestcraft and the cruel unjust caste system that indeed justifies their disgust. This is exactly what the Buddha railed against around 500 BC — and Krishna himself in the Bhagavad Gita XVI.17, derides the hypocrisy of the wealthy self-conceited, selfish, proud and arrogant, who sacrifice with no understanding from sheer vanity.

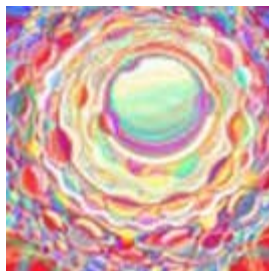
As Swami Muni Narayana Prasad says, “...if you think those of demonic nature will not be interested in religion and spiritual matters, you are wrong. ...often spending much money...desire for fame, for making themselves known as religious [and charitable] people.” And Swami Lakshmanjoo says that these hypocrites are rigid in their pride because they have so much money and “they know no boundaries with [their] money. Money is just rolling before those people. ...O Arjuna, they actually, those people actually hate Me [the Truth of the One], and they hate those who are residing in My meditation.”

“Dead ritual became the end in itself.”

It is entirely possible that when the technologically advanced civilizations abandoned this planet, that those who remained began to mimic whatever highly practical ‘rituals’ their mentors tried to teach them – which were not rituals at all, but simply practical survival techniques. Doris Lessing suggests this in her Canopus in Argos series. Malati J. Shenge has also postulated a similar idea when she talks about the mythopoeisation of ancient Vedic history. I quote Malati J. Shendge’s insightful definition of how history is turned into myth and ritual is born: “When the events became symbolic and were ascribed magical powers to attain certain aims, the process of mythopoeisation was

complete. History was forgotten and dead ritual became the end in itself.”

Truth got very lost.



I hope I have shed some light on these ideas regarding the meaning of yajña sacrifice. In closing, I offer you one of my favourite gems of wisdom from the Bhagavad Gita II.46 — Krishna says that the Vedas are of no more use to the enlightened than a well, when the entire land is flooded on every side!

We are the One. We don't need tyrants and priestcraft. Truth is within us all, waiting patiently, eternally. Tat Tvam Asi. Thou art That.

We Meet in the Heart,

V. Susan Ferguson



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