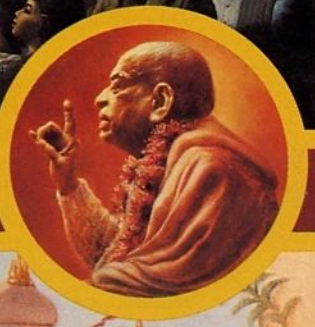
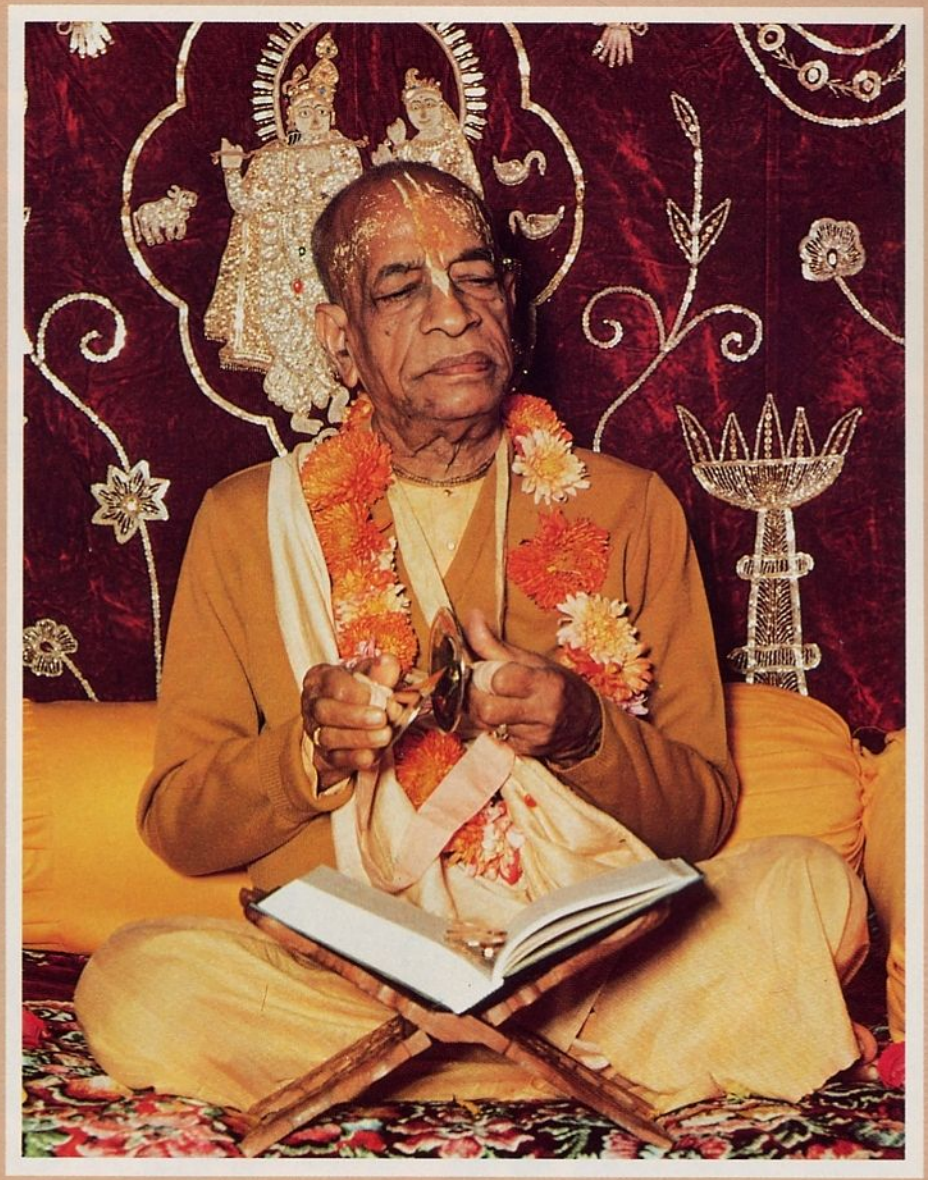
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD



Vol. 23 No. 5 THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age sixty-nine, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India's Vedic literature, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, traveling almost nonstop, Śrīla Prabhupāda molded his international society into a worldwide confederation of *āśramas,* schools, temples, and farm communities. He passed away in 1977 in Vṛndāvana, India, the place most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa. His disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.



BACK TO GODHEAD is the monthly journal of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. When Śrīla Prabhupāda began the Society (in New York City, in 1966), he put into writing the purposes he wanted it to achieve. They are as follows:

1. To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.
2. To propagate a consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, as it is revealed in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*
3. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity, thus developing the idea within the members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Kṛṣṇa).
4. To teach and encourage the *saṅkīrtana* movement, congregational chanting of the holy names of God, as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
5. To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the personality of Kṛṣṇa.
6. To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, more natural way of life.
7. With a view toward achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, books, and other writings.

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

BACK TO GODHEAD

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His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION. We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far** (and hold it twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (**ch, jh, dh,** etc.) as in staun**ch-h**eart, hedge-hog, and red-hot. Finally, pronounce the sibilants **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, and for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

SPIRITUAL NAMES. Members of the International Society for Krishna Conciousness receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with dāsa (dāsī for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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COVER: Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and His elder brother, Balarāma, receive Their dear devotee Uddhava, who has just returned from Vṛndāvana, Their original home. Uddhava, whose features and swarthy complexion resemble Kṛṣṇa's because of his intense love for Kṛṣṇa, went to Vṛndāvana to study the character of the *gopīs,* Kṛṣṇa's cowherd girlfriends. By hearing the *gopīs'* talks of Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava realized that although the *gopīs* were uneducated and unsophisticated in the ordinary sense, they were actually the most exalted of all of Kṛṣṇa's devotees. Kṛṣṇa was pleased to hear of Uddhava's appreciation of the *gopīs'* unconditional love for Him. (Painting by Śaradīya-devī dāsī.)

The Oneness And the Difference

What do we mean when we say that everything is God?

A lecture in Māyāpur, India, on March 25, 1975
by HIS DIVINE GRACE
A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA
Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

vande gurūn īśa-bhaktān
īśam īśāvatārakān
tat-prakāśāṁś ca tac-chaktīḥ
kṛṣṇa-caitanya-saṁjñakam

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto the spiritual masters, the devotees of the Lord, the Lord's incarnations, His plenary portions, His energies, and the primeval Lord Himself, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya."
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi* 1.1)

Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa Himself. That was observed by Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, who composed one hundred verses praising the glories of Lord Caitanya. But because Caitanya Mahāprabhu was playing the part of a devotee, He threw away the verses. "Oh, this is not for Me." That was Caitanya Mahāprabhu's humbleness.

But the devotees know that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself: *mahāprabhu śrī-caitanya, rādhā-kṛṣṇa nahe anya.* "Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is none other than Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa combined." In the beginning there was Kṛṣṇa; then Kṛṣṇa divided into two—Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. And then He again combined. That combination is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

So, the Gosvāmīs' *siddhānta,* or conclusion, is that Kṛṣṇa is one. There is no rival for Kṛṣṇa. God is one: *ekaṁ brahma dvitīyaṁ nāsti.* There cannot be many Gods.

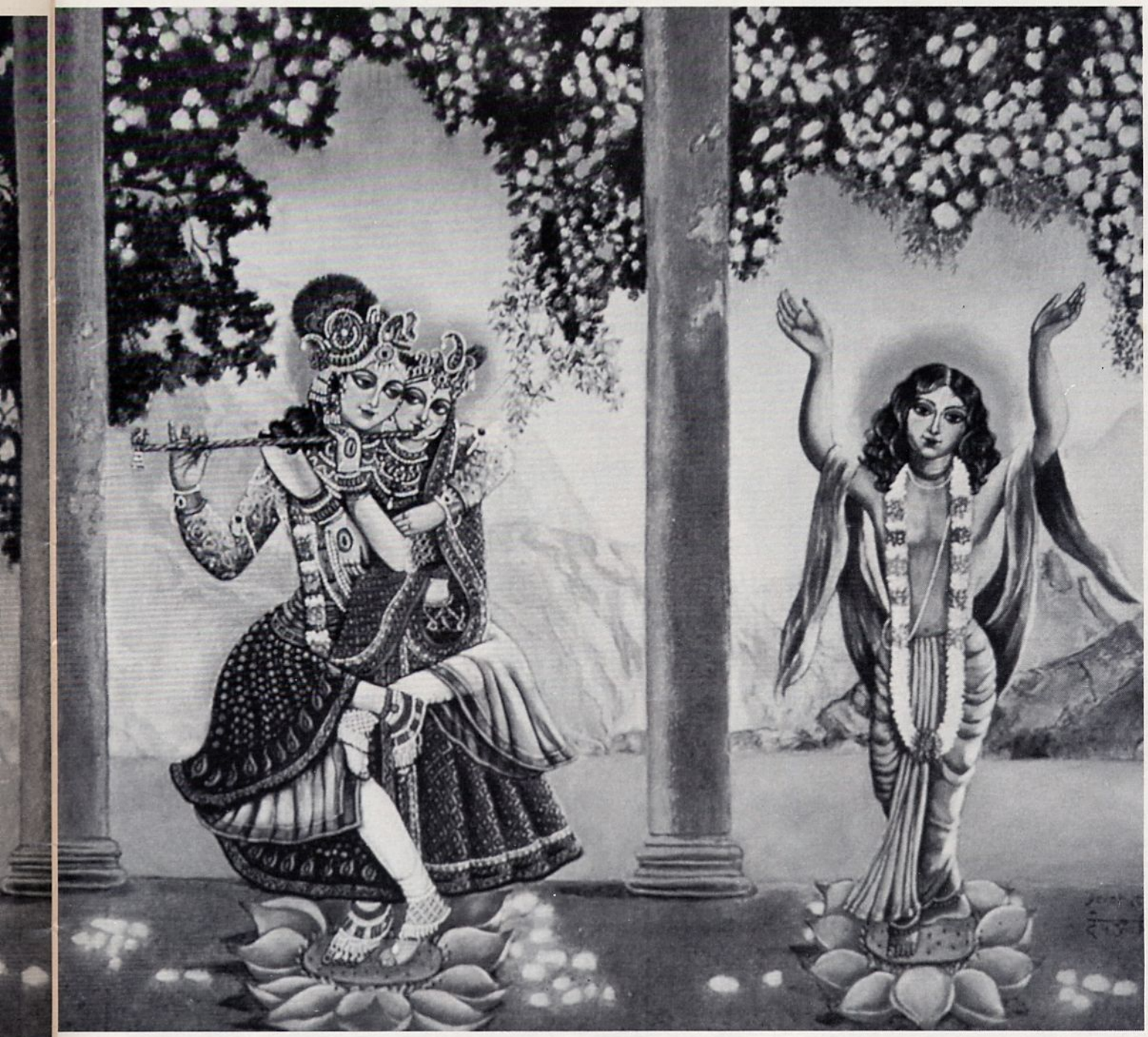
When God, or Kṛṣṇa, wants to enjoy, He expands His pleasure potency, and that potency is Rādhārāṇī. As the *śāstra* [scripture] states, *śakti-śaktimatayor abhedaḥ:* "There is no difference between the energy and the energetic." *Śakti* means "potency," and *śaktimat* means "one who possesses potency." So Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are equal. There is no difference.

The sun is a good example. The sun is the powerful, and the sunshine is the power. So, there is heat in the sun, and there is also heat in the sunshine. There is light in the sun, and there is light in the sunshine also. Therefore, so far as heat and light are concerned, the sun and the sunshine are qualitatively one. But the temperature of the sun and the temperature of the sunshine are different. So there is a quantitative difference.

This is the basic principle of Lord Caitanya's philosophy: *acintya-bhedābheda. Acintya* means "inconceivable," *bheda* means "difference," and *abheda* means "nondifference." This describes the whole situation: there is one God, but He has expanded Himself in many different ways (*eko bahu syām*). And these expansions are all one with Him and at the same time different from Him.

This philosophy of *acintya-bhedābheda* is described here in the first verse of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta.* Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu expands Himself as *gurūn,* the spiritual masters. The spiritual master is directly Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. *Sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair uktaḥ:* "In all the *sāstras,* the *guru* is accepted as

ILLUSTRATION BY DEVAHŪTI-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



Kṛṣṇa." So when you offer your devotion and respects to the *guru,* you offer them to Kṛṣṇa. The *guru* does not think that he is Kṛṣṇa, but he collects the devotional services of his disciples and offers them to Kṛṣṇa. This is the process.

We cannot approach Kṛṣṇa directly; we should approach Him through the *guru. Tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam.* The injunction of the *śāstra* is that one should approach a *guru* who can accept the disciple's service and transfer it to the Supreme Person. Therefore one's first offering is to the *guru—vande gurūn.*

The *guru's* business is to canvass on behalf of the Supreme Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.66] Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja:* "Give up all material engagements and just surrender unto Me." In the material world we have created so many so-called duties. This is our disease. Sociology, communism, nationalism, internationalism, this "ism," that "ism"—many, many duties we have created. But they are all material. Therefore, out of His causeless mercy Kṛṣṇa descends to teach us our real duty.

Human life is meant for one thing: *athāto brahma-jijñāsā*—to inquire about the Supreme Absolute Truth. But instead of doing that, people have created so many "isms." That is their misfortune. In this human life nature gives us the opportunity to inquire about the Absolute

The loving affairs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure-giving potency. Although Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one in Their identity, They separated Themselves eternally. These two transcendental identities again united in the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Truth. We have the intelligence to inquire in this way, whereas the cats and dogs do not. The trees, the plants, the aquatics, the animals, the beasts, the uncivilized men—out of 8,400,000 species of life, only the civilized men can inquire into the Absolute Truth. So it is a rare opportunity.

Because we are part and parcel of God, naturally we have the qualities of God in minute quantity. That is natural. But on account of our material association, those qualities are now covered by various designations. This is our material disease.

When a piece of gold is covered by dirt, it does not exhibit the qualities of gold. Similarly, because we are covered by our material designations, we are not exhibiting our godlike qualities. Actually, we are small Kṛṣṇas—very small. Because we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, we are of the same quality. But that quality is now covered, and the covering is given various names—socialism, communism, and so on. "I am Indian." "I am American." "I am Hindu." "I am Muslim." "I am white." "I am black." All these designations cover our real nature as servants of Kṛṣṇa. It is the business of the *guru* to clear away these designations, these dirty things.

Therefore we first offer our respects to the *guru,* because he is the agent of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says, "Give up all these designative *dharmas* and surrender to Me. That is your real *dharma.*" But Kṛṣṇa does not force us. And even upon the request of Kṛṣṇa we do not give up our designations. This is the difficulty.

Kṛṣṇa said, "Surrender to Me," but except for the Pāṇḍavas and a few other devotees, practically nobody took His order seriously. This was five thousand years ago, so what to speak of today? Now so many scholars speak on the *Bhagavad-gītā,* but without stressing Kṛṣṇa. That is their business. These demons are teaching *Bhagavad-gītā* without Kṛṣṇa! Nobody says what Kṛṣṇa wants: *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja.* Kṛṣṇa wants that everyone simply surrender to Him, but these so-called scholars misinterpret His words in various ways and divert people's attention most foolishly.

Many of you have come from Western countries. So, for at least the last two hundred years the *Bhagavad-gītā* has been popular in Europe and America, at least among scholars and theosophists and theologists. But nobody has understood Kṛṣṇa. That is the problem. But for the last, say, five or ten years, because we have presented Kṛṣṇa as He is, it has become very easy for you to understand Him. Unadulterated Kṛṣṇa. Before this, everything presented about Kṛṣṇa was adulterated. Therefore, there was no effect.

So if you push on this movement by presenting unadulterated Kṛṣṇa, it will go on. And as soon as you adulterate Kṛṣṇa, it will not go on. It will not be effective. You may be a very good scholar or politician, this or that, but you'll never understand what Kṛṣṇa is. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.25], *nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya yoga-māyā-samāvṛtaḥ:* "I do not reveal Myself to everyone, being covered by My illusory energy." In other words, if you pollute Kṛṣṇa, He will never be revealed to you. By the grace of Kṛṣṇa you have taken shelter of His lotus feet. It is a great fortune for you. So do not adulterate Kṛṣṇa. That is my request. Try to understand Kṛṣṇa as He is.

And to help us understand and approach Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. His life and teachings are described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta. Caitanya* means "spiritual, living." So since Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa, that means Kṛṣṇa is the supreme living force.

For at least the last two hundred years the Bhagavad-gītā has been popular in America and Europe, but nobody has understood Kṛṣṇa. But because we have presented Kṛṣṇa as He is, it has become easy for you to understand Him.

We reject the so-called scientific theory that life has come from chemicals. No. We have engaged our scientist students in proving that life does not come from matter but rather from the Supreme Spirit, Kṛṣṇa. Already one student has written a small book, *The Scientific Basis of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness,* and we are soon going to publish another book. What is the title?

Devotee: *Life Comes from Life.*

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Life comes from life. That is a fact. These modern so-called scientific theories that life comes from matter are all foolish.

We have all experienced what is living force and what is dead matter. Kṛṣṇa explains the living force in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [2.20], *na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre:* "The living force is not finished after the annihilation of the body." When we are alive, our body is moving, and we can feel the presence of the living force. And when we see a dead body, one that is not moving, we should ask, "Why was the body moving before and is now not moving?" If we simply study this difference of condition, we can understand what the living force is. It is not very difficult. Simply understand, "Now the living force has gone out of this body; therefore the body is no longer moving and is simply dead matter." The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* talks of the living force, not dead matter. We should always remember this.

Now, the *guru* is part of that living force, and so are the Lord Himself, His incarnations, His expansions, His devotees, and His internal energies. All of them are on the spiritual platform, part of the living force (*caitanya-saṁjñakam*).

Therefore the personification of all living forces is Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Unfortunately, people mistake Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu for an ordinary devotee or *sādhu* or *yogī.* That is a mistake. Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the original living force, Kṛṣṇa.

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya understood Lord Caitanya as He is. So did Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Similarly, the followers of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya all understand Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. And for one who understands or follows the path enunciated by Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa is very easily obtained. This is all described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta.*

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya described Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission as follows:

vairāgya-vidyā-nija-bhakti-yoga-
śikṣārtham ekaḥ puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-śarīra-dhārī
kṛpāmbudhir yas tam ahaṁ prapadye

Here Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya says that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya is *puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ*—Kṛṣṇa, the original Personality of Godhead. Why did Kṛṣṇa Caitanya appear? Sārvabhuama says, *vairāgya-vidyā . . . śikṣārtham.* To teach detachment and knowledge of devotional service. Because we are suffering here on account of so many designations, out of His great mercy Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to purify us of all these nonsense designations. And the way is through *vairāgya-vidyā. Rāga* means "material attachment," and *vairāgya* is "freedom from material attachments." These false attachments we have to give up. How to do this in our practical life—how to love Kṛṣṇa, how to approach Him—is taught by Śrī Kṛṣṇa

(*continued on page 35*)

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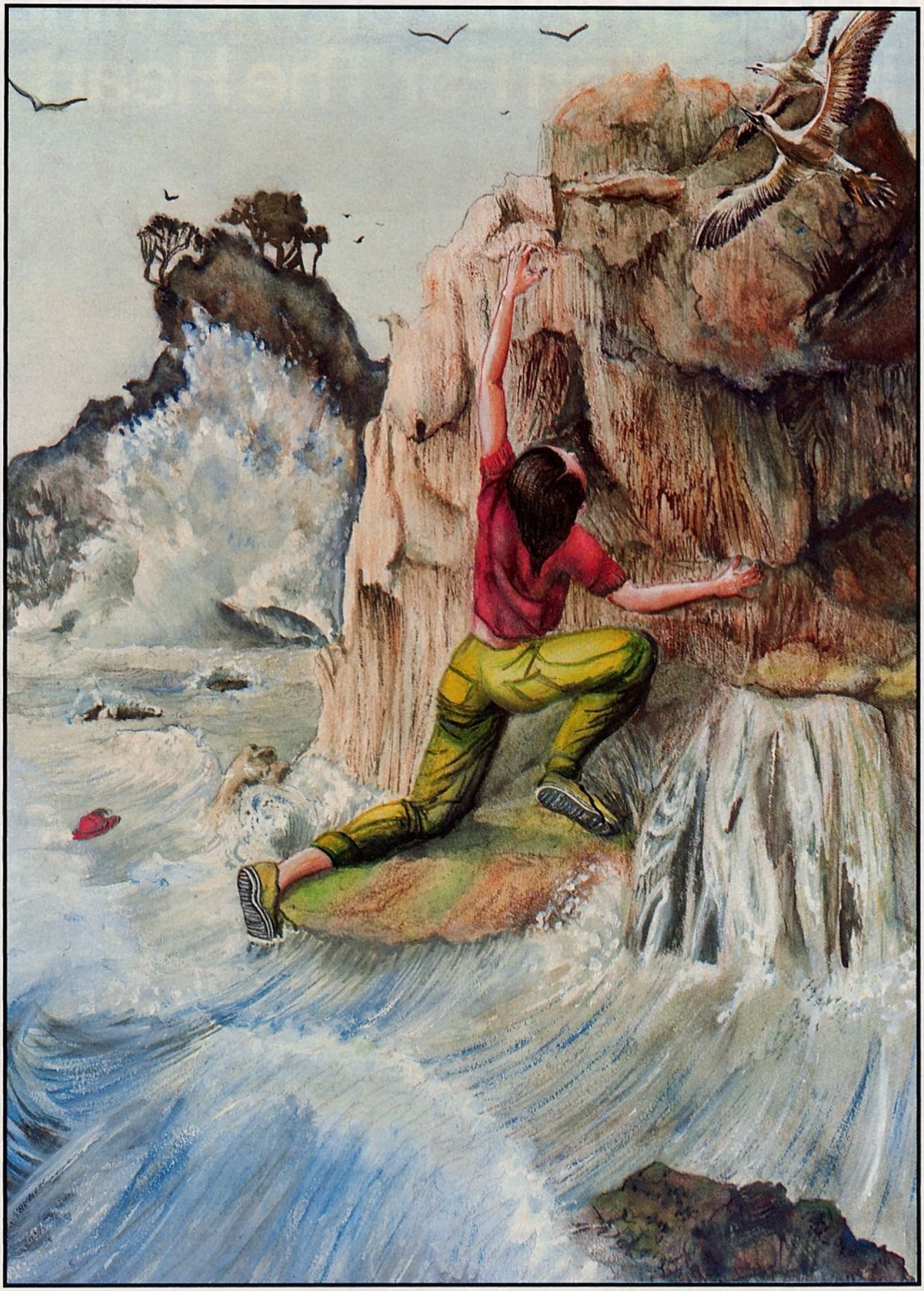


THE BOY AND THE SEA

The awful truth of his crisis became apparent to him, yet throughout his entire conscious being he resisted the fact that he was going to die.

by ROHIṆĪNANDANA DĀSA

It was an ordinary hat, but to him it was an assertion of independence. He cocked it and sauntered along the beach, his tuneless whistle drowned out by the surging roar of breaking ocean waves. Sea gulls played in the wind. Sometimes gliding, sometimes banking against the gusting air, they mewed and cried to one another. Clouds scudded across the sun, their shadows following them across the ocean's surface. Alone, hands in his trouser pockets, thumbs exposed, he hunched his shoulders and gazed indifferently toward the powerful sea as he leaned back into the wind. Occasionally, he made sure his hat was still firmly on his head.

He thought of the future. He was sure he would do something special, something unique to make his mark in the world. Though he saw the sea, heard the crying gulls, and felt the wind, he gave attention to nothing but his own thoughts. He kicked a stone and felt satisfied to see how accurately it cracked into another. He smiled. He didn't allow himself to consider that only when he was alone did he feel significant. Mainly, he lived alone in a mirrored prison of his own making. He kicked the stone again for good measure.

Suddenly the wind blustered, caught the felt hat under its brim, and blew it into the sea, where it gracefully alighted on the surface, far beyond the surf. The boy could still see its single feather proudly piercing the air as if mocking him. He felt indignant that his new hat should be taken away so effortlessly. It was hard to accept, and he decided to take up the challenge of retrieving it.

But the current was sweeping its tiny burden swiftly away. The boy looked longingly at his treasured hat bobbing tauntingly behind the swell. He held back an angry tear, and, like a sea captain, scanned the hat's possible course. A rocky peninsula jutted out staunchly into the ocean. Maybe the hat would drift by there.

But looking at the huge rocks he'd have to scale to get there, he hesitated. Didn't that foothold appear dangerous? Shouldn't he run back and get help? Wouldn't it be better to forget the whole thing? "No!" the boy thought. "I'm almost a man now; I can get the hat on my own. Besides, there's no time to lose."

As he ran along the beach, the rocks loomed higher than they had first appeared. He scrambled over some of them, slipping a couple of times but thinking nothing of it in his frenzy to reach the place where he calculated his hat might pass. The rocks were angular, sharp, and menacingly steep—the earth's bones laid bare. He made it to the top of the crag and clambered cautiously on his hands and knees. He came to where the rock dropped

ILLUSTRATION BY JULIA WILSON

abruptly down to the smaller rock on which he had planned to stand. But it was scary to think how he'd get down the last fifteen feet. Had he considered the difficulty of climbing back up, he would not have attempted his descent.

Somehow he inched his way down, gripping each uninviting protrusion with whitened knuckles. Finally, with a small, nervous leap, he jumped the last five feet.

As soon as he landed, he felt the unfathomed power of the ocean. It surrounded him, sucking, heaving. It surged with tremendous might. He was afraid of such natural potency, which rarely intruded upon his manageable and self-reflective world. "Still," he thought, "I'll fetch my hat and be out of here in a jiffy. But where is the damned thing?"

Now that he was face to face with his gigantic adversary, he could understand that there was no possibility of getting his hat back. Even if it did come near, there was no way he could dare try to reach it. The barnacled rock at his feet was pitted by countless years of unwavering abrasion, making it firm footing, but as it curved to meet the water, it was covered by a dark green slime. He knew he would slip if he tried to reach down from there. To fall from that little platform would mean to be helplessly swept away and then smashed back against the rocks.

"This sea *is* pretty rough," he admitted, and he decided to abandon his enterprise. He turned to leave. Then it happened.

He could have thought before about the possibility. He knew well about outgoing and incoming tides and had heard about picnickers trapped in caves. But today such a thought had evaded him in his haste to find his hat. The sea—or the mover of the sea—was not, however, forgetful. A triumphant upsurge engulfed his small platform, knocked him down, and covered him in its fearsome embraces. Spread-eagled, he frantically grasped the crusted stone, as his monstrous enemy tried to drag him deep into its clutches. The water subsided and was gone almost as quickly as it had come.

The boy gingerly stood up and examined some cuts on his arms and legs. He shook, not so much from the coldness of the water as from fear. His mouth twisted from a fright he had never known. He wanted to call out to someone, but he knew that no one could hear his puny voice above the relentless thunder of the ocean.

He tried to compose himself, rationalizing that it would be another seven or ten waves before the next big one. He surely had time to climb to safety. Once more he turned to escape, but now his prison wall glistened. For a moment he hesitated.

"I've got to do it!" he squealed, as he attempted to climb. But he slipped repeatedly as he tried to find a foothold. Then another big wave came. Captured and bound, he was dragged effortlessly down.

Unaware of the drama going on below, the exultant gulls continued to careen through the skies, fighting and frolicking in the wind. They had no fear of the ocean, which they saw as a resting place and provider of their food. They also felt no fear of death. To them the boy seemed no more than a piece of driftwood buffeted by the waves. There were always so many bits and pieces floating in the sea.

The boy felt himself slipping down over the slimy seaweed. He tried to grab hold of something, but, covered by the wave, he could neither see nor breathe. Then his hands locked around an odd outcrop. The water subsided, leaving him half submerged. He choked and coughed as he inhaled the acrid salt water. With all his strength he pulled himself out by clasping the barnacle-covered rocks. He flopped down. Looking up at the wheeling, laughing birds, he felt envious of their freedom. "How I wish I could fly!"

He shook, not so much from the coldness of the water as from fear. His mouth twisted from a fright he had never known. He wanted to call out to someone, but he knew no one could hear his puny voice above the relentless thunder of the ocean.

But there was no time to lose, no time to check his battered body for wounds. The tide was coming in quickly now, and his small platform was awash. He crawled cautiously to the face of the rock, the waves threatening to sweep him away at any moment.

"Oh, please don't let it happen to me," he wailed, unaware to whom he was speaking. The awful truth of his crisis became apparent to him, yet throughout his entire conscious being he resisted the fact that he was going to die. He could not in any way accommodate such an idea. But death seemed inevitable. He knew that one more strong rush of water could carry him helplessly away.

"No, no, it can't happen to me!" he pleaded, as he feverishly grasped at the forbidding wall of rock.

With unprecedented clarity he suddenly saw himself to be a tiny creature controlled by infinite natural forces. He surrendered his pride. Mysteriously, he now saw handholds. He climbed without effort and found himself inexplicably at the top. He lay down. A mighty wave smashed below him, sending spray high into the air, soaking his sobbing body.

Exhausted, he rested on the safe stone and gazed thoughtfully out of window-like eyes. "I'm just a little creature in this universe! But I exist. The sun exists, the clouds exist, the stars exist, the moon, the sea, and all these animals and birds exist. And I exist! I spend my time with trivial concerns. I've been thinking I'm something special. Actually *everything* is special. Everything is so wonderful! And I'm part of it. I don't know how all this is happening, but there must be a reason."

Like a baby discovering his body, the boy discovered another dimension of existence that had previously remained beyond his perception. He understood for a moment that beyond the powerful phenomenon of the ocean was its source, something or someone of infinite magnificence that yet remained hidden to him because of his spiritual immaturity. Then, as at the end of a dramatic performance, a curtain of comforting illusion came down over his inner eye, and his thoughts returned once more to mundane familiarity.

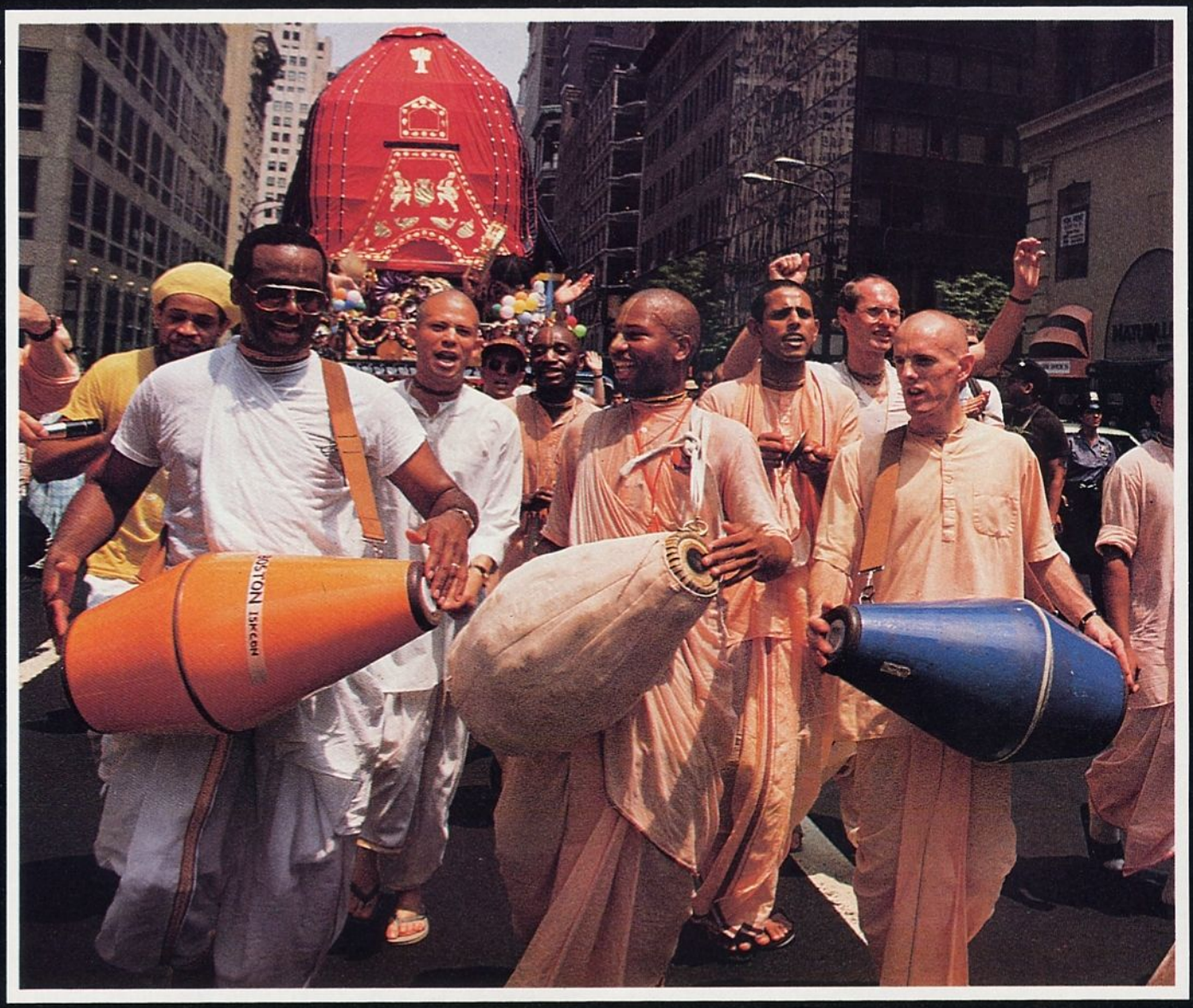
He crawled back along the crag and finally reached the beach. He sat down and gazed wondrously at the sea, the rocks, and the sky. The birds still wheeled in their airy habitat.

"I wonder what my life is for," he thought.

This episode is autobiographical: I was the boy foolishly grappling with Lord Kṛṣṇa's powerful material energy. Although I could have imbibed a valuable lesson from this experience, wherein for a few moments I glimpsed my insignificance, I soon forgot the lesson and fell back into my small, seemingly secure world of spiritual ignorance.

Years later, however, when I was developing faith in the presence of God through scriptural and philosophical evidence, logic, and the teachings of saintly persons, especially Śrīla Prabhupāda, remembering such vivid experiences helped demolish my stubborn resistance to the truth. After all, not one wave breaks without Kṛṣṇa's will.

—Rohiṇīnandana dāsa



1987 Festival of the Chariots, New York City

HARE KṚṢṆA, HARE KṚṢṆA, KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA, HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA, HARE RĀMA, RĀMA RĀMA, HARE HARE

Chanting is easy, and it works. In fact, it is the most effective means of God realization in the world.

Here's why. God is unlimitedly powerful, and His name is Himself. When we chant God's names, God is totally present through the transcendental sound. So potent are God's names that the Vedic scriptures consider chanting the essential, universal religion of the age.

So why don't more people chant?

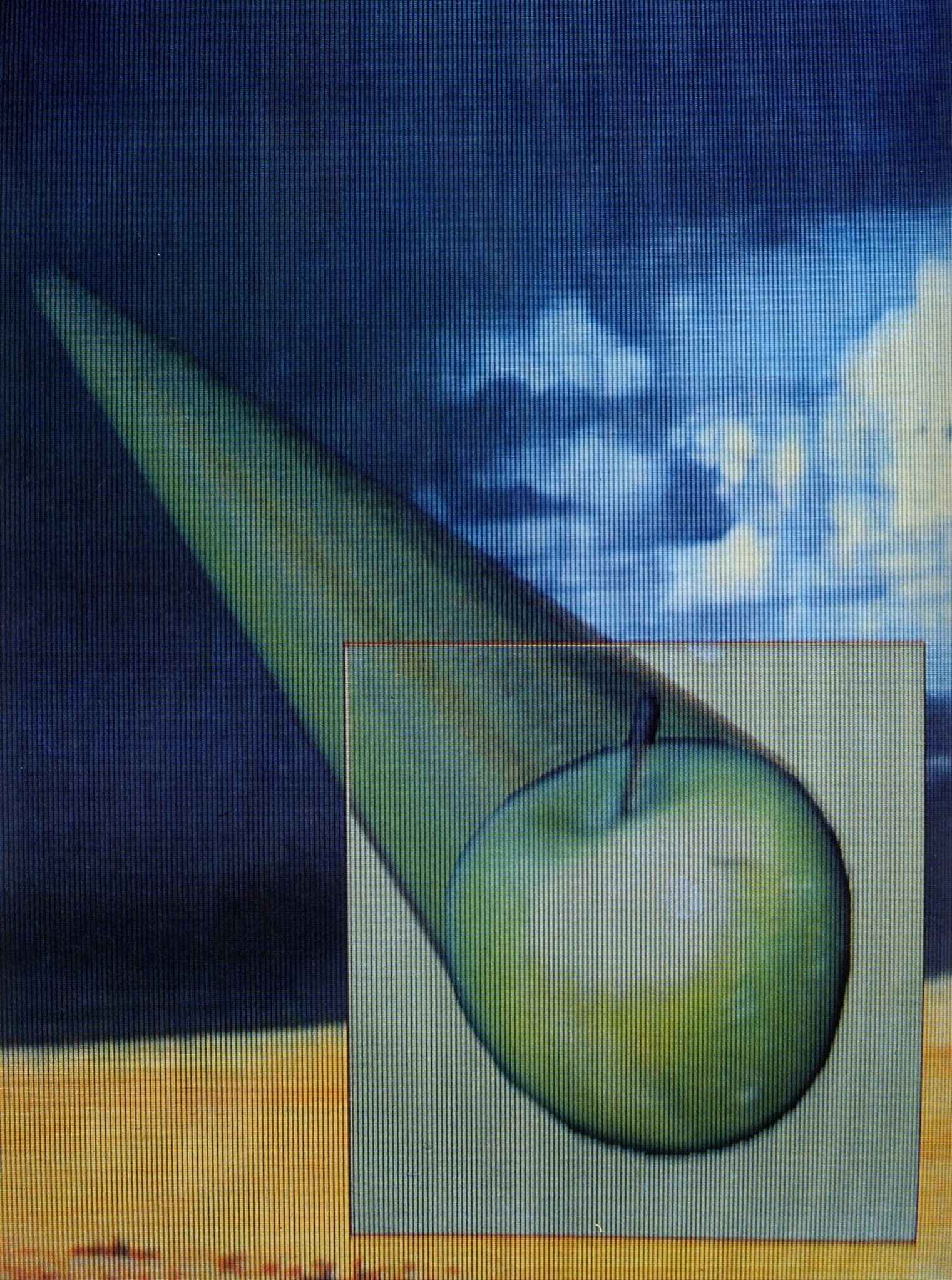
Maybe they're embarrassed. Or busy. Or doubtful. Or maybe they think chanting is a sectarian religious practice—something only for the Hare Krishnas.

Yet what could be less sectarian than calling out to God? All the great scriptures of the world praise the holy names of God. God's names may vary from religion to religion or from culture to culture, but the person—the supreme father of all—is the same.

Don't be embarrassed. Chanting is for everyone. Don't feel you're too busy. Chanting is easy. And don't remain doubtful. Try chanting and see the results.

Chant. It's easy, effective, and universal.

Photo by Yamarāja dāsa



Science

HIGH TECHNOLOGY AND THE GROUND OF BEING

Experiments with phase conjugation may help link physics to metaphysics—and metaphysics to a comprehensive spiritual world view.

Text and illustrations by
SADĀPŪTA DĀSA

In the United States and the Soviet Union, scientists compete to perfect optical phase conjugation—a process that can reverse the motion of a beam of light, causing an image scrambled by an irregular medium (such as frosted glass) to return to its original, undistorted form. They hope to use reversed light beams to focus laser weapons on enemy missiles.

At Syracuse University an eminent physicist appears before a large audience. A professor of religion introduces him as the man who may save the world from the fragmentation of modern Western thinking and bring people to a platform of transcendental wholeness. The physicist then begins expounding metaphysical ideas based on physics and Eastern philosophy.

Although it may seem surprising, the military research work and the university lecture share a common foundation in a fundamental feature of the laws of physics. To understand how this is so, let us first consider optical phase conjugation.

The application of the technology of optical phase conjugation to "star wars" weapons systems is still in the conceptual stage, but the unscrambling of light that has passed through frosted glass has actually been demonstrated (see Figure 1). In a typical experiment, light is reflected from an object and passes through frosted glass, causing the light beam to distort in a complicated way. The beam then reflects from a device called a phase conjugate mirror, which reverses the distorted beam and passes it back through the frosted glass. When the light enters an observer's eye, he perceives a clear, undistorted image of the original object instead of a garbled blur, which he would see if the image were reflected back through the glass by an ordinary mirror.

As the reflected beam leaves the phase conjugate mirror, it has the curious properties that (1) it encodes information for the original image in a distorted, unrecognizable form, and (2) as time passes, the apparently random distortion is reduced, and the information contained by the beam becomes clearly manifest. Normally we would expect to see just the opposite—a pattern containing meaningful information will gradually degrade until the information is irretrievably lost.

According to classical physical theory, however, the laws of physical dynamics are reversible, and thus it is possible in theory for any physical process to run backward and recreate an earlier state of affairs from its later end product. This implies that information is never actually lost as a result of physical transformations, and in principle it might be possible to again extract the information from the cosmic energy background. The restoration of a garbled image by a phase conjugate mirror seems to provide an example of this.

While the phase conjugate mirror example shows an apparently random pattern being produced by letting an orderly pattern degrade by natural processes, random patterns can also be produced in other ways. In some techniques of optical phase conjugation, one adds to the reflecting beam a predistorted image—of a face, for example—that was not present when the beam first passed through the clouded glass. As the beam retraces its path, the face undistorts and becomes clearly visible.

A beam of light emerging from a cloud focuses on a screen to form a sharp image of an apple. Although this seems highly improbable, such a beam could actually be generated using the technology of the optical phase conjugation. This gives a hint as to how the manifestation of organized form, which to mundane vision seems to proceed automatically from disorganized matter, can be directed by an unseen transcendental intelligence.

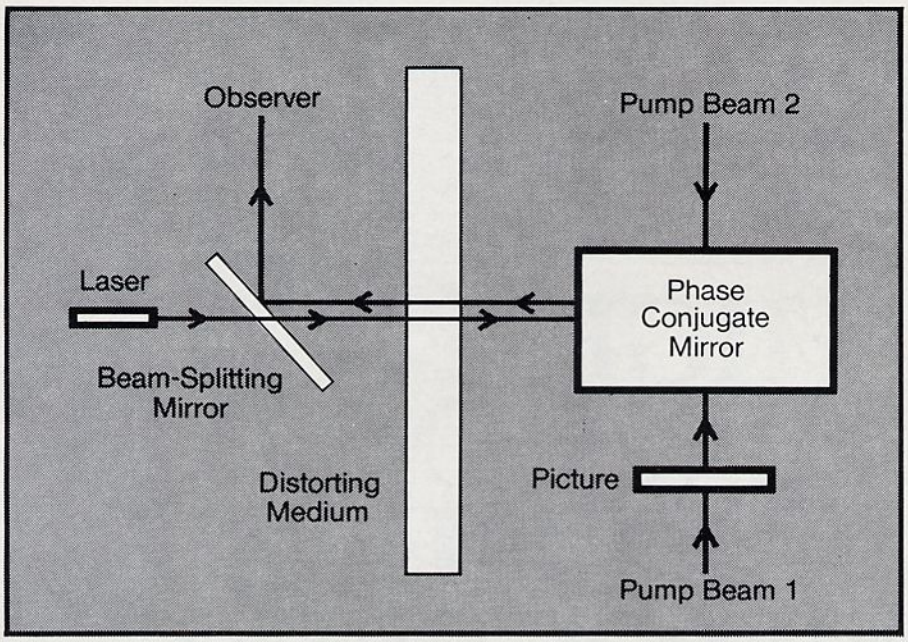


Figure 1: A diagram of apparatus for sending an image through a distorting medium such as a pane of frosted glass or a cloud. Light from the laser (at left) first passes through the distorting medium and stores in the phase conjugate mirror (right) information encoding that medium's particular pattern of distortion. The first pump beam of the phase conjugate mirror passes through a transparency of the image to be transmitted and is combined with the distortion information encoded in the phase conjugate mirror. The result is a predistorted beam that moves to the left through the distorting medium, emerges on the other side, and carries to the observer (top left) a sharp image of the picture being transmitted.

This example of research in optical phase conjugation has bearing on metaphysical questions. Could it be that the universal background of random electromagnetic noise incorporates patterns that are imposed on the physical medium by a transcendental source of order, and which are programed to naturally generate orderly forms and sequences of events?

The Implicate Order

As it turns out, the fact that dispersed information can give rise to localized organization has been used as the cornerstone for a comprehensive metaphysical world view. This is the theory of the implicate order, devised by David Bohm—the physicist in our second scenario.

Bohm generally illustrates his ideas with an apparatus consisting of two concentric cylinders with the space in between filled with a viscous fluid such as glycerine. If a drop of ink is placed on the surface of the fluid and the outer cylinder is slowly rotated, the drop will be drawn out into a long, thin strand that ultimately will become invisible. If the outer cylinder is then slowly rotated in the opposite direction, the stretching out of the drop will be reversed, and at a certain time the drop will again become briefly visible. Then it will again stretch out and disappear as the rotation of the cylinder continues.

We can see that this is another example of how information for an organized structure—in this case the drop of ink—can be dispersed throughout a physical medium in an unrecognizable form and then recovered through a physical transformation that restores the original structure. Bohm would say that the dispersed ink drop has become enfolded in the fluid, and that when it reappears, it has become unfolded.

From this example we can understand Bohm's world view by two steps. In the first step, we imagine that all phenomena in the universe are enfolded in an ultimate physical substrate—the ground of all being—which Bohm calls the "implicate order." As processes of physical transformation occur in this substrate, successive enfolded patterns unfold and emerge in explicit form, manifesting the "explicate order" of our ordinary experience.

The second step in understanding Bohm's world view is to understand his conception of the implicate order as a unified whole consisting of apparently distinguishable parts. According to Bohm, although the parts seem distinct, each part is identical with the whole since it includes, or "enfolds," the whole. To Bohm the most important characteristic of ultimate reality is undifferentiated wholeness. Athough he accepts the existence of distinct parts as an aspect of the explicate order, he regards it as incorrect to suppose that, on a fundamental level, reality is actually made up of distinct parts.

The intuitive basis behind this idea of wholeness is that when information is enfolded into a physical system, it tends to become distributed uniformly throughout the system.

For example, when a drop of ink is enfolded into the glycerine, the pattern of ink from which the drop can later be recovered stretches out over a broad area. If we could somehow remove the ink from all parts of this pattern except for a small region, then we would find that a dim image of the original drop could be restored, or unfolded, from the ink in this region

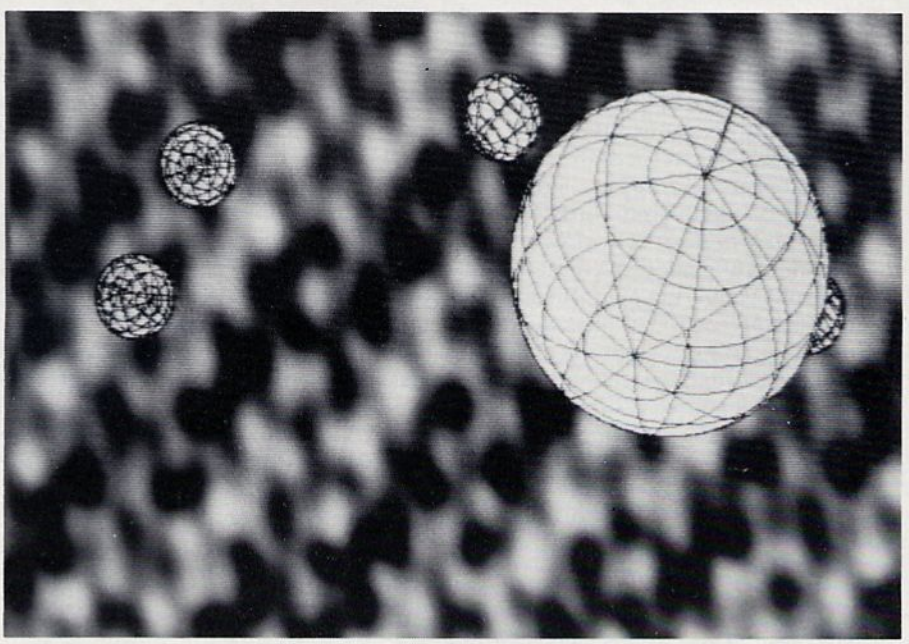


Figure 2: The creation of space from transcendental sound vibration. According to Vedic literature, transcendental sound vibrations propagating through a subtle medium (background) generate universal globes having the properties of space as we know it. Similar ideas are being contemplated by architects of the grand unified theories of modern physics.

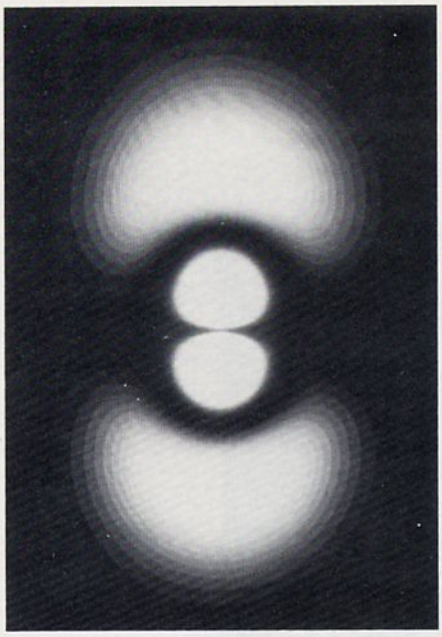


Figure 3: The generation of matter. According to Vedic literature, after the manifestation of space, various forms of gross and subtle matter are generated from transcendental sound vibration. In essence, matter is a transformation of sound vibration. This is reminiscent of modern physics. In this figure we see a hydrogen atom, which in quantum mechanics is represented as a vibrational pattern.

alone. Thus, in one sense, the enfolded drop has been distributed over many different parts of the glycerine at once.

This leads to the idea of a continuum in which all patterns ever manifest in any part are represented equally in all parts. Speaking loosely one can say that the whole of the continuum in both space and time is present in any small part of the continuum. By invoking quantum mechanical undefinability, which holds that a particle such as an electron must be defined simultaneously as a particle and a wave, one can then leap from this idea to the idea of a unified entity encompassing all space and time, in which each part not merely represents the whole but contains the whole and is thus identical to it.

This is Bohm's implicate order. Although it is partly based on physics, it also clearly involves ideas that are quite alien to traditional physical science. In fact, Bohm's implicate order represents an attempt to build a bridge between physics and a metaphysical system some call the "perennial philosophy."

The essence of the perennial philosophy is that reality consists of a hierarchy of levels ranging from gross matter through mind, intelligence, and ego, and culminating in an all-encompassing transcendent state of absolute oneness. Many cultures have expounded such philosophies, and the most highly developed examples include Buddhism, the *advaita-vedānta* philosophy of India, Sufiism, Taoism, and Christian mysticism.

Though Bohm does not explicitly say so in his books, it is clear from published conversations that he is trying to create a synthesis of physics and the particular form of *advaita-vedānta* expounded by the Indian philosopher Krishnamurti, whose teachings Bohm greatly admires. Thus Bohm's implicate order is motivated by metaphysical ideas extending far beyond the limits of his reasoning about physics.

The idea that "unfolded" information can give rise to observable organized form is based both on physical theory and practical examples, such as the phase conjugate mirror. But the idea that the parts of the implicate order actually include the whole does not arise naturally from these sources of inspiration, and indeed it is very difficult, if not impossible, to formulate this idea mathematically.

Where, then, does this idea ultimately come from? Bohm speaks of insight that comes from beyond manifest thought, and that may even originate from a level transcending the implicate order.

He emphasizes, however, that human thought cannot grasp the unmanifest, and he stresses the danger of becoming deluded by false insights. But if human thought is not an adequate instrument for gaining knowledge of the unmanifest, then how will we be able to distinguish between true and false "insights"?

As we have indicated, Bohm's ideas come from the Indian philosophical system of *advaita-vedānta,* which forms one school of thought within a diverse body of tradition generally known as Hinduism. According to this tradition, transcendental knowledge can be reliably attained through the mutual reinforcement of two forms of revelation: internal and external.

The external revelation is expressed in scriptures, or *śāstras,* which descend to the human level through a chain of enlightened beings, and which originate from a transcendental, supremely intelligent source. The general term for this body of revealed knowledge is *Veda.*

The internal revelation is directly transmitted into the consciousness of a spiritual aspirant from the same supreme intelligence that introduced the Vedic

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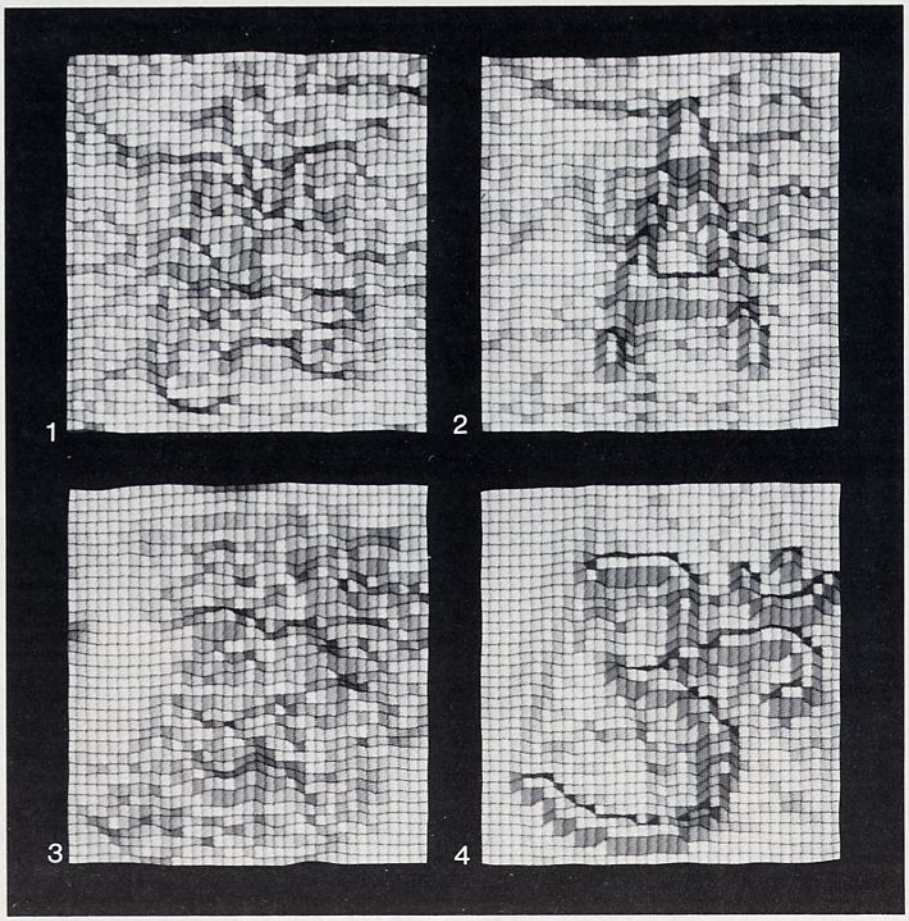
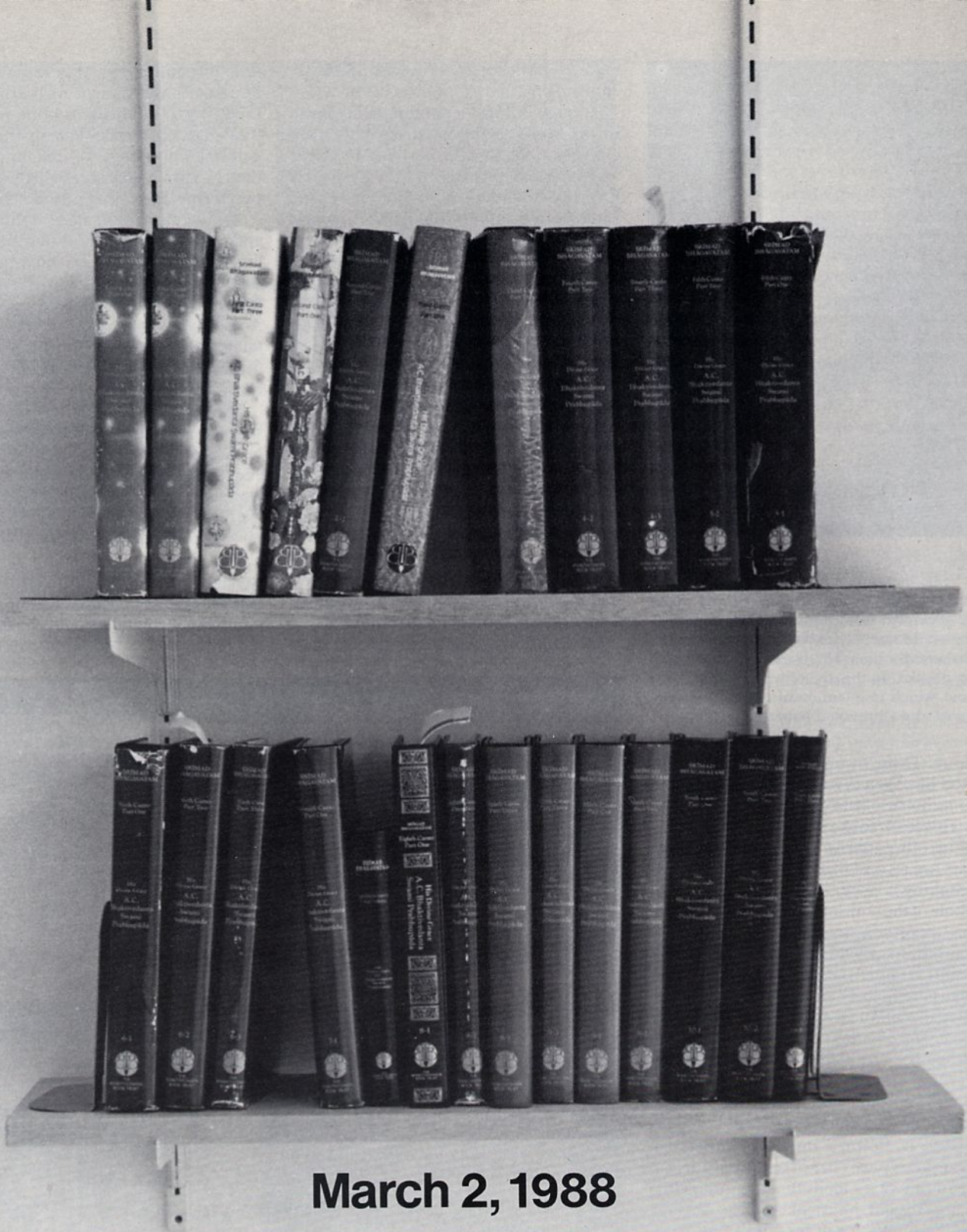


Figure 4: The manifestation of organized form from intelligently directed wave patterns. In frame 1 we see an elastic medium capable of transmitting waves (the surface of a pond is an example). The wave pattern in frame 1 seems chaotic, but in frame 2, which shows the wave pattern after a time interval has elapsed, we see that a letter *A* has emerged. In frame 3, representing a slightly later time, this form has disappeared. Still later, in frame 4, a pattern appears representing the symbol *Aum.* Actually, the information for both the *A* and the *Aum* was encoded in the wave pattern of frame 1.

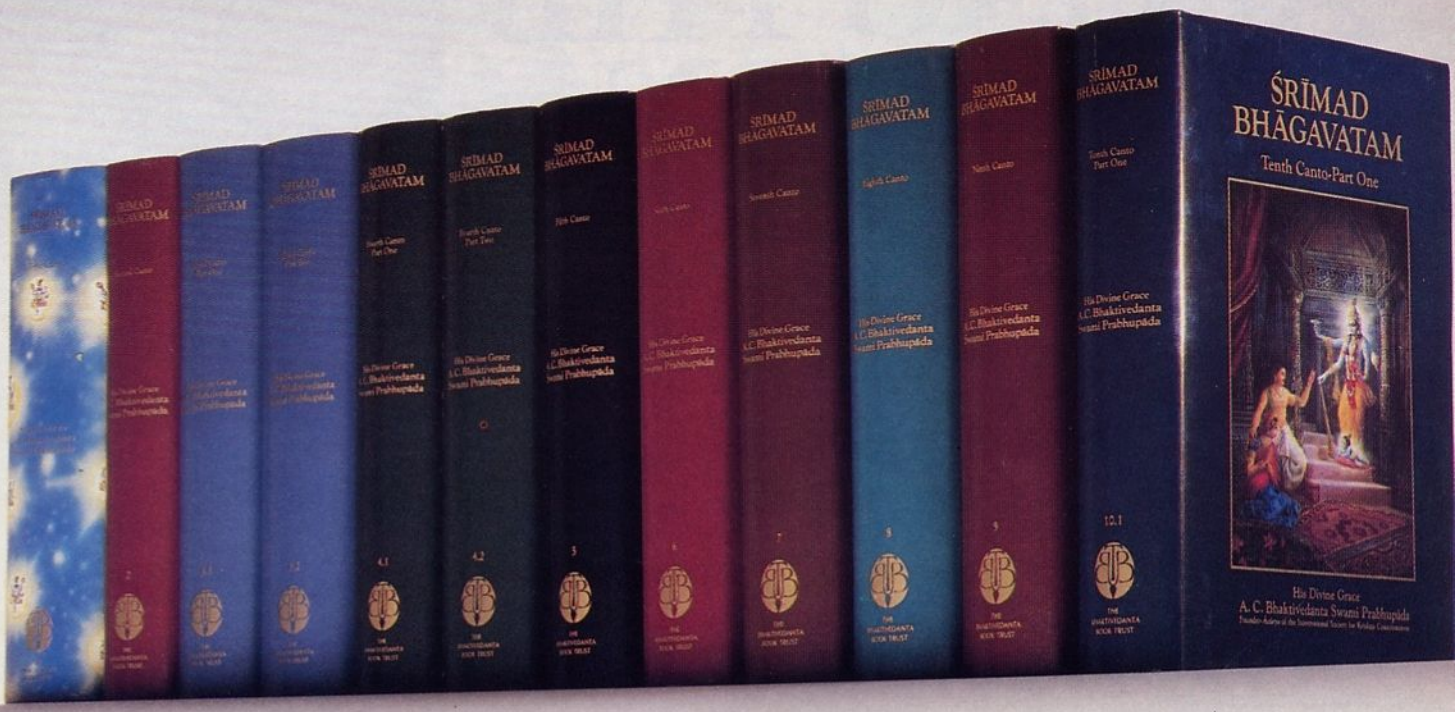


March 2, 1988

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Translation and purports by
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Reincarnated.



March 3, 1988

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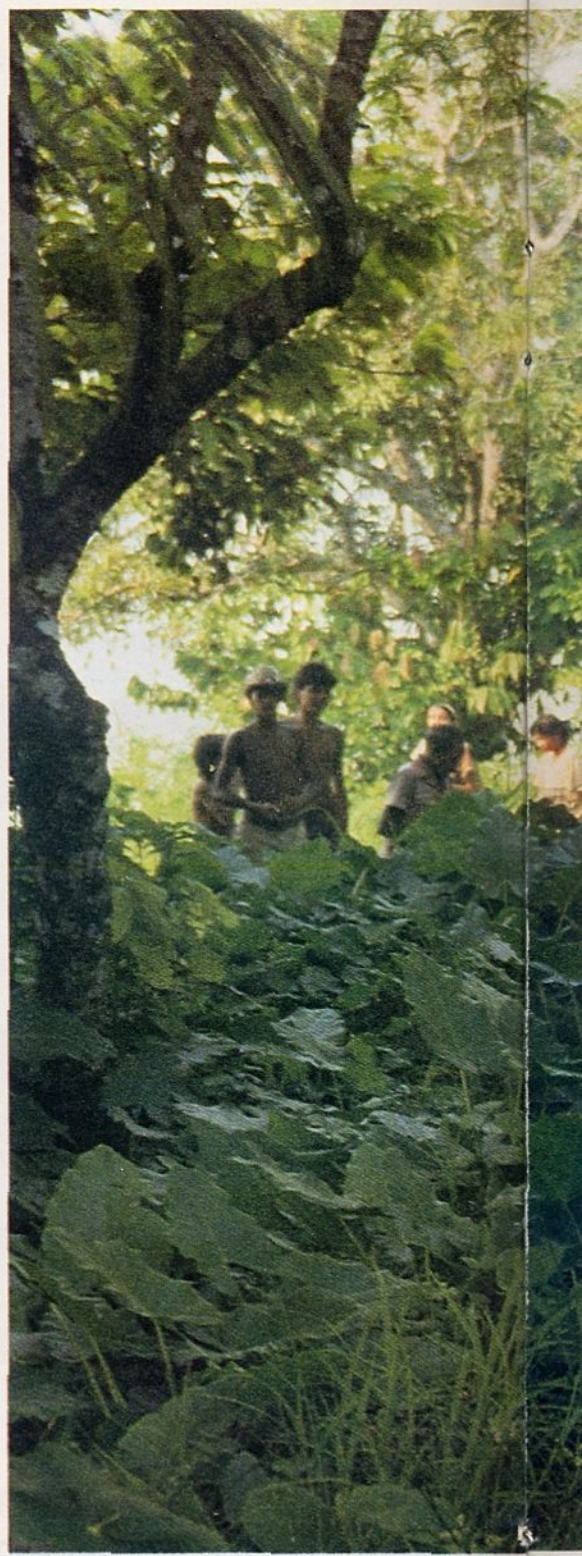
As the weeks went by, they came to respect
the jungle that was their home.
Despite the many hazards and austerities
it imposed on them, it was
God's creation, undisturbed by man.

DRUMS ALONG THE AMAZON

A New Frontier For Lord Caitanya's Mercy

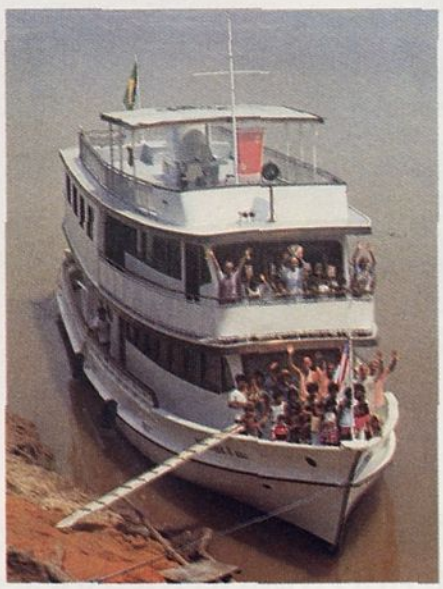
by INDRADYUMNA SWAMI



One day late last fall, one of my Godbrothers requested me to travel and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Brazil. I jumped at the opportunity. As a *sannyāsī* I am duty-bound to travel widely and teach within our Hare Kṛṣṇa Society, and I knew we had many centers in Brazil. Yet as I looked over a map, I realized that my Godbrother's request opened up another opportunity: I would have a chance to take the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to a new frontier—the Amazon jungle.

In the early years of our Society I had the privilege to help pioneer the spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Europe. Since those days the movement has expanded to every continent in its effort to fulfill the prediction made five hundred years ago by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu that the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa would one day go to every town and village in the world. Yet there still remain some places untouched by the *saṅkīrtana* movement, and I longed for the pioneering experience again. In my Godbrother's invitation I had found my chance.

Starting in Rio de Janeiro, I traveled north through Salvador, Recife, and Belém. After some weeks my dream of bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Amazon came closer to becoming a reality, when the small plane I was flying in

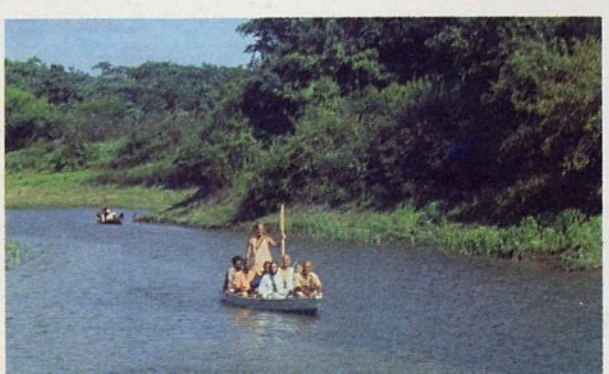


landed in Manaus, deep in the Amazon jungle. As the pilot brought the plane to a halt and opened the door, I was met by a wave of the heat and humidity that would be my constant companions for the months ahead.

As I collected my bags, I was happy to see the small group of devotees who had come to pick me up. They had opened a small temple in Manaus two years before and since then had not seen another devotee. Their responsibilities had not taken them far beyond the city limits, but when I revealed my plan to take Kṛṣṇa consciousness up the Amazon River, they immediately responded with enthusiastic smiles.

Despite their enthusiasm, however, I soon learned that there were practical problems to be solved before my plan

PHOTOS BY INDRADYUMNA SWAMI AND RŪPA GOSVĀMĪ DĀSA



Bringing Kṛṣṇa's holy name to the Amazon jungle (above), Rūpa Gosvāmī dāsa leads *kīrtana* as the devotees head for the next village. Villagers join the devotees (far left) onboard the *Piraiba*. At left, the devotees take the *saṅkīrtana* movement up an Amazon tributary.

could be fulfilled. ISKCON Manaus was a poor center—ten devotees in a small apartment and with no car, what to speak of a suitable boat for plying up the Amazon. But I had faith that if Lord Caitanya wanted our trip, it would happen.

And sure enough, that weekend at the Sunday Feast Kṛṣṇa fulfilled our desire, as we were honored to receive the wife of the governor of the Amazon state, Mrs.

Tarcila Mendez. A regular visitor to the small center, she responded enthusiastically to my idea. I asked her to help us find a boat with which we could travel up the river. This was the only mode of transport suitable for visiting the villages in the jungle, many of which have no roads connecting them to the civilized world.

Two days later Mrs. Mendez returned to the Manaus temple. She had discussed our proposed expedition with her husband, and they had decided to let us use their own riverboat, the *Piraiba,* especially suited to the dangerous conditions of the Amazon.

I was overwhelmed by her generosity, and even more so when I visited the boat with her the next day. Lord Kṛṣṇa had inspired her to load the one-hundred-ton, eighty-five-foot boat with a two-month supply of foodstuffs, including half a ton of grain for *prasādam* distribution, and a supply of fresh drinking water for the entire journey. And what's more, her husband had ordered the military to provide a crew of six: a captain, a first lieutenant, an engine man, and three crew members. He also offered to pay for the fuel for the entire trip. And to my ultimate surprise, he ordered the whole crew to be vegetarian for the entire journey!

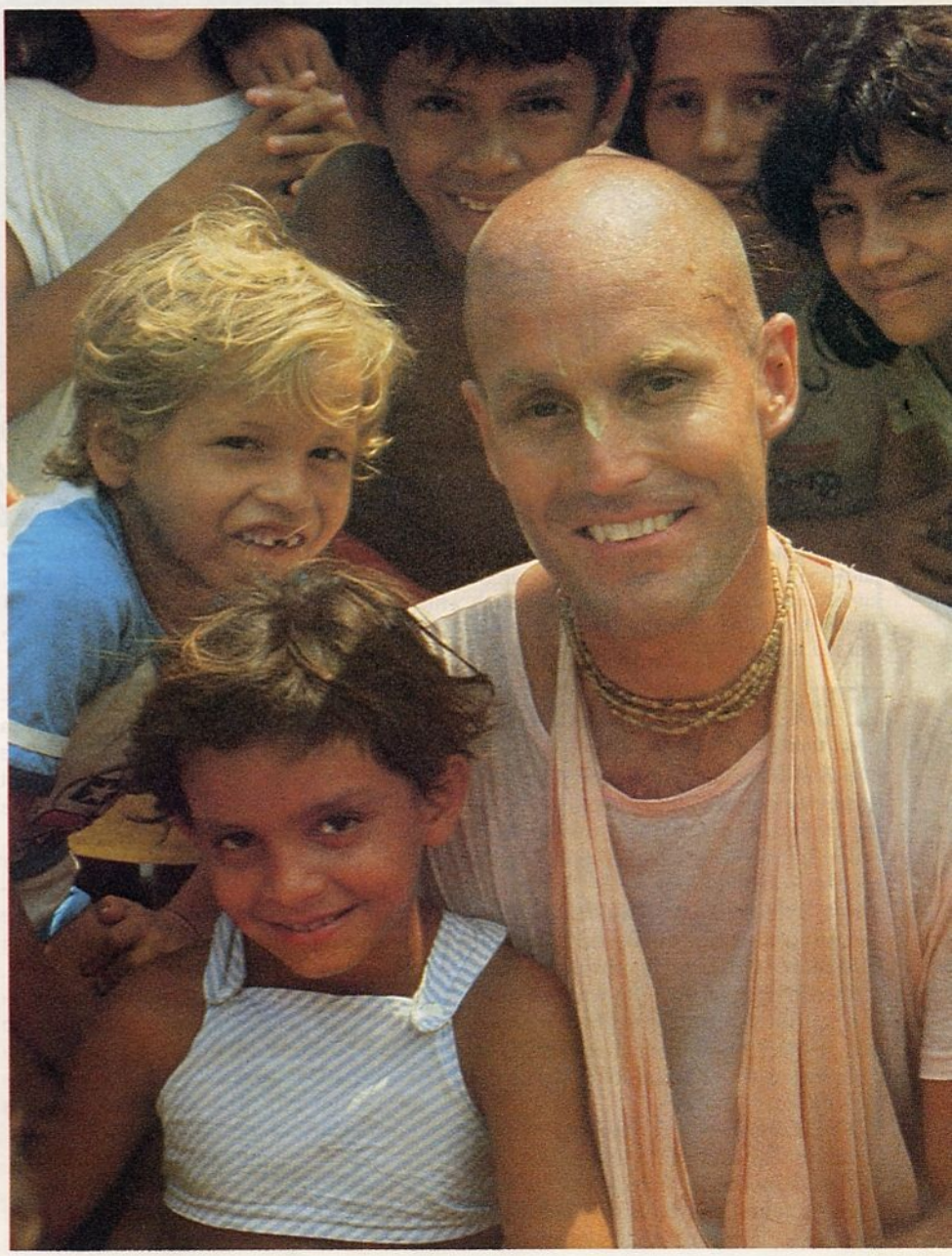
Taking these facilities as a direct sign from Lord Caitanya, we loaded the *Piraiba* with Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and other supplies and, flying the Brazilian flag, left port that day bound for Tefe, more than six hundred miles away. As we left Manaus—and with it civilization—we looked forward to the adventure of preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the first time in the villages that lay ahead.

For the first time ever, Amazon villagers witness the glorification of Kṛṣṇa's holy name (right). Onboard the *Piraiba* (above), devotees share *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* with leaders of an Amazon village. The captain of the *Piraiba* sits at the head of the table. At left, Hari Prasāda dāsa distributes candy *prasādam* to eager village children.

But we knew that even with the facilities we had, the voyage was not without risks. The first day out, the captain warned us about falling overboard: the *piranhas* would devour anyone in minutes. And there were the *piraibas*—after whom the boat was named—large flesh-eating fish that could swallow a man whole. The river itself was constantly changing course and had dangerous whirlpools that could easily capsize our boat. And there were the pervasive mosquitoes—carrying malaria and dengue and yellow fever. I soon learned, too, that the alligators and snakes were not in cages out here. This wasn't a trip into Adventureland at Disney World.

After a few days we reached the first village along the river's bank. We anchored, boarded our small lifeboat, and headed for shore, armed only with Kṛṣṇa's holy names, *prasādam,* and Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Knowing that the villagers rarely see visitors, we couldn't

Taking a break from his gardening, a villager (left) hears about Lord Caitanya's all-auspicious movement. Below, villagers pull up alongside the *Piraiba* to receive *kṛṣṇa-prasādam.* At right, the transcendental wisdom of the Vedic literature reaches the Amazon, as a devotee distributes Portuguese translations of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Below, right, author and expedition leader Indradyumna Swami poses with village children.



predict their reactions when fifteen Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees would come chanting and dancing into their village.

But our apprehensions were soon pleasantly relieved when we saw several hundred men, women, and children lining the shore for our arrival. After following us up the riverbank, they continued with us the entire two hours as we wound our way through the village's small dirt streets chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Everyone was hungry by the time we stopped to distribute *prasādam.* They ate heartily and then listened intently as I spoke, through a translator, on the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā.*

It was dark before we left. Pushing our lifeboat off from the shore, I smiled to think that the *saṅkīrtana* movement was just as popular here in the wild Amazon jungle as it is anywhere else in the world.

We were soon reminded of the perils of

(*continued on page 26*)

DRAWING BY PARIKṢIT DĀSA

The Absolute Truth is inaccessible to the mundane mind and senses. On this basis, empiric philosophers may deny that the Absolute has form, but to be consistent they should also deny the formless, impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth, which is equally beyond the grasp of their material minds. According to the Vedic literature, the Absolute Truth is endowed with form and personality, and the Lord will reveal Himself to those who surrender to Him with love and devotion.

TECHNOLOGY

(*continued from page 13*)

śāstras into the material realm. This corresponds to Bohm's idea of insight originating from a source beyond the implicate order. In the Vedic system, however, this insight is corroborated by the *śāstras,* which are directly accessible to the external mind and senses. By accepting the guidance of the *śāstras,* a spiritual aspirant is able to discriminate between genuine and spurious spiritual insight. We suggest that Bohm's metaphysical system is incomplete without some form of explicit external revelation.

If one is going to seriously seek transcendental knowledge, one should at least theoretically accept that (1) the ultimate transcendental source of this knowledge is able to communicate with human beings, and (2) records of genuine communications of this kind do exist in human society. If this is not so, then one has little hope of understanding that which lies utterly beyond the grasp of the mind and senses.

One might therefore seriously consider the perennial notion that a supreme intelligence, known in the West as God, may be the source of the organized information that gives rise to our manifest world. Bohm, in fact, comes very close to admitting the possibility of a sentient supreme being. However, in line with the philosophy of *advaita-vedānta,* he finally turns away from this idea, declaring, "There's nothing we can do with that."

Simultaneous Oneness and Difference

It is interesting to note that the Vedic *śāstra* entitled *Brahma-saṁhitā* gives a very clear description of Bohm's idea of a whole that is fully contained in each of its parts. Ironically, this is part of a series of prayers to God as a supreme person:

> He is an undifferentiated entity, as there is no distinction between potency and the possessor thereof. In His work of creation of millions of worlds, His potency remains inseparable. All the universes exist in Him, and He is present in His fullness in every one of the atoms that are scattered throughout the universe, at one and the same time. Such is the primeval Lord whom I adore.

One might object that the human mind acting on its own could not possibly demonstrate the truth of the personal conception of the supreme whole. Therefore, one should adopt a more cautious conception that is abstract and impersonal. The point can be made, however, that *any* conception of the Absolute generated by the finite mind is as mundane as any other, including both personal and impersonal conceptions. One then may as well forego all metaphysical speculation and restrict one's attention entirely to the manifest world of interacting material energies.

But if one does want to introduce ideas about the Absolute derived from revealed knowledge, then the Vedic literatures give concrete indication of how direct realization of this knowledge can be attained. Although the Supreme Lord is inaccessible to the mundane mind, the Lord will reveal Himself to persons who surrender to Him and serve Him with love. This, of course, is also a perennial philosophical conclusion.

Back to Physics

We have seen that key aspects of Bohm's world view are based indirectly on traditional sources of revealed transcendental knowledge. One might ask, however, what part of his philosophy of the implicate order can be based exclusively on physical observation and theory.

We suggest that this is limited to the observation that macroscopic forms can arise by physical transformations from patterns of minute fluctuations that look like random noise. These patterns may appear in many forms, ranging from light waves to distributions of nuclear magnetic fields. The patterns are not necessarily spread throughout all space, but patterns that will later give rise to distinct macroscopic events may co-exist in the same volume of space.

We can use these observations to show another way in which a link can be established between physics and metaphysics. Our proposed link is derived from the Vedic literature *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* It is the idea that the material creation is brought about and maintained through the injection of divinely ordered sound vibrations into a primordial material

substrate called *pradhāna.*

According to this idea, the *pradhāna* is an eternally existing energy of the supreme that is capable of manifesting material space and time, the material elements, and their various possible combinations. Left to itself the *pradhāna* would manifest none of these things, but it does so under the influence of intelligently directed sound vibrations generated by the Supreme Lord.

Here the word *sound* is a translation of the Sanskrit word *śabda.* Since the *pradhāna* is even more subtle than space as we know it, this *śabda* does not refer to ordinary sound, consisting of vibrations propagating through gross matter. We will therefore interpret "sound" here to mean any type of propagating vibration, however subtle.

The creation of the material universes by sound (see Figures 2 and 3) involves (1) the generation of material space and time, (2) the systematic building up of the subtle and gross material elements, (3) the organization of these elements into worlds living beings, and, finally, (4) the continued maintenance and direction of these worlds.

Optical phase conjugation provides an analogy to this picture of the relation between material and transcendental levels of existence. Consider an arrangement in which pictures are being transmitted through a sheet of frosted glass. An observer on the receiving side would see successive images emerging from the glass screen, but he would not be able to see the transmitting persons and apparatus on the other side.

Similarly, according to the Vedic conception, the material energy serves as a veil of illusion, or *māyā,* that prevents living beings in the material realm from directly perceiving God. God is actually in direct control of the material energy, but He is manipulating it in such a way that His presence is hidden, and complex patterns of events seem to unfold simply by material action and reaction.

Let us suppose for the moment that organized wave patterns are continually being injected into the known physical continuum from subtler levels of physical reality. Such patterns will appear to be random, especially if they encode information for many different macroscopic forms and sequences of events. For this reason they will be difficult to distinguish from purely random patterns by experimental observation.

Thus much of the random noise that surrounds us may consist of information for patterns that will "unfold" in the future to produce macroscopic results, while the rest consists of the "enfolded" or "refolded" remnants of past macroscopic patterns. If a pattern of microscopic vibrations *does* unfold to produce an organized macroscopic effect, then this will make a very striking impression if it can be observed.

To indicate the possibilities for such an event, we can give an example based on the idea of a wave field. The surface of a pond is a simple example of such a field. The first frame in Figure 4 shows the wave field in an apparently chaotic state of motion. However, this pattern of waves contains hidden information. The successive frames show the motion of the waves (according to the wave equation) as time passes. In frame 2 we see that a letter *A* has appeared in the field. This form quickly takes shape and dissipates, and it is replaced in frame 4 by the similar rapid appearance and disappearance of the symbol ॐ (*Aum*). Actually the information for both symbols is present in all four frames of the figure.

The Theory of Evolution

Natural history is an area in which the

(*continued on page 26*)

Lord Jagannātha and the Daffodils

by Mathureśa dāsa

The sun broke through in February
And brought both joy and sorrow,
For though the air was mild today,
I feared the frost tomorrow.

A spell this warm would raise the heads
Of daffodil and buttercup.
Drenched in sunlight, bathed in dew,
They'd figure winter's time was up.

Sure enough, I spied green shoots
Emerging from the earth,
Poking through the garden beds,
Arms upraised in mirth.

With trowel and flowerpot in hand
I hurried to the rescue,
Knowing I couldn't save them all,
Resolved to save a few.

They're up here in my office now,
Sitting on the sills,
Looking a mite homesick—
Four buttercups, three daffodils.

Outside it's cloudy, cold and wet,
Though not yet back to freezing.
The daffs are waiting at the window.
They'd find some sunlight pleasing.

Winged yellow faces fully spread
To catch each golden ray,
They're gazing toward the western sky,
Where their friend set yesterday.

Little do they know that here,
Upon a silken cloth,
Behind them on my top bookshelf,
Resides Lord Jagannātha.

Daffodils and buttercups
Are each a part of Him—
Infinitesimal spirit souls,
As are trees and birds and men.

He is the father of us all,
The friend fore'er well-wishing.
The sun and moon are His two eyes.
He is the sun-rapt spring.

So I've advised my daffodils
That while their sun is hiding,
They ought to turn around and see
Lord Jagannātha presiding.

But there they sit beside the glass,
Their faces turned away,
Their longing eyes upon the clouds
That dim the light of day.

Although I know they hear me well,
The sun still has their heart;
For while quite pretty, young, and gay,
They really aren't so smart.

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Santa Cruz, Bolivia—Snack Govinda, Av. Argomosa (1° anillo), esq. Bolivar

TECHNOLOGY

(*continued from page 23*)

hypothesis of unfolding of subtle information has relevant applications. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the prevailing scientific viewpoint has been that the origin of living species can be explained by Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection and random variation. But there have always been prominent dissenters from this view.

In the nineteenth century Alfred Russell Wallace, the co-inventor of Darwin's theory, felt that the action of some higher intelligence was required to account for such biological phenomena as the human brain. A similar point is made by Bohm, who feels that "natural selection is not the whole story, but rather that evolution is a sign of the creative intelligence of matter." As we have pointed out, Bohm regards this intelligence as emanating either from his implicate order or from beyond.

In the theory of creation by sound vibration that we are considering here, it is to be expected that the forms of living organisms could be generated or modified through the effects of organized wave patterns transmitted into the physical realm by the supreme intelligent being. This will also be difficult to either demonstrate or disprove empirically, because of the incompleteness of the fossil record and the presumed rarity of radical transformations of species.

When evaluating a possible transformation of this kind, there will always be the problem of making sure that the transformation is not a result of ordinary physical cause and effect. To do this effectively would require detailed knowledge about the transformation, which would be very difficult to obtain.

Actually both the theory of creation by sound vibration and the Darwinian theory of evolution are extremely difficult to test empirically. On the physical level both theories are dealing with phenomena that are extremely complex and are not subject to experimental manipulation.

The theory of creation by sound vibration involves transcendental levels of reality not accessible to the mundane senses, and thus in one way it is more unverifiable than the purely physical Darwinian theory. However, if a purely physical theory turns out to be empirically unverifiable, then there is nothing further one can do to be sure about it. In contrast, a theory that posits a supreme intelligent being opens up the possibility that further knowledge may be gained through internal and external revelation brought about by the will of that being.

Of course, the dynamics of obtaining such knowledge are different from those of empirical, experimental science and mathematical analysis. Instead of forcing nature to disclose its secrets, one surrenders to the Supreme Lord in a humble spirit and pursues a path of spiritual discipline and divine service.

This approach to knowledge and to life also constitutes one of the great perennial philosophies of mankind, but it has tended to be eclipsed in this age of scientific empiricism. To obtain the fruits of this path to knowledge, one must be willing to follow it, and one will be inclined to do this only if one thinks the world view on which it is based might possibly be true. Establishing this possibility constitutes the ultimate justification for constructing theories, such as the one considered here, linking physics and metaphysics.

SADĀPŪTA DĀSA obtained his Ph.D. in mathematics at Cornell University, specializing in probability theory and statistical mechanics. He has published many scientific articles in the fields of mathematical biology and remote sensing, and has recently completed a university textbook, titled Computer Simulations of Self-organization in Biological Systems. *"High Technology and the Ground of Being" was excerpted from the first chapter of Sadāpūta's upcoming book,* The End of Physics.

AMAZON

(*continued from page 21*)

the jungle, however. Unable to find our way back to the *Piraiba,* we wandered aimlessly for hours alongside the bank of the river. Suddenly we found ourselves in an eerie swamp, lit only by the dim lights of thousands of fireflies. Then, in our efforts to get out, we got stuck on a sand bar . . . or so we thought.

As I stepped out of the lifeboat to free our craft, my leg was suddenly sucked under—quicksand! I pushed the boat desperately to free myself. Fortunately, the devotees were able to grab me, and we broke free. Once safely inside the boat, my small flashlight lit up the eyes of an alligator just a few yards away. Within an hour we had found our way back to the *Piraiba* and the security it offered in the middle of the wilderness.

On our third day up the river we came upon our second village. Here we didn't have time to guess about our reception. As soon as we came within sight of the group of thatched huts and small wooden houses, a dozen boats from the village came out to meet us. News of our last stop had spread, and the people had come for food and medicine. Having barely enough medicine for ourselves, we distributed *prasādam* overboard into eager hands.

As the weeks went by, we came to respect the mighty jungle that was our home. Despite the many hazards and austerities it imposed on us, it was God's creation, undisturbed by man. As wild as it was, it seemed perfectly orchestrated by Him. Each morning as the sun rose, its orange rays beautifully contrasted with the deep green of the jungle and set a majestic backdrop for the activities of the jungle's millions of inhabitants. Our morning classes on the bank of the river were often visited by curious onlookers: chattering monkeys, colorful parrots, wild boars and buffalos. Once, a leopard studied us momentarily from a distance. Strangely enough, we often felt at home so far from civilization.

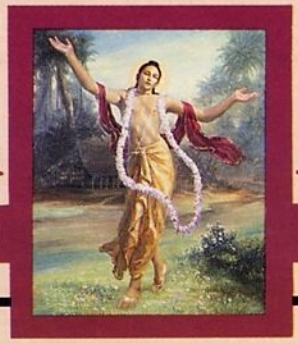
Winding our way up the river, we would visit three or four villages a day, some with as few as twenty inhabitants. Several times the village leaders came back to our boat for a vegetarian dinner and an evening of philosophical discussion. And we would always present them with a copy of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is,* ensuring that the timeless wisdom of Lord Kṛṣṇa would remain behind even as we continued on our way.

One night, halfway through the journey, disaster almost struck again. Plying silently through the water while we were fast asleep, our boat hit a sandbar concealed just below the surface. Everything lurched forward, and the boat began to tip to one side. We called out to Lord Kṛṣṇa for help. In the darkness it was difficult to perceive our actual position, but I knew that the river would be merciless if we capsized. Suddenly, by Kṛṣṇa's grace the swift current freed us, and we drifted off the sandbar to safety.

After one month we reached our destination, Tefe. As we pulled into port, we looked forward to some of the amenities of civilization we knew could be found here in this larger town, connected to the rest of the world by a small airport. Sewing needles, bandages, sun protection cream, and dysentery pills were the first order of business.

As we prepared for our return trip, I realized that I didn't regret the risks and austerities we'd undergone. We had enjoyed the privilege and satisfaction of taking Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement to this jungle for the first time. Even as we began our voyage down the river and back home, I took out my map and pondered once again—were there any other regions left in which to pioneer the mercy of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu?

Every Town And Village



The worldwide activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

Soviet Devotee Dies in Labor Camp; Others Released

Jarna, Sweden—The Committee to Free Soviet Hare Krishnas, which has its headquarters here, recently announced that twenty-three-year-old Śacīsūta dāsa (Sarkis Ogadzhanyan) had died in a labor camp on December 26, 1987, just a few days before his scheduled release. He had been incarcerated for being a member of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. His death was due to the abominable conditions of the labor camp, and especially his nutritionally deficient diet, which caused him to become emaciated.

After Śacīsūta's death, Soviet devotees protested in Moscow outside a human rights meeting sponsored by the International Helsinki Foundation. The protest received international press coverage, including national television news in Great Britain.

As a result of the worldwide attention being drawn to the plight of Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees, eight devotees were recently released from incarceration. Two of them had completed the terms of their sentences. The Committee attributes the release of the others to the worldwide demonstrations, petitions, letter-writing campaigns, and even hunger strikes on behalf of the persecuted devotees.

Among the devotees released was Ananta-śānti dāsa (Anatoli Pinyayev), the first member of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in the Soviet Union. Ananta-śānti has been in and out of Soviet prisons and psychiatric hospitals since 1980 because of his practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. His recent release was from the Special Psychiatric Hospital in Smolensk, where he had served four years of an indefinite sentence. While there, he was subjected to insulin shock treatments and injections of neuroleptic drugs. Ananta-śānti's release was due in part to a meeting between Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and Australian Prime Minister Robert Hawke, during which Mr. Hawke requested Ananta-śānti's release.

Other Soviet devotees released were Sannyāsa dāsa (Suren Karapetyan), Āśutoṣa dāsa (Aleksei Musatov), Viśvāmitra dāsa (Vladimir Kritski), Kamalamālā dāsa (Karen Saakyan), Yamarāja dāsa (Yakov Dzhidzhevadze), Ātmānanda dāsa (Armen Saakyan), and Oleg Stepanyan.

Ananta-śānti dāsa, the first member of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in the Soviet Union, was recently released from a Special Psychiatric hospital in Smolensk.

Although the Committee to Free Soviet Hare Krishnas, as well as devotees within the Soviet Union, are encouraged by the releases, they are wary that the mood may change at any moment. Besides, there are still devotees in confinement or doing compulsory labor, and the Soviet government has yet to recognize Kṛṣṇa consciousness as an authorized religion.

As part of the continuing effort to gain freedom for the Soviet devotees, ISKCON's minister of public affairs, Mukunda Goswami, and Vedavyāsa dāsa, a former Soviet citizen and journalist who had been jailed and confined in a psychiatric hospital for his affiliation with the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, recently attended the United Nations Human Rights Day conference at the U.S. State Department headquarters in Washington, D.C.

"We laud hospital officials and new *glasnost* initiatives which contributed to freeing these devotees," Vedavyāsa said. "But this is no time for complacency. This summer they [Soviet authorities] allowed us to chant in Moscow on Arbat Street for six weeks, and then they suddenly began arresting and threatening us, treating us in a very rough manner. Political climates can change here rather suddenly. We must now press for the release of the remaining captives."

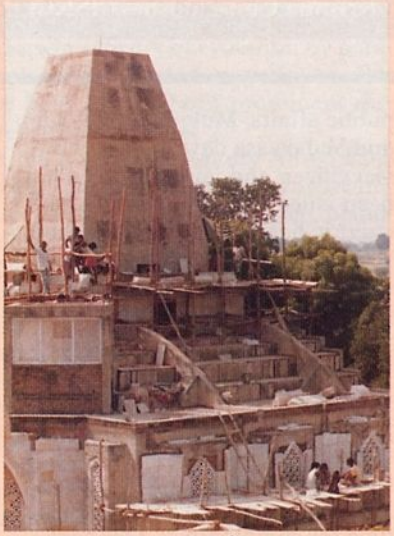
Anyone wanting to assist the Committee to Free Soviet Hare Krishnas can write to CFSHK, Almviks Gärd, 15300 Järna, Sweden.

Samādhi Construction Progressing

Vṛndāvana, India—Thanks to contributions from devotees around the world and the supervision of the Committee for the Completion of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Samādhi,* work on the construction of the *samādhi* (shrine) of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is progressing steadily here. Major obstacles to the construction have been overcome, especially because of the dedicated efforts of Haṁsa Rūpa dāsa and Toṣaṇa Kṛṣṇa dāsa, who are directly overseeing the construction.

Significant recent advances in the project include the development of a dependable system for purchasing quality marble, and the construction of a foundry for making bronze reliefs that will adorn the inside walls of the *samādhi.* The

samādhi committee has approved preliminary artwork for the bronze reliefs, which was submitted by artist Bhaktisiddhānta dāsa.



The unfinished dome of Śrīla Prabhupāda's samādhi *in Vṛndāvana, India.*

NEWS BRIEFS

To commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's birth, the Bhaktivedanta Institute has planned two international conferences: The World Parliament of Religions, in Delhi in 1993; and the second World Conference for the Synthesis of Science and Religion, in Calcutta in 1996. The Institute also plans to publish a set of books based on Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings, entitled *Scientific, Theological, and Philosophical Teachings of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.*

•

At Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, thirty scholars, theologians, and clergy met recently to establish dialogue with new religious movements. Dean Kelley, director of the National Council of Churches' Religious Liberty Committee, and Franklin Littell, chairman and founder of the Hamlin Institute, chaired the conference. Mukunda Goswami, ISKCON's minister of public affairs, represented ISKCON. In his presentation, he summarized the basic philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and he appealed to conference members to use their influence to help ISKCON fight persecution.

RESOURCES

Now your television can bring you closer to Kṛṣṇa. Videocassettes from ITV (ISKCON Television) bring the spiritual vision of Kṛṣṇa into your home.

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For more information, write to Śrī Rāma dāsa, ISKCON Gurukula Education Office, Almviks Gärd, 15300 Järna, Sweden.

Festivals & Calendar

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The devotees at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you will gladly tell you more about the meaning of the festivals listed here.

Month of Madhusūdana
(April 3–May 1)

May 1—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Parameśvara Purī, an associate of Lord Caitanya.

Month of Trivikrama
First Half
(May 2–May 31)

May 6—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, an intimate associate of Lord Caitanya.

May 12—Aparā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

May 13—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, author of *Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata,* a famous biography on Lord Caitanya.

Month of Puruṣottama
(May 16–June 14)

May 27—Padminī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

June 10—Paramā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Trivikrama
Second Half
(June 15–June 29)

June 24—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a famous spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* (disciplic succession), and the author of *Govinda Bhāṣya,* an important commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra.* Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Gaṅgamātā Gosvāminī, a famous woman spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya.*

June 26—Pāṇḍava Nirjalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

June 27—Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's chipped-rice-and-yogurt festival at Pāṇihāṭi.

June 29—Snāna-yātrā, the bathing festival of Lord Jagannātha. Disappearance anniversaries of Śrīla Mukunda Datta and Śrīla Śrīdhara Paṇḍita, two great devotees of Lord Caitanya.

Book Section

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the "cream of the Vedic literatures" of ancient India. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. The original Sanskrit text is presented here with transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Third Canto: "The Status Quo"

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Killing of the Demon Hiraṇyākṣa

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, *the sage Maitreya continues to describe to Vidura, a great devotee of the Lord, the battle between Lord Viṣṇu in His boar incarnation and the powerful demon Hiraṇyākṣa.*

TEXT 4

स तदा लब्धतीर्थोऽपि न बबाधे निरायुधम् ।
मानयन् स मृधे धर्मं विष्वक्सेनं प्रकोपयन् ॥ ४ ॥

sa tadā labdha-tīrtho 'pi
na babādhe nirāyudham
mānayan sa mṛdhe dharmaṁ
viṣvaksenaṁ prakopayan

saḥ—that Hiraṇyākṣa; *tadā*—then; *labdha-tīrthaḥ*—having gained an excellent opportunity; *api*—although; *na*—not; *babādhe*—attacked; *nirāyudham*—having no weapon; *mānayan*—respecting; *saḥ*—Hiraṇyākṣa; *mṛdhe*—in battle; *dharmam*—the code of combat; *viṣvaksenam*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *prakopayan*—making angry.

TRANSLATION

Even though the demon had an excellent opportunity to strike his unarmed foe without obstruction, he respected the law of single combat, thereby kindling the fury of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 5

गदायामपविद्धायां हाहाकारे विनिर्गते ।
मानयामास तद्धर्मं सुनाभं चास्मरद्विभुः ॥ ५ ॥

gadāyām apaviddhāyāṁ
hāhā-kāre vinirgate
mānayām āsa tad-dharmaṁ
sunābhaṁ cāsmarad vibhuḥ

gadāyām—as His mace; *apaviddhāyām*—fell; *hāhā-kāre*—a cry of alarm; *vinirgate*—arose; *mānayām āsa*—acknowledged; *tat*—of Hiraṇyākṣa; *dharmam*—righteousness; *sunābham*—the Sudarśana *cakra; ca*—and; *asmarat*—remembered; *vibhuḥ*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

As the Lord's mace fell to the ground and a cry of alarm arose from the witnessing crowd of gods and ṛṣis, the Personality of Godhead acknowledged the demon's love of righteousness and therefore invoked His Sudarśana discus.

TEXT 6

तं व्यग्रचक्रं दितिपुत्राधमेन
स्वपार्षदमुख्येन विषज्जमानम् ।
चित्रा वाचोऽतद्विदां खेचराणां
तत्र स्मासन् स्वस्ति तेऽमुं जहीति ॥ ६ ॥

taṁ vyagra-cakraṁ diti-putrādhamena
sva-pārṣada-mukhyena viṣajjamānam
citrā vāco 'tad-vidāṁ khe-carāṇāṁ
tatra smāsan svasti te 'muṁ jahīti

tam—unto the Personality of Godhead; *vyagra*—revolving; *cakram*—whose discus; *diti-putra*—son of Diti; *adhamena*—vile; *sva-pārṣada*—of His associates; *mukhyena*—with the chief; *viṣajjamānam*—playing; *citrāḥ*—various; *vācaḥ*—expressions; *a-tat-vidām*—of those who did not know; *khe-carāṇām*—flying in the sky; *tatra*—there; *sma āsan*—occurred; *svasti*—fortune; *te*—unto You; *amum*—him; *jahi*—please kill; *iti*—thus.

TRANSLATION

As the discus began to revolve in the Lord's hands and the Lord contended at close quarters with the chief of His Vaikuṇṭha attendants, who had been born as Hiraṇyākṣa, a vile son of Diti, there issued from every direction strange expressions uttered by those who were witnessing from airplanes. They had no knowledge of the Lord's reality, and they cried, "May victory attend You! Pray dispatch him. Play no more with him."

TEXT 7

स तं निशाम्यात्तरथाङ्गमग्रतो
व्यवस्थितं पद्मपलाशलोचनम् ।
विलोक्य चामर्षपरिप्लुतेन्द्रियो
रुषा स्वदन्तच्छदमादशच्छ्वसन् ॥ ७ ॥

sa taṁ niśāmyātta-rathāṅgam agrato
vyavasthitaṁ padma-palāśa-locanam
vilokya cāmarṣa-pariplutendriyo
ruṣā sva-danta-cchadam ādaśac chvasan

saḥ—that demon; *tam*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *niśāmya*—after seeing; *ātta-rathāṅgam*—armed with the Sudarśana disc; *agrataḥ*—before him; *vyavasthitam*—standing in position; *padma*—lotus flower; *palāśa*—petals; *locanam*—eyes; *vilokya*—after seeing; *ca*—and; *amarṣa*—by indignation; *paripluta*—overpowered; *indriyaḥ*—his senses; *ruṣā*—with great resentment; *sva-danta-chadam*—his own lip; *ādaśat*—bit; *śvasan*—hissing.

TRANSLATION

When the demon saw the Personality of Godhead, who had eyes just like lotus petals, standing in position before him, armed with His Sudarśana discus, his senses were overpowered by indignation. He began to hiss like a serpent, and he bit his lip in great resentment.

TEXT 8

करालदंष्ट्रश्चक्षुर्भ्यां सञ्चक्षाणो दहन्निव ।
अभिप्लुत्य खगदया हतोऽसीत्याहनद्धरिम् ॥ ८ ॥

karāla-daṁṣṭraś cakṣurbhyāṁ
sañcakṣāṇo dahann iva
abhiplutya sva-gadayā
hato 'sīty āhanad dharim

karāla—fearful; *daṁṣṭraḥ*—having tusks; *cakṣurbhyām*—with both eyes; *sañcakṣāṇaḥ*—staring; *dahan*—burning; *iva*—as if; *abhiplutya*—attacking; *sva-gadayā*—with his own club; *hataḥ*—slain; *asi*—You are; *iti*—thus; *āhanat*—struck; *harim*—at Hari.

TRANSLATION

The demon, who had fearful tusks, stared at the Personality of Godhead as though to burn Him. Springing into the air, he aimed his mace at the Lord, exclaiming at the same time, "You are slain!"

TEXT 9

पदा सव्येन तां साधो भगवान् यज्ञसूकरः ।
लीलया मिषतः शत्रोः प्राहरद्वातरंहसम् ॥ ९ ॥

padā savyena tāṁ sādho
bhagavān yajña-sūkaraḥ
līlayā miṣataḥ śatroḥ
prāharad vāta-raṁhasam

padā—with His foot; *savyena*—left; *tām*—that mace; *sādho*—O Vidura; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *yajña-sūkaraḥ*—in His boar form, the enjoyer of all sacrifices; *līlayā*—playfully; *miṣataḥ*—looking on; *śatroḥ*—of His enemy (Hiraṇyākṣa); *prāharat*—knocked down; *vāta-raṁhasam*—having the force of a tempest.

TRANSLATION

O saintly Vidura, while His enemy looked on, the Lord in His boar form, the enjoyer of all sacrificial offerings, playfully knocked down the mace with His left foot, even as it came upon Him with the force of a tempest.

TEXT 10

आह चायुधमाधत्स्व घटस्व त्वं जिगीषसि ।
इत्युक्तः स तदा भूयस्ताडयन् व्यनदद् भृशम् ॥१०॥

āha cāyudham ādhatsva
ghaṭasva tvaṁ jigīṣasi
ity uktaḥ sa tadā bhūyas
tāḍayan vyanadad bhṛśam

āha—He said; *ca*—and; *āyudham*—weapon; *ādhatsva*—take up; *ghaṭasva*—try; *tvam*—you; *jigīṣasi*—are eager to conquer; *iti*—thus; *uktaḥ*—challenged; *saḥ*—Hiraṇyākṣa; *tadā*—at that time; *bhūyaḥ*—again; *tāḍayan*—striking at; *vyanadat*—roared; *bhṛśam*—loudly.

TRANSLATION

The Lord then said: "Take up your weapon and try again, eager as you are to conquer Me." Challenged in these words, the demon aimed his mace at the Lord and once more loudly roared.

TEXT 11

तां स आपततीं वीक्ष्य भगवान् समवस्थितः ।
जग्राह लीलया प्राप्तां गरुत्मानिव पन्नगीम् ॥११॥

tāṁ sa āpatatīṁ vīkṣya
bhagavān samavasthitaḥ
jagrāha līlayā prāptāṁ
garutmān iva pannagīm

tām—that mace; *saḥ*—He; *āpatatīm*—flying toward; *vīkṣya*—after seeing; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *samavasthitaḥ*—stood firmly; *jagrāha*—caught; *līlayā*—easily; *prāptām*—entered into His presence; *garutmān*—Garuḍa; *iva*—as; *pannagīm*—a serpent.

TRANSLATION

When the Lord saw the mace flying toward Him, He stood firmly where He was and caught it with the same ease as Garuḍa, the king of birds, would seize a serpent.

TEXT 12

स्वपौरुषे प्रतिहते हतमानो महासुरः ।
नैच्छद्गदां दीयमानां हरिणा विगतप्रभः ॥१२॥

sva-pauruṣe pratihate
hata-māno mahāsuraḥ
naicchad gadāṁ dīyamānāṁ
hariṇā vigata-prabhaḥ

sva-pauruṣe—his valor; *pratihate*—frustrated; *hata*—destroyed; *mānaḥ*—pride; *mahā-asuraḥ*—the great demon; *na aicchat*—desired not (to take); *gadām*—the mace; *dīyamānām*—being offered; *hariṇā*—by Hari; *vigata-prabhaḥ*—reduced in splendor.

TRANSLATION

His valor thus frustrated, the great demon felt humiliated and was put out of countenance. He was reluctant to take back the mace when it was offered by the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 13

जग्राह त्रिशिखं शूलं ज्वलज्ज्वलनलोलुपम् ।
यज्ञाय धृतरूपाय विप्रायाभिचरन् यथा ॥१३॥

jagrāha tri-śikhaṁ śūlaṁ
jvalaj-jvalana-lolupam
yajñāya dhṛta-rūpāya
viprāyābhicaran yathā

jagrāha—took up; *tri-śikham*—three-pointed; *śūlam*—trident; *jvalat*—flaming; *jvalana*—fire; *lolupam*—rapacious; *yajñāya*—at the enjoyer of all sacrifices; *dhṛta-rūpāya*—in the form of Varāha; *viprāya*—unto a *brāhmaṇa; abhicaran*—acting malevolently; *yathā*—as.

TRANSLATION

He now took a trident which was as rapacious as a flaming fire and hurled it against the Lord, the enjoyer of all sacrifices, even as one would use penance for a malevolent purpose against a holy brāhmaṇa.

TEXT 14

तदोजसा दैत्यमहाभटार्पितं
चकासदन्तःख उदीर्णदीधिति ।
चक्रेण चिच्छेद निशातनेमिना
हरिर्यथा तार्क्ष्यपतत्रमुज्झितम् ॥१४॥

tad ojasā daitya-mahā-bhaṭārpitaṁ
cakāsad antaḥ-kha udīrṇa-dīdhiti
cakreṇa ciccheda niśāta-neminā
harir yathā tārkṣya-patatram ujjhitam

tat—that trident; *ojasā*—with all his strength; *daitya*—among the demons; *mahā-bhaṭa*—by the mighty fighter; *arpitam*—hurled; *cakāsat*—shining; *antaḥ-khe*—in the middle of the sky; *udīrṇa*—increased; *dīdhiti*—illumination; *cakreṇa*—by the Sudarśana disc; *ciccheda*—He cut to pieces; *niśāta*—sharpened; *neminā*—rim; *hariḥ*—Indra; *yathā*—as; *tārkṣya*—of Garuḍa; *patatram*—the wing; *ujjhitam*—abandoned.

TRANSLATION

Hurled by the mighty demon with all his strength, the flying trident shone brightly in the sky. The Personality of Godhead, however, tore it to pieces with His discus Sudarśana, which had a sharp-edged rim, even as Indra cut off a wing of Garuḍa.

PURPORT

The context of the reference given herein regarding Garuḍa and Indra is this. Once upon a time, Garuḍa, the carrier of the Lord, snatched away

a nectar pot from the hands of the demigods in heaven in order to liberate his mother, Vinatā, from the clutches of his stepmother, Kadrū, the mother of the serpents. On learning of this, Indra, the King of heaven, hurled his thunderbolt against Garuḍa. With a view to respect the infallibility of Indra's weapon, Garuḍa, though otherwise invincible, being the Lord's own mount, dropped one of his wings, which was shattered to pieces by the thunderbolt. The inhabitants of higher planets are so sensible that even in the process of fighting they observe the preliminary rules and regulations of gentleness. In this case, Garuḍa wanted to show respect for Indra; since he knew that Indra's weapon must destroy something, he offered his wing.

TEXT 15

वृक्णे स्वशूले बहुधारिणा हरेः
प्रत्येत्य विस्तीर्णमुरो विभूतिमत् ।
प्रवृद्धरोषः स कठोरमुष्टिना
नदन् प्रहृत्यान्तरधीयतासुरः ॥१५॥

vṛkṇe sva-śūle bahudhāriṇā hareḥ
pratyetya vistīrṇam uro vibhūtimat
pravṛddha-roṣaḥ sa kaṭhora-muṣṭinā
nadan prahṛtyāntaradhīyatāsuraḥ

vṛkṇe—when cut; *sva-śūle*—his trident; *bahudhā*—to many pieces; *ariṇā*—by the Sudarśana *cakra; hareḥ*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pratyetya*—after advancing toward; *vistīrṇam*—broad; *uraḥ*—chest; *vibhūti-mat*—the abode of the goddess of fortune; *pravṛddha*—having been increased; *roṣaḥ*—anger; *saḥ*—Hiraṇyākṣa; *kaṭhora*—hard; *muṣṭinā*—with his fist; *nadan*—roaring; *prahṛtya*—after striking; *antaradhīyata*—disappeared; *asuraḥ*—the demon.

TRANSLATION

The demon was enraged when his trident was cut to pieces by the discus of the Personality of Godhead. He therefore advanced toward the Lord and, roaring aloud, struck his hard fist against the Lord's broad chest, which bore the mark of Śrīvatsa. Then he went out of sight.

PURPORT

Śrīvatsa is a curl of white hair on the chest of the Lord which is a special sign of His being the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In Vaikuṇṭhaloka or in Goloka Vṛndāvana, the inhabitants are exactly of the same form as the Personality of Godhead, but by this Śrīvatsa mark on the chest of the Lord He is distinguished from all others.

TEXT 16

तेनेत्थमाहतः क्षत्तर्भगवानादिसूकरः ।
नाकम्पत मनाक् क्वापि स्रजा हत इव द्विपः॥१६॥

tenettham āhataḥ kṣattar
bhagavān ādi-sūkaraḥ
nākampata manāk kvāpi
srajā hata iva dvipaḥ

tena—by Hiraṇyākṣa; *ittham*—thus; *āhataḥ*—struck; *kṣattaḥ*—O Vidura; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ādi-sūkaraḥ*—the first boar; *na akampata*—did not feel quaking; *manāk*—even slightly; *kva api*—anywhere; *srajā*—by a garland of flowers; *hataḥ*—struck; *iva*—as; *dvipaḥ*—an elephant.

TRANSLATION

Hit in this manner by the demon, O Vidura, the Lord, who had appeared as the first boar, did not feel the least quaking in any part of His body, any more than an elephant would when struck with a wreath of flowers.

PURPORT

As previously explained, the demon was originally a servitor of the Lord in Vaikuṇṭha, but somehow or other he fell as a demon. His fight with the Supreme Lord was meant for his liberation. The Lord enjoyed the striking on His transcendental body, just like a fully grown-up father fighting with his child. Sometimes a father takes pleasure in having a mock fight with his small child, and similarly the Lord felt Hiraṇyākṣa's striking on His body to be like flowers offered for worship. In other words, the Lord desired to fight in order to enjoy His transcendental bliss; therefore He enjoyed the attack.

TEXT 17

अथोरुधासृजन्मायां योगमायेश्वरे हरौ ।
यां विलोक्य प्रजास्त्रस्ता मेनिरेऽस्योपसंयमम् ॥१७॥

athorudhāsṛjan māyāṁ
yoga-māyeśvare harau
yāṁ vilokya prajās trastā
menire 'syopasaṁyamam

atha—then; *urudhā*—in many ways; *asṛjat*—he cast; *māyām*—conjuring tricks; *yoga-māyā-īśvare*—the Lord of *yogamāyā; harau*—at Hari; *yām*—which; *vilokya*—after seeing; *prajāḥ*—the people; *trastāḥ*—fearful; *menire*—thought; *asya*—of this universe; *upasaṁyamam*—the dissolution.

TRANSLATION

The demon, however, employed many conjuring tricks against the Personality of Godhead, who is the Lord of yogamāyā. At the sight of this the people were filled with alarm and thought that the dissolution of the universe was near.

PURPORT

The fighting enjoyment of the Supreme Lord with His devotee, who had been converted into a demon, appeared severe enough to bring about the dissolution of the universe. This is the greatness of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; even the wavering of His little finger appears to be a great and very dangerous movement in the eyes of the inhabitants of the universe.

TEXT 18

प्रववुर्वायवश्चण्डास्तमः पांसवमैरयन् ।
दिग्भ्यो निपेतुर्ग्रावाणः क्षेपणैः प्रहिता इव ॥१८॥

pravavur vāyavaś caṇḍās
tamaḥ pāṁsavam airayan
digbhyo nipetur grāvāṇaḥ
kṣepaṇaiḥ prahitā iva

pravavuḥ—were blowing; *vāyavaḥ*—winds; *caṇḍāḥ*—fierce; *tamaḥ*—darkness; *pāṁsavam*—caused by dust; *airayan*—were spreading; *digbhyaḥ*—from every direction; *nipetuḥ*—came down; *grāvāṇaḥ*—stones; *kṣepaṇaiḥ*—by machine guns; *prahitāḥ*—thrown; *iva*—as if.

TRANSLATION

Fierce winds began to blow from all directions, spreading darkness occasioned by dust and hail storms; stones came in volleys from every corner, as if thrown by machine guns.

TEXT 19

द्यौर्नष्टभगणाभ्रौघैः सविद्युत्स्तनयित्नुभिः ।
वर्षद्भिः पूयकेशासृग्विण्मूत्रास्थीनि चासकृत्॥१९॥

dyaur naṣṭa-bhagaṇābhraughaiḥ
sa-vidyut-stanayitnubhiḥ
varṣadbhiḥ pūya-keśāsṛg-
viṇ-mūtrāsthīni cāsakṛt

dyauḥ—the sky; *naṣṭa*—having disappeared; *bha-gaṇa*—luminaries; *abhra*—of clouds; *oghaiḥ*—by masses; *sa*—accompanied by; *vidyut*—lightning; *stanayitnubhiḥ*—and thunder; *varṣadbhiḥ*—raining; *pūya*—pus; *keśa*—hair; *asṛk*—blood; *viṭ*—stool; *mūtra*—urine; *asthīni*—bones; *ca*—and; *asakṛt*—again and again.

TRANSLATION

The luminaries in outer space disappeared due to the sky's being overcast with masses of clouds, which were accompanied by lightning and thunder. The sky rained pus, hair, blood, stool, urine and bones.

(*continued in next issue*)

THE ACRE/COW THEORY

by Mathureśa dāsa

The New York stock market crash last fall, which set off similar dives in foreign markets, prompted financial experts to offer reassuring perspectives on the grim fact that investors had lost billions of dollars (and yen and marks and pounds). The plunge was only a "market adjustment," most of them seemed to say, and in the long run "key indicators" pointed to a strong economy and a stable market.

The flurry of advice and reassurances from the experts only succeeded in reassuring me how inherently unstable is any economy based on speculative investments. If the dollar, yen, mark, and pound are themselves prone to fluctuate, then what to speak of the markets they fuel?

But the Vedic formula for economic stability is so simple and down-to-earth that it too may be practically impossible for most of us to believe in.

The Vedic formula? The bottom line for what you need to live a happy and prosperous life? Here it is: an acre of land and a cow.

Can you imagine a financial wizard recommending in a news interview that the solution to our economic woes is for each of us to acquire an acre of land and a cow?

Interviewer: Beg your pardon?

Expert: Yes, on your acre you can graze your cow and grow your own grains and vegetables. And from cow's milk you make butter, yogurt, curd . . . what more could you want?

Interviewer: What more? Are you serious? We're talking about mortgage payments, car payments, food bills, clothing bills, medical bills, the GNP . . .

Expert: Don't take a mortgage. You can afford to *buy* an acre of land. You won't have food bills, and since you won't be driving to the supermarket, you don't need a car. Most of the world lives without cars.

Interviewer: Most of the world lives in poverty, without proper food and clothing.

Expert: But food comes from the earth; clothing—cotton and silk—comes from the earth. If people are in poverty, it's not because they don't have cars and supermarkets; it's because the earth is poorly managed. If things are properly managed, and people have food, clothing, and shelter, then what is the value of your so-called wealth of cars and processed food?

Interviewer: [*To production manager*] Who arranged this interview? Get rid of this guy.

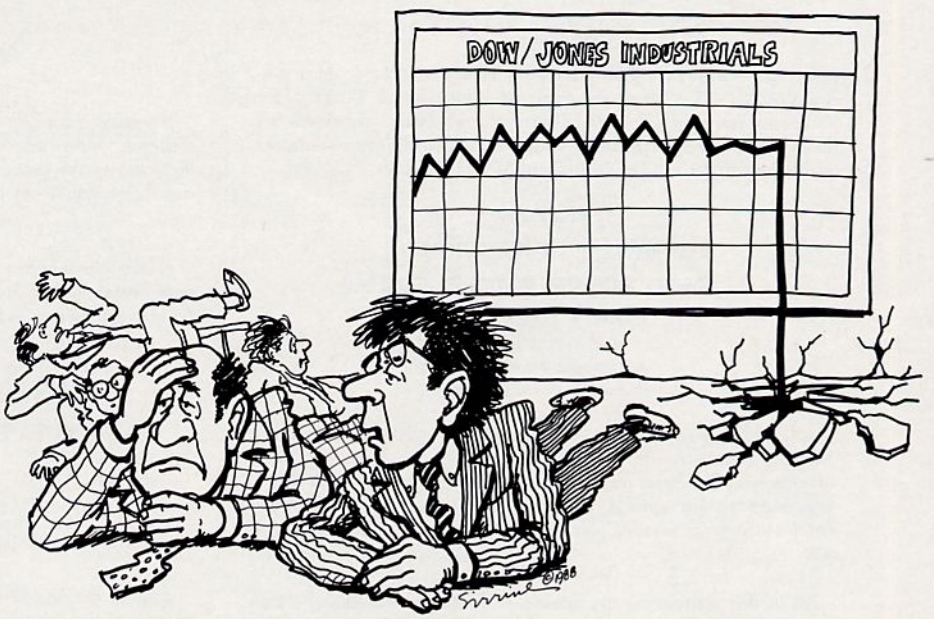
Although I am among the few who accept, theoretically at least, the practicality of the one-cow/one-acre formula for economic stability, I'm no more willing than anyone else to practice what I theorize. As long as there are cars to be had, I want one; I *need* one. As long as there are central heating, indoor plumbing, health insurance, carbonated drinks, and the six o'clock news, I need, I need, I need.

If in the spring you gave me an acre of land and a cow—even if you threw in an assortment of seeds, a roto-tiller, and a few hundred bucks to get me started—I'd most likely perish before the end of summer. And I'd surely freeze to death the first winter. Where do I get winter clothing and fuel from an acre of land?

That's what really stops me dead in my theoretical tracks. The cold. Much of Europe, America, and other parts of the industrialized world is covered with snow part of each year. Sure, only a hundred years ago, even in the snow, most people were living a lot closer to the one-cow/one-acre formula and managing O.K. But if I had to do it today, send me somewhere tropical.

To the Philippines, say. I hear that President Aquino is pushing land reform there. She has proposed to break up larger landholdings, including her family's fifteen-thousand-acre sugar plantation, and distribute the land—thirteen million acres in all—to the nation's ten million farm workers and tenant farmers.

The Filipinos are mostly farmers already, so there's no need to convince them of the importance of their own acre. I only hope they don't try to set up ten million mini-sugar plantations. No. Vedic authorities advise that you grow your necessities first, and only then, if you have the time and the room, think about cash crops. Personally, I'd plant rice, wheat, a vegetable garden, and a couple of mango trees. And I'd chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. What a life.



"I don't know if I can handle another 'market adjustment' like that."

COBSERVER

entary on the Issues of the Day

Mrs. Aquino, I seriously hope land reform goes well for you. It's time that some of the world's "underdeveloped" nations took a leading economic role by demonstrating the advantages of underdevelopment, of prospering on a one-acre plantation. Please don't let your citizens think that progress is measured in terms of television and indoor plumbing. And please reserve an acre for me. I'll be arriving with my roto-tiller shortly after the next market adjustment.

IN PURSUIT OF AMERICAN HAPPINESS

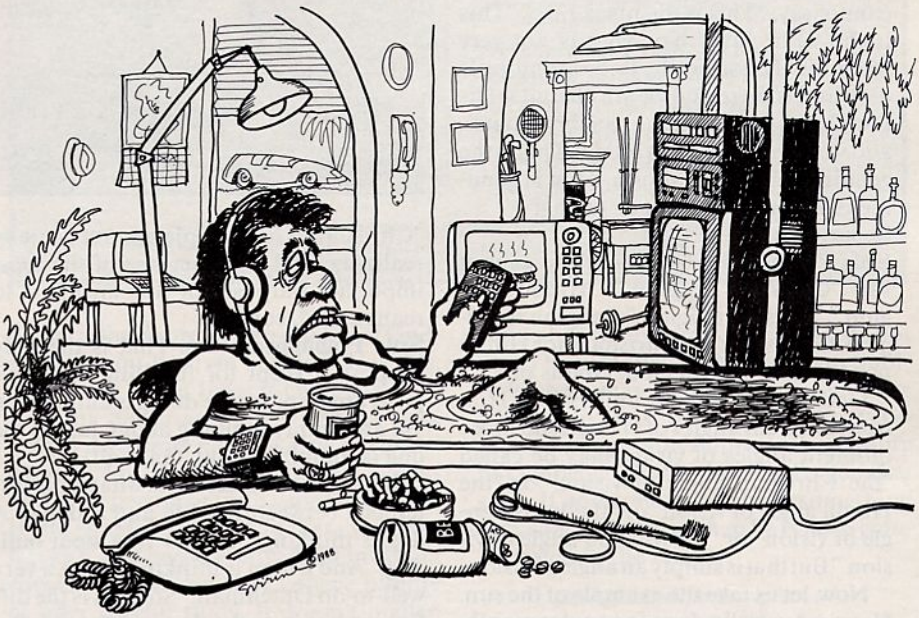
by Sthita-dhī-muni dāsa

Americans like to think that their nation offers the finest opportunities in the pursuit of happiness. Therefore, Americans—and those who long for what America has to offer—may be disappointed to learn that the American way of life falls short in providing a basic necessity for satisfaction: respect and encouragement toward spiritual values that can completely gratify the innermost aspirations of the human being. Instead, the American way of life pilots the individual toward an empty concept of happiness.

Madison Avenue advertising influences all Americans to some extent by trying to convince them that they can achieve satisfaction only with charge accounts and shopping complexes. Advertisers know that these things are necessary to stimulate the sort of rabid consumerism needed to maintain America's overburdened economy. Therefore, when one respected consumer analyst reported that Americans are happy at home, content to enjoy their new sound systems, video players, and microwaved junk food, no doubt Madison Avenue's pundits sensed trouble. For them, what profit can come from a nation of satisfied citizens, disinclined to stay in tune with the consumer market's latest innovations?

Pulitzer Prize–winner George F. Will reflected upon this dilemma in his syndicated column. As he put it, "A paradox of American life is that happiness and discontentment are inseparable. That is, the pursuit of happiness depends on economic dynamism, and that dynamism is driven by discontentment."

This observation naturally makes one wonder: How can a way of life based on a philosophy that plans for discontentment ever provide tangible happiness?



Fortunately, smart Americans need not buy this package of happiness dependent on mental misery. They can take advantage of the constitutionally guaranteed right to pursue happiness through spiritual life. Their religious freedom allows them to peacefully worship and serve the Supreme Lord.

But while the Constitution safeguards spiritual life, the American way of life discourages it. The result is that Americans aren't really happy, nor is their nation as great as it could be.

Formerly, great civilizations flourished by promoting theistic values. The Vedic civilization of India is an example. It organized society in such a way that the citizens could take care of life's ordinary requirements with minimum anxiety. At the same time it encouraged people to concentrate on spiritual principles that might be considered esoteric in modern life.

Vedic literature such as the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* enables us to immediately appreciate the simple yet sublime philosophy underlying this intriguing civilization. The *Bhāgavatam* stresses that human life is a unique opportunity for the soul to reawaken its natural love for the Supreme Lord. As individuals, we each possess a unique relationship with the Lord based on pure loving exchanges. The name *Kṛṣṇa* means "all-attractive," and when the mature transcendentalist perceives God's all-attractiveness, the banal pleasures of mundane life pale in comparison.

The Vedic literature offers practical guidelines for the sincere soul determined to take advantage of human life for spiritual advancement. These guidelines should not be taken as ordinary ethics prudishly designed to cage us in, but as benevolent regulations meant to wean us away from materialistic addictions that exclude us from attaining spiritual life's superior pleasures.

One sublime Vedic regulation meant for evoking God consciousness is the

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Seeing God

This is a continuation of a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and reporters in Melbourne, Australia, on June 29, 1974.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So religion means to abide by the laws of God. That's all. It cannot be "Hindu," "Muslim," "Christian." Take the state law: in the state there are many persons, many citizens of the state—but the law does not stipulate that "This is for the Christians," "This is for the Jews," "This is for the black men," "This is for the white men." The law is not like that.

The law is the same for everyone. You cannot say, "This is the black law," "This is the white law." No. That is not very scientific. The scientific understanding is that God is there and we are all under His law. God is great, we are His subordinates, and we have to obey His orders. That is the genuine spiritual platform. That is genuine religion. Am I right or wrong?

Reporter 3: You're right.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Therefore you cannot say "Christian religion," "Hindu religion," "Muslim religion." Religion is religion. God is neither Christian nor Hindu nor Muslim. God is God. God is one.

God is one. But we understand Him from different angles of vision. And those different angles of vision may be called "the Christian angle of vision" or "the Hindu angle of vision" or "the Jewish angle of vision" or "the Muslim angle of vision." But that is simply an angle of vision.

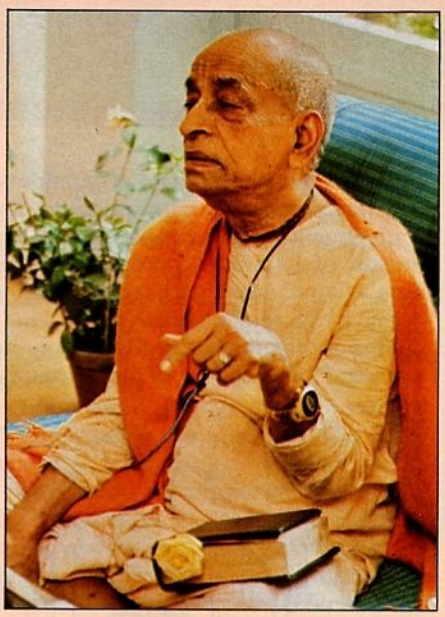
Now, let us take the example of the sun. Here in Australia, June is a cooler month, and we may see the sun as not so warm. But you ask some African friend whether the sun is warm. "Oh, it is very warm."

So his appreciation of the sun from his angle of vision is different from your appreciation here.

But factually, the sun is one and the same. There is no such thing as the "Australian sun" or the "African sun." So factually, there is no such thing as "Hindu religion," "Muslim religion," "Christian religion." You see? These conceptions are all due to our sophisticated mind.

Just as God is one, religion is one: you must know what God is, and you must know what His order is—and you must abide by it. Then you are religious. That's all. We are preaching like that.

Reporter 6: So it seems you are saying, then, that by holding to their conception of a "Muslim" or "Jewish" or "Hindu" or



"Christian" God, people are not actually realizing God. And yet one of the most important purposes of human life is to realize God, correct?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. That is the only purpose. Except for fulfilling that purpose, anything we are doing is animalism. We are simply jumping about, just as the dog is jumping about, that's all.

If we do not realize God, what is the difference between our life and a dog's? A dog is thinking, "I am a very stout bulldog." And a man is thinking, "I am a very well-to-do Dutchman." So what is the difference between the dog and the man?

Their mentality is the same. The dog is thinking, "I am this body," and the man is equally thinking, "I am this body." But when one understands, "I am not this body—I am a spirit, and I emanate from the supreme spirit," that is humanity.

Reporter 6: So, Your Divine Grace, have you realized God?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What do you think? What is your opinion?

Reporter 6: I can't say.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then if I say "Yes," what will you understand? If you are not yourself expert, then even if I say "Yes, I am God realized," how will you take it as truth? If you do not know what God realization is, then how can you ask this question, and how will you be satisfied with the answer?

Reporter 6: Well, what is God realization?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: First make sure you understand this idea.

Now, for instance, if one medical man asks another man, "Are you a medical man?" and the other man says "Yes," then the first man will understand by their exchange of technical terms whether the second man is truly a medical man. But unless one is himself a medical man, what is the use of asking another man, "Are you really a medical man?"

So for you it is useless to ask about my having realized God, unless you are prepared to accept my answer. Are you?

Reporter 6: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then it is all right. I am God realized. I am seeing God at every moment.

Reporter 5: Your Divine Grace, do you see meditation as a means to God realization?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, meditation is also a means, but you cannot meditate now, because you do not know what God is. *Meditation* means meditation upon something or someone. But if you do not know what God is, upon what or whom will you meditate?

First of all, you must know about God. For instance, we know about God, Kṛṣṇa, and in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktaḥ:* "Always think of Me." So we meditate upon Kṛṣṇa. This is perfect meditation—because meditation means to think of God. But if you do not know what God is, how will you think of Him?

Reporter 3: Your Divine Grace, it is written in many scriptures that God is light.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: God is everything. God is darkness, also. Therefore the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* clearly defines God as "that being from whom emanates everything that exists." Light exists, yet darkness also exists. So just as light emanates from God, darkness also emanates from God.

Reporter 5: Is meditation a way to see God inside yourself?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. That is the proper definition of meditation. *Dhyānāvasthita-tad-gatena manasā paśyanti yaṁ yoginaḥ:* by concentrating their mind upon God, the *yogīs* try to see Him within their heart.

But to concentrate your mind on God and ultimately see Him, you must first know what God is. In our institution, for instance, our students first learn what God is—God's attributes. In that way they can think of God. But if you have no idea of God, how will you think of Him?

(To be continued.)

chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra:* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. When offered as a faithful prayer to the Lord, it has unparalleled purifying effects that minimize one's addictions to undesirable habits. Ultimately, regular sincere chanting quickly returns the soul to his original position of relishing his pure relationship with the all-attractive Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

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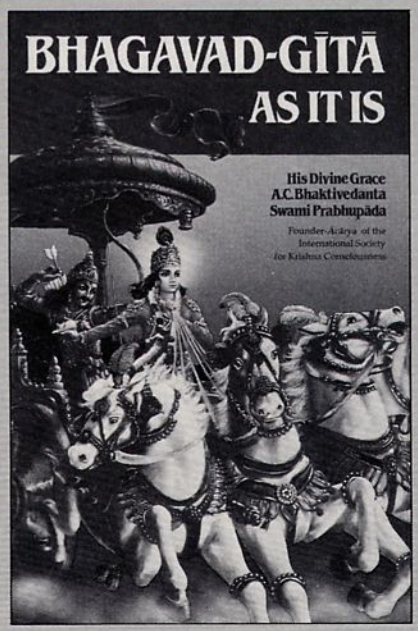

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The Difference

(*continued from page 4*)

Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Lord Caitanya is described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* Eleventh Canto, as *kṛṣṇa-varṇaṁ tviṣākṛṣṇam. Kṛṣṇa-varṇam* means either "one who belongs to the same category as Kṛṣṇa" or "one who is always describing Kṛṣṇa," and *tviṣākṛṣṇam* means "with a nonblackish complexion." Lord Caitanya's only business is to describe Kṛṣṇa, and His complexion is not blackish. Kṛṣṇa has many colors. One of His colors is *pīta,* golden. So Lord Caitanya is known as the golden *avatāra.* Then, *sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam:* "Lord Caitanya is always accompanied by His close associates." These associates are described here in this first verse of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*—the *gurus,* the Lord's devotees, His incarnations, expansions, and energies.

So, study this *Caitanya-caritāmṛta.* Now, following in the footsteps of our Guru Mahārāja, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, we have published this very elaborately explained English edition. There is no other edition of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* like this, so elaborately explained. It can be understood by the advanced student.

Anyone can become advanced. "Advanced" means that at least you should understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If you simply understand this—that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead—then you are advanced. It is not very difficult. All Vedic literatures are meant for understanding Kṛṣṇa. What is that understanding? That Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If you become convinced of this, your study of the *Vedas* is complete.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.7] Kṛṣṇa says, *mattaḥ parataraṁ nānyat kiñcid asti dhanañjaya:* "My dear Arjuna, there is no authority or person or truth superior to Me." If you simply have faith in these words of Kṛṣṇa's, you become advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You may believe blindly or after careful study. It doesn't matter. Whether you touch fire blindly or purposely, it will act. Similarly, even if you blindly accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Person, you become advanced. Take it from me: if you simply have this conviction—"Yes, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead"—you are an advanced student in spiritual life.

So, all the persons associated with Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya—Śrī Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Gadādhara, and Śrīvāsa—all of them are one in the sense that they are all interested in pushing Kṛṣṇa consciousness on. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is personally trying, and Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Prabhu, Śrīvāsa, and Gadādhara are helping Him.

To approach these five supreme persons, you require the help of a *guru.* Therefore the *guru* is offered respectful prayers first: *vande gurūn.* Plural number—*gurūn.* Still, the *gurus* are one. For example, Kṛṣṇa has many forms, but that does not mean He is many. No, Kṛṣṇa is one. Similarly, there may be many *gurus,* but their philosophy must be one: to teach everyone that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the test of a genuine *guru.* If someone is teaching something else, some nonsense, then he is not a *guru.* As stated in the *śāstra,*

ṣaṭ-karma-nipuṇo vipro
mantra-tantra-viśāradaḥ
avaiṣṇavo gurur na sa syād
vaiṣṇavaḥ śva-paco guruḥ

A *brāhmaṇa* is usually very expert in chanting Vedic *mantras,* understanding the *tantras,* etc. That is the test of the *brāhmaṇa*—that he is very learned. But if he does not know what Kṛṣṇa is, or if he's not a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, he cannot become a *guru.* On the other hand, one who is coming from the family of dog-eaters, the lowest of human beings, can become a *guru* if he's a Vaiṣṇava, a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.

So, the *guru* is very important because he has accepted Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he has seen the truth, and he is teaching pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the test of a genuine *guru.* The bona fide *guru* does not claim to be Kṛṣṇa Himself, but rather he canvasses door to door: "Please become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa." This is the sign of a genuine *guru.*

Thank you very much.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Responsibilities of a Secular Government

The separation of church and state is a feature of secular governments intended to protect the rights of religious pluralities as well as the civil rights of individuals. The interests of church and state tend to merge and clash, however, as evidenced by an outbreak of court cases instigated by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) last Christmas.

The ACLU sued several city governments for allowing religious displays on public property during the holidays. ACLU's Michigan director, Howard Simon, stated, "Government endorsement of the symbols of Judaism as well as Christianity does not honor their obligation regarding separation of church and state." The two interests appear to be at odds. Even Jesus Christ indicated the conflict of interests when he stated, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

But the Vedic scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes the interaction of church and state in a way that may shed light on present-day disagreements. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda writes in his *Bhāgavatam* commentary, "A secular state may be impartial to any particular type of faith, but the state cannot be indifferent to the principles of religion." According to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* executive heads of state should advocate religious principles in a way that will not compromise anyone's liberties. In fact, when the government fails to support religious principles, it indirectly introduces greed, falsehood, and cheating. It is hypocritical for a government to make propaganda to stop corruption in the state while doing nothing to promote religious principles.

Principles of religion are not the dogmas of a certain faith. They are not the property of the Christians or Hindus, Buddhists or Mohammedans. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "The principles of religion, namely *austerity, cleanliness, mercy* and *truthfulness,* may be followed by the follower of any faith."

Austerity

The word *austere* will always seem unpalatable to the hedonists, and yet no healthy civilization is without simplicity and rigor among its people. In recent decades we have seen this manifest through trends such as renewed attention to health and diet, environmental protection, the economics of "small is beautiful," and similar sensible movements. In Sanskrit austerity is termed *tapasya,* which means "to accept things that may not be comfortable for the body but that are conducive to spiritual realization." If we understand the religious principle of austerity rightly, we will see that it is an auspicious energy that leaders can use for people's betterment. And since austerity among the people benefits both the church and the state, they can combine to promote it, rather than argue in nitpicking ways about the overlapping of church and state interests.

Cleanliness

In a free government, people have the right *not* to be clean if they so wish, but there are limits, especially when their uncleanliness affects the well-being of others. Should a government be completely indifferent to whether the health of its citizens is being endangered by sewage or air pollution? Of course not. Vedic knowledge further suggests that cleanliness refers to internal as well as external purity. There is a definable standard of cleanliness in mind and habit, which can be agreed upon by all reasonable persons. And that standard may also be upheld by law. But in the absence of guidance in making standards, the government inadvertently—or deliberately—promotes uncleanliness by endorsing acts that are physically, morally, and spiritually corrupt.

Mercifulness

Human mercy should be promoted, beginning with an education in what is mercy. Certainly great spiritual teachers such as Lord Kṛṣṇa, Jesus Christ, and Lord Buddha taught and practiced mercy to all living beings. Their teachings were on a sublime level, but the same principles have to be understood and applied by ordinary people in ordinary dealings. Mercy should be shared by all who profess interest in liberty and the well-being of society. The practical implementation of mercy may be debated according to different viewpoints, and the government will have to decide how mercy can prevail. But government cannot turn its face away from the responsibility to be merciful, and neither should government leaders think they have nothing to learn from the world's religions regarding mercy.

Truthfulness

According to Vedic knowledge, the present age is symptomized by an almost complete loss of religious principles. The last quality to remain is truthfulness. If we can at least admit that things are wrong or out of control, this indicates that we want to know the truth. Honesty is also expressed in the desire to expose frauds wherever they may appear, even in religious and government leaders.

In enforcing honesty, a government may also test the religionists, by insisting that they follow the tenets of their own religion without hypocrisy. As Śrīla Prabhupāda has said, "The government should have expert men to see that the Hindus are acting like Hindus, Muslims are acting like Muslims, and Christians are acting like Christians. The government should not be callous about religion. It may be neutral, in that whatever religion you profess, the government has nothing to do with that. But it is the government's duty to see that you are doing nicely and are not bluffing." According to Vedic knowledge, persistent honesty will ultimately lead us to acknowledge the supremacy of the supreme being and to serve Him.

Modern societies that promote uncleanliness and dishonesty cannot check the evils—such as crime and disease—that result from these practices simply by statutory acts or police vigilance. These evils can only be checked by measures advocated in the principles of nonsectarian religion.

If government leaders would sincerely conduct research into the dynamics of spirituality aside from the dogmas and differences of various religions, they could find many secrets for peaceful, prosperous civilization. The practices of austerity, mercifulness, cleanliness, and truthfulness contain powers that can correct the worst flaws of human society. But when we become entangled in petty quarrels, such as the recent legal cases over separation of religion and government, we forget the purifying essence of religion, as well as the responsible role of government.

We therefore suggest that these four criteria may be used as a basic standard of proper behavior, and that religious and public leaders be tested accordingly before they can be accepted as masters of society. **—SDG**

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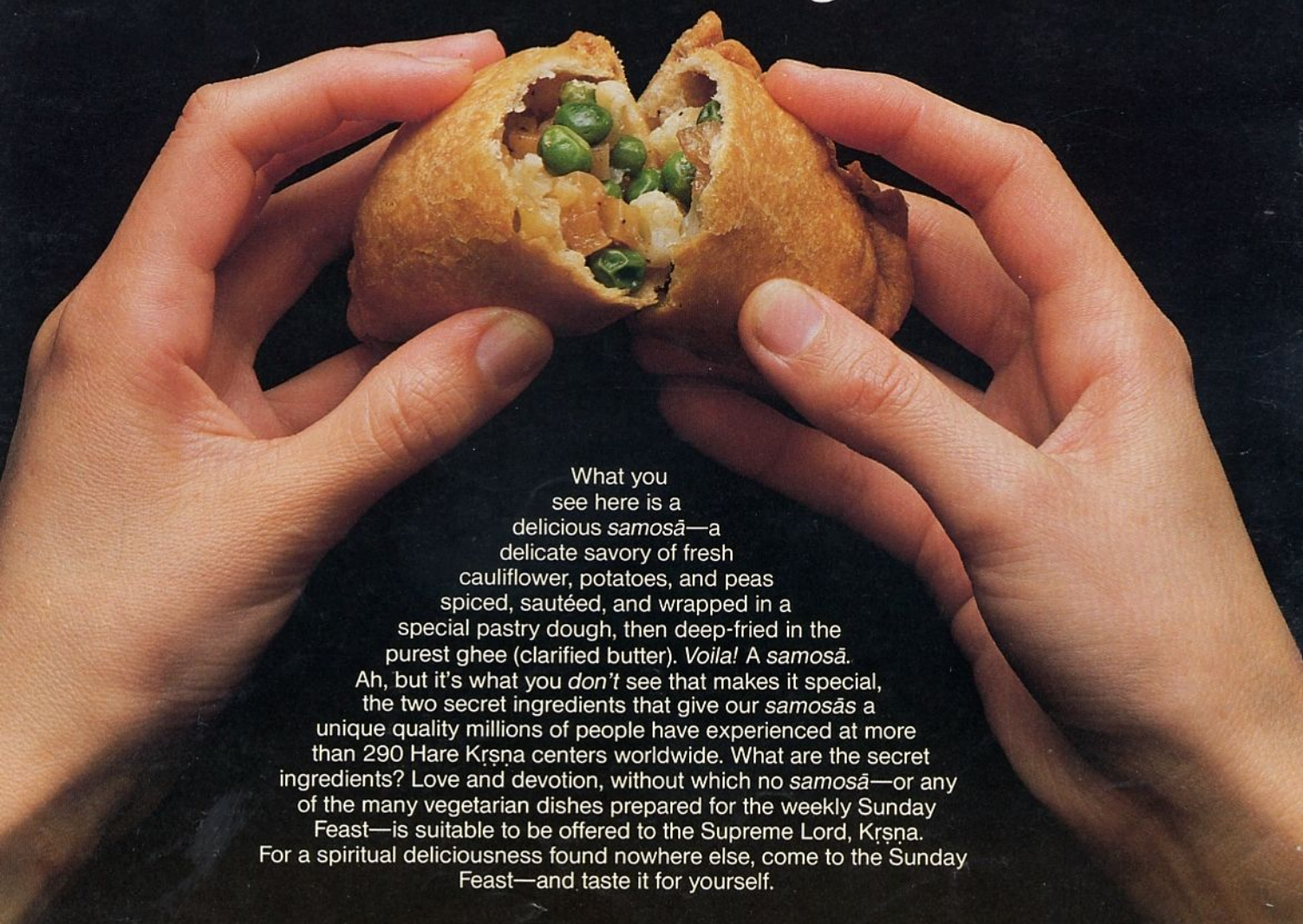

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