

Ecstasy, Equipoise and Eternity

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A Vade Mecum and Guide to Shri Mahendranath's Fantastic Kosmic Kingdom of the Alakshya Nathas of Shambhala International

A Dreamtime Dossier for those who want to do their own thing but do it themselves The Palace of both Liberation and Enjoyment

Subtitle: Nathamandalasahajamarga – which means the Path of Ecstasy of the Nath Circle - which in Europe and the Americas is called "The Arcane and Magickal Order Of the Knights of Shambhala" (The word Knights being a collective for the Lords and Ladies).

Exordium: Between the years 1532 and 1534 A.D., Francois Rabelais, the French novelist and humorist, produced the satirical masterpiece of Gargantua and Pantagruel. The books themselves are fantastic but the real miracle of the author's life was that he was never burnt at the stake. In his very humorous way; and probably with a smile, he did more to rock the power of the church than any other man of his period. He introduced to his public an imaginary Abbey of Thelema, a monastic institution which had inscribed over the entrance doorway the conclusive injunction "Do what thou wilt shall be the only law." This rule, it appears, was piously obeyed by the resident monks and nuns.

Many years later, Sir Francis Dashwood revived the Abbey and its delightful law in the grounds of his country residence not far from London. John Wilkes, a fiery radical parliamentarian, was one of the chief and most active members. This Abbey is now a local tourist attraction.

In more recent history Saint Aleister Crowley, who did so much to revive and reform the Western Occult tradition, in reverence to the Rabelaisian masterpiece, also revived the Thelemic Law and even, for a short period, established an Abbey on an Italian island.

"Do what thou wilt shall be the only law." has always been an injunction which strikes fear and terror in the hearts of the moralists, ministers and mini-minds. Yet millions have practised it and passed by unnoticed. It may be new to those who read this MS but the identical rule of law has been held in the highest respect in India and neighbouring lands for thousands of years. It has been the amoral philosophy of the Nathas, Tantriks and Siddha saints and sadhus. It made possible the Parivrajaka or homeless wanderer saints and eventually to the highest grade of Indian spiritual attainment known as the Avadhoota or emancipated one. Thus Rabelais, Dashwood and Crowley must share the honour of perpetuating what has been such a high ideal in most of Asia.

Now that the Natha tradition has been reborn in Europe and the Americas we must know a little more about the amoral patterns of the Nathas.

The Nathas as a sect and organized body of people came into being as an answer to two separate events. One was the invasion of India by the Muslims and the destruction of holy places and second, which actually occurred much earlier, was the spread of Shankaracharya doctrine of Mayavada, that all and everything was an illusion and only God was Real.

About 1000 A.D. a great teacher came to the fore. He was the son of Minanath, a fisherman and was known as Matsyendranatha. This great saint of humble origin is considered to be the founder of the Nath Order of Sadhus. Actually he gave it substance for Nathas had been known much earlier. He combined the three viewpoints of Siddha, Tantrik and Natha philosophy in a great sweeping revival of the ancient teachings, that although God was one there were also many manifestations of God and these included the world and human beings also.

Though God is One we also live in the dual form of many. Though much of life can be an illusion there are many occasions when pain, suffering and hunger bring us down to reality because they are real also.

But the greatest concept of the Nathas was to free mind and body from Karmas, Kleshas and Konditioning and break forever the chain of rebirth into the world. Thus to end Samsara and free the Spirit of Real Self to its natural condition of peace, freedom and happiness. Matsyendranatha was followed by a brilliant disciple who developed the

Natha Order and outshone his Guru. He was Gorakhnath, a weaver who came from a caste of cowboys.

We must be technical, but only for a moment, to examine the Sanskrit terms which are related to the Nathas so that we can translate them into creative thought. A knowledge of the Sanskrit language (now a dead language anyway) is not necessary either for the Concord of Cosmic People nor for the Sanctum of Nathas, known as the AMOOKOS. These are given, not so we can learn Sanskrit words but so that we can understand the meaning and deeper concepts to translate into our own mother tongue and into our own valid patterns of life.

First let us see the Thelemic Law in terms of Hinduism and Sanskrit:

Sveccha means one's own wish or free will.

Svecchachara means a way of life where one acts as one wishes and doing what is right in one's own eyes. Doing one's own Will.

The concluding Sanskrit expression in the Avadhoota Upanishad is Svecchaparo. The term Paro means a mysterious or secret pattern to the action done by one's own Will but with discretion, not making it too obvious or to harm or hurt other people. Yet this is also a typical Nathism as a complete reversal of Vedic Morals and Philosophy

This combined attitude towards people and one's own Will is clearly expressed by Shri Datta in the Avadhoota Upanishad, where he is made to say:

"What I actually wanted to do is exactly what I did.

What I wished for, I received, and this always happens.

No matter what I do, whether it is that ordained by Scripture or by customs, or that which is natural and not restrained, are my own inhibitions or feelings.

Yet, although I do not wish for it, I may follow
Spiritual patterns prescribed by scripture, but I
Do this for the benefit of humanity (not wishing to
Confuse them). What can this possibly matter to me?

Thus, the concluding lines of the Upanishads ends with the expression Svecchaparō. Since the Avadhoot who has evolved to the highest level never forgets that all people are not the same as himself he uses some discretion for their sake and also because those acts fit for him may also involve him in worldly conflict.

There are still many Natha orders and numerous sub sects in India today. Some of them are still numerically strong, but others, for a variety of reasons, have become tiny exclusive In-groups. Some have degenerated to the level of holy beggars who know and understand nothing but collecting. Most of the higher strata Nathas belonged to the North but in the South West they have evolved into purely devotional cults, worshipping Shri Datta as a benevolent god and not as a far-out exceptional teacher. The original revolt against Vedic Brahminism with its bogus morality are forgotten. Also the basic battle for spiritual life as opposed to civilization, urbanization and religious superstitions has also vanished.

Samsara: What are we getting away from? The ceaseless round of births and death, transmigration but also meaning "worldly life" and the mundane process from birth to death, household or secular life as opposed to spiritual renunciation of the world. Sometimes used to mean "The Ocean of life" or the

"Wheel of Rebirths." Samsara is the bondage which binds us to worldly involvement and the worldly involvements perpetuate it. Spiritual life aims at breaking the chain and ending the rebirth process but religions, such as Hindu sects, only promise an escape to heaven. But this is recognized as temporary and when that span of existence has finished Samsara starts again.

Natha: Means Lord, Protector, a Refuge. It becomes Lady by giving the feminine ending Natha but female Natha Sadhvinis have always been rare in India. Usually they occur as Yogini or Devi. In India also Nathas do not marry live in household life or breed children. They do not practice sex abnegation and usually have a female partner. A Western Nath Order would not find it practical to follow the same patterns, as the free wandering life of a saint is not possible and Western Nathas will be householders, married, and even have regular employment for wages. This in no way affects the life of Nathas in India.

Environment, climate and social patterns must be taken into consideration in any transfer of Eastern cults into the West. It is the free spiritual and amoral patterns which most matter and not the external forms. Nor would it be possible for Western Nathas to wander about naked or wearing only a G-string or Longoti. The word Natha is very very ancient and used in former times for any saint or sadhu but after the amalgamation of Siddhas (Magicians - accomplished - attained) and the Tantriks into one order the word came only to be confined to them. The Nathas, East and West, will however do as they will to retain their Order and unity. Natha is related to Nithan (Gothic) and Ginatha (Anglo Saxon).

Three words in Sanskrit express the essence of the Natha Way of Life.

Sama: The same, equal, corresponding, balance, equipoise.

Samarasa: Equipoise in feelings, nondiscrimination, the mind at rest.

Sahaja: Natural joy, Amoral, Elevating all worldly things to a divine status. To dissolve natural senses into divine expression.

These three words express the attainment of the Avadhoota or an emancipated one. The full expression of "Do what you will." Thus one who becomes a Natha or Nath does not remain content to wear it round their neck like a label or think of it as just something they belong to but try to strive for the higher attainments (Siddhas), practice the rites, ritual and yoga, and teach others the way out of Samsara. We are creating something new for our people and building a new fantastic Kingdom of Shambhala. These will not be done without sincerity, and right forms of activity. Samsara need not be all misery and suffering if we seek and understand the use of the natural joys which it offers us and use them to purify the mind and awaken to immortality.

While it is true the Indian Siddhas, Nathas and Tantrik Yogis renounced the world for the higher attainments and immortality, while they remained in the world they felt it a duty to try and help others onto the same path. But this is not for everyone and it was important so that people obtained some Punya, merit in this life and the future so as to escape from Samsara in only one or two lives. To do this the Nathas encouraged better social organization based on good will and mutual aid and gave new life to the ancient cohesion of the Hindu people by encouraging the rituals, worship and guru grace and also instruction. The rituals must not be neglected and if they had deep meaning to the individual, so much the better.

It is said that the Nath Order in its recent and present Indian form was founded Shri Matsyendranatha. He was the son of Minanath a

fisherman. Matsyendranatha's disciple was Gorakhnath. [Another figure was Jalandharanath... MM.] The name means a water bearer or carrier but he was employed as a sweeper. [There is a line missing from the original manuscript here which I have not been able to reconstruct to date, MM.] These very names of spiritual leaders were a blow to the Vedic Brahmin caste system.

The Nathas spread rapidly and enjoyed vast public support. The tradition of the Natha with magick powers still persists even in the chaos of today. They never at any time gave the impression of puritanical piety. They wore varied dress, carried trishules (tridents), fire tongs and huge earrings. They wore the hair long and marked the body, especially the forehead, with ashes. Some were naked; none cared if they were dressed or not. Some wore an orange cloth, some red and (as in the case of my own sub sect) black. I did not like black and only wore it on odd occasions. New Naths and Yogis followed fixed rules and customs.

There is every reason to believe that the early Nathas were associated with the worship of the Mother Goddess, but a bipolar worship in which Shiva played a large part. The physical appearance of most Nathas was similar to the accepted ideas of what Shiva looked like. They all accepted the ideal of the Avadhoot and regarded Shri Dattatreya as a cult Guru and even as a guardian spirit. Only later when the Nathas of S.W India developed into bhakti- devotional cults was he elevated to the status of a god. Also, in many of these cases, although Datta was thought of as an avatar or manifestation of Shiva, he later became regarded as an avatar of Vishnu, but this was probably due to some thoughtless acceptance of Vedic influence. The real Nathas of India today still belong to the North. Even the Pagal

(Mad) Nathas, so called because of their outrageous and erratic behaviour.

History cannot obscure the fact that the rise of the Tantriks, Siddhas and Nathas in India was not only a revolt against puritanical, straight-faced Vedic and Buddhist morals but it placed an even greater emphasis on the fact that spiritual attainments began with the awakening of the insight faculty and had nothing to do with caste, education or social status. This came at a time when real Pagan values were being forgotten and the antisex syndrome was creeping in from Europe and missionaries. Added to this was the Muslim aversion to naked images and sex symbols such as the lingam and yoni.

Most of the great Nathas of the past and present came from the lower strata of society but they were all people who upheld the dignity of their own class even if it were classified as lower. One great Nath came from a caste of snake charmers, a caste which considered it beneath their dignity to beg, in spite of their poverty. Fishermen, sweepers and weavers were poor enough but they worked and maintained themselves and their families. As in Europe, all too often, they were better and nobler people than you found in the upper crust.

Yet when they became Nathas they became nobodies, but free and unconditioned. They belonged to nobody and nobody belonged to them. Mostly they wandered. They did not work or marry or breed children. They no longer worked for reward or served others as menials. If they served others it was without obligation or reward. Although a sadhu depends on the alms of the faithful he never asks for anything. Of course in the Indian subcontinent these things are part of the way of life and understood. In nearly thirty years in India and

adjoining parts of Asia I have never lacked food, clothing, shelter or medical care. These are needs and not wants. In Europe it would not be possible to do this from scratch. But as life has been adapted in India so Europe and America must make their own patterns.

The Londinium Temple Strain

The Alchemagick of one's Guardian Spirit

Few today realise or appreciate the magick of London. Those who seek to penetrate the occult aspects of life tend to think much in terms of Glastonbury, Stonehenge and King Arthur's Magical Kingdom. Some take their thoughts even further to the Sphinx, the Great Pyramid and onwards to the Far East. Few think of London as a Magical centre or a location of great occult power.

Centuries ago there was a great Druid centre on the north bank of the Thames. The town was called Cockaigne and is still in use today as a place of pleasure and enjoyment, for as such it must have appeared to the people of the remoter countryside who came to attend the Druid festivals. Another survival of the ancient name is in the word Cockney, which though often applied only to the downtrodden denizens of the great capital, originally meant one born in the city area of only one square mile, or born within the sound of Bow Bells.

The conquering Romans changed the name to Londinium and, most probably, destroyed as much of the Druid culture as possible. London has always been a fabulous city and retained some mystic charm. It has its own long record of magicians and alchemists and many of

those from abroad flourished in London. Some like Bruno and Cagliostro left the sanctuary of London to go to their deaths.

In the modern occult world, London groups and societies flourished and the Order of the Golden Dawn saw its best days in the capital, until our Magus joined its ranks and the decay was rapid. This was inevitable because it retained, or adopted, so much Judeo-Christian background and Aleister was basically for the Western Tradition.

The Order of the Golden Dawn was a landmark in the "occult revival," which had begun with Levi. It also made available an English translation of The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage. Crowley read this book and digested its contents. The themes are very ancient and the text sought to guide one in the first important initiation of any lone magician -- to establish contact with his or her Guardian Spirit. The purpose of this tractate is to relate experiences and methods which have actually been successfully used to make this contact. Yet it must ever be remembered that the personal experiences and experiments of any magician are generally unique and rarely, if ever, identical with those of others. For - this reason they are presented as a guide to reveal the principles involved and less importance is attached to the details.

Aleister Crowley was a born magician, yet the greatest and most important aspect of his work was to successfully contact his own Guardian. I first met the Magus in the High Court in Chancery Lane where his unfortunate court action against Nina Hamnett took place in the early thirties. The case began as a claim for libel damages against Mrs. Hamnett but quickly developed into a trial of Aleister Crowley. I sat throughout the court proceedings and as a young man had my first

lesson in British justice and how easy it could turn round and display its rear end. The glory of the Magus had passed, but the magical spirit and wisdom were still there. A very serious miscalculation had been made and, because of his basic ideals, he sought publicity to make the Work more widespread.

But he had to learn that the publicity of the gutter press only threw up the sort of things one expects to find in the gutter. Crowley thought in terms of a New Aeon but Fleet Street was out to disprove it. I often contemplated on the story of Aiwass, the personal Guardian and the inspiration of the Book of the Law. The Magus often visited me in a little flatlet I had on the King's Road front at Brighton. He frequently came down from London and stayed at the Ship Hotel. One afternoon I put to him the question, "Where is Aiwass now?" Crowley looked at me and gave his head a minute shake and then spread his arms with upturned palms as if to say, 'Where?' or even "God knows!" Then he spoke, "I think the fault is mine."

I was much impressed by these sad moments and the look of dejection I witnessed. Yet it made me realise that the factor which had caused his rise had been neglected in his fall. In spite of all this, Crowley was still able to help me much in my own Work, just as people are being inspired and encouraged by his writings now he has passed on.

During my childhood I had strange experiences. Our house in London had a nice garden and little freaky spots to play and hide. I was, by no means, the only inhabitant. I soon found it was also populated by goblins, fairies, gnomes, trolls, pixies and elves. Sometimes visible and sometimes invisible. I never liked mechanical toys and how could they fit into this enchanted garden?

At some time in this juvenile history, a strange lady used to appear. She was tall, fair-haired and beautiful. I would suddenly notice she was there and just as suddenly she would disappear. We spoke in a way I could not understand for it was a conversation based on our thoughts and not on normal speech. Whenever anybody came into the garden she would vanish. As time passed I began to see and realise that this was perhaps a lady but often I had the strong impression of a beautiful man. Then I began to see that this lovely visitor was neither male nor female and yet a combination of both. As the contact became more stable I used to call the spirit by the name Pantoen. Only in the last decades did I realise this could be converted by notarigon to mean En To Pan, which means All Is One. As I grew older my life grew more complicated and I developed an inclination to study, and not always respectable or conventional subjects.

When in the early thirties I met the Magus, I related these early experiences to him and he responded benevolently and with much encouragement. He related his own experiences and his contact with Aiwass in Egypt.

Not wishing to create a wrong or misleading impression, I must state that I was never a member of any occult group or society. At this time and onwards I do not think the British section of the O.T.O. ever met or wanted to meet. The Abbey of Thelema and other events in his life had long passed away. The Mage invited me to visit him in his Jermyn Street flat and these visits became more and more numerous. The press which had slandered him at every opportunity never once expressed any of his ideals or teachings. Thus when I had opportunities to meet him he revealed a vast store of knowledge on a

variety of subjects. I not only realised that the much libelled Aleister Crowley was probably the most far out and advanced thinker at the time but as well as being a natural born magician he possessed a knowledge of both yoga and the I Ching which was superior to that of any other European.

During our conversations in London he reached a conclusion and advised me to seek more knowledge of yoga and the I Ching and these, he felt, would help people to contact their Guardian spirit more easily. In relation to higher yoga his judgement was sound, for meditation is undoubtedly an important key. With the I Ching the position still needs more understanding but I do think it may be there. So far there is still more work to be done even though I studied the subject with a Chinese Master in Malaysia. But the oracle section is still a valuable form of contact which cannot be ignored. There is a system of yoga taught in the I Ching which still needs more experiment.

In spite of all the work and writings of the Master we are still waiting to expand. Here in India I have often mused on my meetings with A.C. His advice for me to go to India was a path blocked by many obstructions. He estimated I would need a minimum of £1,000 pounds. That was the greatest obstacle. In actual fact I did not arrive in India until July 1953 and not a single penny or new penny in my bag. I think this was all the work of my guardian spirit.

I did not arrive until I was ready for India and my penniless arrival was the right and correct way. There are a thousand wonders to relate but these must wait for a later occasion.

The problem of the guardian spirit contact was solved by some of the secret teachings of the Adi-Nath sect into which I was first initiated. These teachings are based on the Yogi or Natha sitting on a meditation seat inside a circle. From the circle he creates or rearranges energy to form a cone. Mind projections sent outside of this cone are classified as Expansion, while those drawn in are called Absorbtion. Either a mixture of the two or even independently the Yogi-Natha can practice Projection. This is identical to the will projection or direction of the Cult of Thelema, as well as being the vital factor on which magick much depends.

The concept of an individual guardian spirit is not only ancient but is accepted in practically all religions. The real word for this guardian spirit is the Latin Daemon or the Greek Daimon, but in Christian thought and the Anglicised form of Demon, the meaning has been reduced to imply an evil spirit. This transformation only follows the Christian custom of converting all Pagan deities and concepts into devils and evil desires. In point of fact a demon can only be bad when the mind conceives it as being so. Man himself is still the most dangerous creature of the three planes. Nor is it easy to imagine a deity who terrorised his followers more evilly than did Jehovah.

The Greek Pagans thought of a Daimon as a lesser god or a subordinate deity which could also be the spirit or genius dwelling in a place or shrine or as the personal attendant spirit of an individual. In English we would write it as god with a small "g". This dynamic concept flourished in the ancient world. There were many references to this individual spirit inspiration when men walked and talked with the gods. As civilisation began to develop, or should we say fester,

men lost their contact with their spirit guides and protectors to rely more and more on their own faulty reasoning and knowledge. In magick we believe that everybody has an individual guardian spirit and it may also be true for animals. In childhood - the contact is generally there and manifest but parents who have forgotten the delightful fantasy world of their own childhood too often scold the child or want to take it to a psychiatrist for treatment.

I still think that humans can recover the beautiful and protecting influence of their guardian. But to do this one must first believe in the existence of the guardian and be prepared to do something towards freeing themselves from the brainwashing and muddy mind conditioning of society and remove completely all those inhibitions and indoctrinations which block the path. The more natural, free, uninhibited you can become the easier the task will be. This path is not for artificial people. This is not a separate segment of the magickal life since this turn about freedom from inhibitions and society moral conditioning is essential in yoga, magick and spiritual life and attainment on all levels, as well as being the sine qua non for human happiness. The highest path of Indian and Tibetan Yoga is the Vama Marg of Tantrika. Like our own English world of faery it teaches attainment by the complete reversal-inversion of society morality, taboos and relationships.

The Shadow Rite of the Priest Kings

I live in a fantastic world and perform fantastic experiments

Because of this I can point the way but the goal is for you to find.

This is the sacred shadow rite of the Priest-Kings who guard us.

Thus I have designated the guardian spirit with a new title.

I call him Priest for he is Lord of my rites and rituals

I call him King because he rules my life with his guidance.

The rite is neither the sun nor the moon but in between

It is neither in the darkness nor in the rays of brightness.

It is in the shadow and the in-between world I must enter.

I have selected a place as my meditation Zonule

And prepared a mat which is called the Dragon Seat

For only a real dragon will dare to do this work.

Around the Dragon Seat there is the magick circle

Where none but true Priest-Kings will dare to enter.

Before the Dragon Seat I place the ritual substances as the symbols of Earth, Air, Fire and Water.

For when the four mundane elements are assembled, the fifth element, the Will, becomes more powerful.

For the mind is the matrix of the fifth dimension.

I am naked because this is my form in submission

I take my place upon the Dragon Seat to pray

That as a Priest you do perform this supreme ritual

That as a King you do command and grant success

Now in the silence, by power of breath and Will

Let this place become one of success and unity.

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law!

The practical directions related to the Umbra Zonule could go on endlessly since the entire universe is based on the interplay of correspondences. The ritual substances are classified as the five elements of which our world is composed. These are Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Mind. When the four mundane elements are assembled the fifth element attains to its fullest power. Here we mean power as expressing itself as Will. The five elements are found in all religions and schools and symbolised in Tantrika as the Five Things. The four mundane elements are represented by the substances of universal worship: Earth: earth, sand, stone, ashes or metals. These may be present in the form of metal or earthenware bowls, braziers or dishes. Foods are or can be used as symbolic products of the Earth, Air, Fire and Water as all of these elements produce when in combination the fresh vegetables and fruits of life. However, food substances need not appear in a rite used for meditation.

Air: although air is always present, even if in a polluted form, it is symbolised or made tangible in the rite in the form of smoke or incense.

Fire: fire is represented by candles, oil lamps or naked flame, or only a fiery glow in a charcoal brazier. A charcoal glow should only be used in a room which is well ventilated as it conjures up the demon CO. (Known in esoteric circles as Carbon Monox Hide)

Water: water should be placed in a flask, flagon or dish. It may not be used but it should be present. At the conclusion of a rite the water, which has become charged with vibrations, can be used on other occasions.

Nothing which has been written should be regarded as fixed or final as ideas. It is better that every experimenter adapts the fundamentals to suit their own fantasy and imagination. In the final analysis, nothing is really needed in magick other than the Will of the magician. But in practice, because of inexperience it is better to surround oneself with the patterns, substances and paraphernalia which encourage the imagination, build up fantasy and power and conduce to success in the rite.

I have used the word Umbra Zonule for special reasons. Since for a single person only a small area on the ground or floor is required, I use the word Zonule, which means a small zone or area. If other people, who must be in perfectly harmonious relationships and also uninhibited, are present in the experiments, a larger circle must be used and these participants will sit around inside it. In this way the Umbra Zonule is excellent for family or group work. The word Umbra (Latin) means a shadow or a shade. In its archaic meaning as being something or some entity which accompanies a person or thing, therefore, as a guardian spirit is with someone. The ancient world also saw the Umbra as being an attendant phantom, spirit or shadowy apparition and as a spirit or shade being present but not in visible or material form. From this it will be seen that Umbra is fully related to our concept of a guardian god or spirit. I always avoid the word angel for although not bad in itself, it has Judeo-Christian associations which do not mean the same and can mislead the experimenter.

The Umbra or Spirit in magick is neither good nor bad, for people themselves live or deny their true natures. The manifold spirit values of the Cosmos can be tabulated as follows, and expressed in terms of occult lore:

- 1. The individual guardian spirit or Umbra**
- 2. The household or family spirits or gods**
- 3. The spirit of a tribe or community**
- 4. The spirits of friends or ancestors**
- 5. The spirits of an area but unrelated to us (one or more of these can be a national or area deity)**
- 6. The higher evolved guardian spirits of this planet**
- 7. Solar and planetary gods and goddesses**
- 8. The Supreme Spirit of the Solar System**
- 9. The Supreme Ruler of the Galaxy**
- 10. The Absolute Ruler of the Universe or Cosmos**

This list is a basic presentation of what was universally accepted in all religious patterns of the ancient Pagan world. In all magick laboratory work and experiment a new and higher level of thinking is essential for success. If we face magick with the conditioning and inhibitions of the past we are doomed to failure. All political, economic, social, religious, educational patterns of life in any country should culminate only in human happiness. If this is not attained, then nothing is gained. If the goals of happiness were always kept in mind we would not see the corruption, frustration and degradation which most religion, politics and education produce. But human beings need not only high ideas but a spirit force which will guide and direct them towards those ideas. Once we see the worthless patterns of the past we can begin to work for a better inspired future of new patterns, new morals and a new joy and happiness. The Umbra Zonule is not meant only for ascetics, monks and nuns. You will probably encounter many surprises and find

that the spirit world is more erotic than our own, and sexual energy in many forms helps in the contact and gives the power for future work.

There is a final thought to add to this section. If those who experiment with the Umbra- Zonule would report, the results and experiences may help others.

The Codicillates of the Magick Tractate

1. Paeon of the Magick City: Great scenes and work have been done in the expansive city of Londinium. It is a sacred place and the miracles and wonder are based on its remarkable history. It has always been one of the most powerful energy centres of the world. It has been the Cauldron wherein races and people have met and digested into its solvency. Thus it has been the symbol of a material Alkahest, a cosmic solvent in which the Gnosis, Art and Passion have been sublimated. It is the city of the Masters and the city of the slaves, the city of ecstasy and joy and also of blood and tears. When the Masters are consolidated and the slaves ready to follow, the Aquarian Aeon of the New Life will be established. All the world will come to pay homage, for it is the City of the Miracle and the shrine of the Cosmos. It is Cockaigne!

Beneath the subsoil of the Magick City

Is the Yoni Shrine of the White Goddess;

For throughout the ancient land of Britannia

Cockaigne is the energy centre par excellence.

The Celtic Tribals of the Iceni are still

The Guardian Spirits of the Magick City,

**Soon to be the Spirit Guides of our people
To make us Cosmic Tribals of the New Aeon.
When Guardians and Magicians of the New Aeon
Do here assemble within the Great Circle,
The True Masters will become visible to all
And the slaves will know and behold them
To see in them the real path of salvation.
Thus will the Masters will an era of justice;
Thus will the slaves serve and obey them;
For the True Will of all mankind is this --
To work the Magick Will of the Cosmos,
That all will know joy and enjoyment
Revert to the ways of the natural law
That nothing shall stand in the way of happiness.
The corruptions and defilements will vanish
And our true way of life shall be restored.
The New Aeon shall begin in the Magick City
And the Masters will assemble and consolidate.
Thus the Londinium Strain will be of those
Fit as Magicians to lead the world Awake!
There will be worked great miracles of wonder
And its power will penetrate even the dark places
Beyond the seas, the world, and into the plenum,
Proclaiming the law -- Do what thou wilt!
And the Magick Rite of real perfection.**

2. New Ways, New People, New Age:

I bow to the universal goddess Trivia

For mankind has now reached the crossroads.

Who is now asleep and who is Awake

To know the path which we should take?

Today we are living in an expansive-magical age of science, discovery and phantasy. Test tubes are overflowing with imagination. Men no longer investigate against the barriers of the impossible nor the delusion that science can reach a point of cessation or stagnation.

But the real mystery of today is not in science but in the backwardness of Man! While science moves, mankind is still foundering and suffering from morals which are centuries out of date. One questions the value of a scientific progress when emotional progress and human joy and happiness have not kept pace with it. Advanced physics has to keep company with a society whose rules were dictated by a feeble-minded deity. Why is it that the scientist can penetrate his own fantastic world while the human individual is brainwashed and conditioned to accept moral standards and sex relationships which have the flavour of hypocrisy as well as frustration. Nobody can be normal if the standards of life are subnormal. There has been some slight awakening but there is also the ever present danger that someone may try to restore the age of backwardness.

For the slaves there must be slave laws, but the Masters who are free should not be expected to conform to them. One becomes a Master on the basis of understanding but slaves remain in bondage because of their ignorance. Thus people are only born but whether to be Master or slave depends on oneself. Slaves remain the plankton people who float on the ocean of life. It is their destiny to drift through life. They are the gardeners producing only weeds and who achieve nothing of any worth. For the slave there is only hope for tomorrow but for the Master it must be full life for today. Magicians can never be vast in numbers but there is no reason why they should not have a vast following. Thus the service and support of the magicians becomes the way of life of the slaves.

3. Laboratory Work in the Umbra Zonule -- The Preliminary Rites: The first hours within the Zonule should be devoted to the consecration by prayer, incantation or mantra of the Dragon Seat and magick circle. These are both for protection. If the magick circle is not painted or traced on the floor with chalk or other powders, it may be traced with a wand or stick. In this case it will be invisible but will still need to be consecrated. After practice the circle can be traced only with the Will while seated on the Dragon Seat. Relax; do not be in a hurry.

At other parts of the day you should think about the Guardian and help to build up a mental relationship. This will be conscious and not the subconscious relationship which is essential for contact. Read suitable and related literature if it is available. Do not try to create preconceived ideas which will confuse the experiments. Many people in India, as well as other countries, practice meditation and think they have contacted a God or Goddess but usually it is their own Guardian. They start with conditioned ideas. In reality all deities are guardian spirits but some are elevated well above the human sphere and less

able to guide and help us in our daily life and magickal work. What we are really seeking is the individual guardian spirit intimately associated with us from birth to death.

Sitting quiet is the best spiritual exercise but purposeful meditation and concentration will speed up the process and help us to use and direct the Will, and do so with the required aspects of intensity. Therefore it is said:

Intensity, Stability, Quiet, Determination, and Expectancy are the qualities for meditation.

To attain calmness a simple form of in and out breathing will help. The in and out breaths are counted one to seven then repeated, again and again. Do not make any obstacles by constructing mental puzzles and problems. This quiet sitting has its own value to keep calm the mind as especially helpful for tired, confused, or worried people. This is apart from the goal of contacting the guardian spirit. It must be obvious that the contact with another world or a different plane structure can only be done if and when the mind is in a condition to be receptive.

Thus the process of calming the mind and stopping the normal confused processes is an essential condition for all magickal operations and spiritual awareness, contact, and attainment on all levels. In this way also, the Dragon Seat is the doorway to a new, different and expansive world and can be the laboratory-workshop of every other aspect of magickal life. Such a simple system and yet a certain escape from the triviality and the meaningless routines of

everyday life. We can draw into the Zonule or project out. This means the Will power to influence the visible natural phenomena of disease, growth, events, happenings, climate, danger and make for safety and more advantageous living.

Then also the Will power to contact the invisible spirit-aetherial world of demigods, deities, spirits, elementals, cosmic powers, ancestors, as well as the ability to combat and overcome evil influence and anti-vibes.

Meditation is incredibly simple but a separate tractate is being prepared to explain everything in the simplest possible language and much needs to be said to overcome current illusions which have grown up in the West and now create difficulties. Perhaps the most important thing at this stage is to recognise with reverence and humility that this is a wonder-world of ancient wisdom, magick and traditions. As its secrets are unfolded to you, you become the custodian of these traditions and this ageless wisdom. As treasures of the Cosmos they must be guarded and used with care.

We raise the Mind beyond everyday triviality

By steady contemplation of the miraculous,

The laws of nature and free-life expressions,

For this cult of magick is a world of miracles.

Awake to the world but asleep to Reality

This is the meaningless life of most people;

The real problem of life is not its misery,

But the wasteful boredom and purposeless routines.

4. Yantras, Diagrams and Patterns: Work in the Umbra Zonule can also take the form of a variety of experiments. These can be things you have already been taught or work you have long wanted to undertake. They should, of course, be related to the Work. Apart and aside from periods spent in meditation with the eyes closed you can profitably use diagrams and pictures for concentrating the mind and expanding the imagination. An alternative is to keep a drawing pad and suitable pen. With these you can draw your own fantastic diagrams and expressions.

Much of the structure of these diagrams will come from the subconscious but do not be too surprised if your guardian spirit also takes a hand in their formation. Some of the artistic or monstrous productions will be worth preserving in your own magickal records and some can be used again and again. Have a good pen with broad nib as you will be working in half-lights.

5. The I Ching Ray Projector: There are profound depths to the I Ching which will be dealt with later. Few people in the Western world have fully grasped the true significance of the fantastic characters who gave it formation and its remarkable relationships with our own Higher Magick. It can be considered as something in the nature of a Cosmic Revelation when in 1951 this book was presented to the English-speaking world and translated from the slightly earlier German edition.

But for the moment it can be regarded solely as an oracle and used also as a medium for communication between yourself and the

guardian spirit. The book itself points out to us that spirit forces cannot always give us direct expressions of their Will and must do so by means of an oracle. In magickal work with the I Ching, use only the full edition of the translation by Richard Wilhelm as other shorter parlour game editions are useless for our purpose. I myself received my first instruction on the I Ching from Aleister Crowley. At that time (early thirties) only the James Legge edition was available.

6. Shinto-Shell Society: An entry into the world of Magick requires a complete reorientation of thinking and even patterns of living. The most important thing which has to be realised is that one's education and training for work or profession, religion and morals, etc. are all framed with the intention of fitting one into the social rat race.

Even laws are still much based on Judeo-Christian morals and teachings. Religious intolerance has much relaxed in recent years and the power of the Church is only a ghost of its former self. But old customs die hard and most "morality," especially with parents and the older generations is based on these outdated ideas. The main requirement of an individual expanding on to a higher level is to fully realise and understand how much we have been conditioned. At any time, especially in a thoughtless moment, there is danger of us reverting to this conditioned thinking. Too many people think their thoughts and decisions are their own and never realise how much society has planted seeds in our minds.

Most of Crowley's work took place in a hideous society, much worse than it is today. The gutter press, always waiting to concoct some dirt or print some new Crowley sensation, were the bastions, upholders and defenders of the British Judeo-Christian way of life. Those like

A.C. who revolted against their phoney morals and sham-shell society were constant targets. A man who was not a Christian must be exposed and the public must be warned against someone who did not "toe the line."

**When the mind awakens, we become aware
That we have been brainwashed and conditioned
From our very birth to accept society,
Its morals, conventions, system and ideas,
Its pattern of behaviour and stupid nationalism,
Its caste system of unfair social standards,
The rule of right, privilege and preference,
Of happiness as the exclusive right of a few
And poverty, servitude and misery for most.
None of these established patterns of society
Can give expansion to any individual
They are worthless concepts for magickal life
And those who seek the Cosmos must reject them.**

7. The Spirit-Man Crystallisation: In Magick, man is used as a collective noun and means both men and women, all human beings. When one enters on a new aeon of life it may not result in physical changes which are obvious to other people. Given time it must, for the Master has a different bearing than a slave. The immediate changes are on the mental level and these can sometimes be disturbing to the

normal pattern of living. But advancement of the mind usually takes care of the body in many advantageous ways. It is only if the moral outlook fails to broaden that we face disadvantages.

In some places the pseudo-morals are breaking down while in other areas they seem to solidify., We have no better example of the latter than in India where Western uptight morals have been readily accepted without realising that Western morals are basically Christian. So there is a clash and increasing frustration which spreads to lower standards on all levels. When we are in doubt we have not very far to look. We compare only with Nature and Natural Law and find the true standards. What Nature has given, man should accept.

It is the absurd old story of a deluded god creating Adam and Eve and giving them operative sexual organs which he did not intend them to use. The man and the woman proved to be more intelligent than their feeble-minded god.

Morbid Meats and Macabre Meals

IT seems that no creature on earth is so perverse as the human beast, yet none can compare with him in being amusing at those moments when he intends to be most serious. People still visit zoos, aquariums and menageries to be amused at the antics of the imprisoned animal life, yet the vast world of entertainment of the human species capering on the streets, fighting in sports stadiums, or despatching human creatures to a heavenly abode In other parts of the world, no longer interests anyone.

From boyhood I was fascinated by cannibals and felt some pangs of remorse when I learned that the missionaries had converted them into good Christians and they now went to church instead of going head-hunting. There is no accounting for the tastes of mankind. The cartoon of the missionary in the cannibal's cooking pot was once a popular feature of comic papers and jokes. They provided readers with macabre amusement to think that Christian missionaries who were bent on filling the natives with the enthusiasm of a new religion; were themselves used to fill the cooking-pots and, later, the natives.

In Pidgin English, that fascinating dialect which amused seamen, but caused Oxford dons to tear out their hair, the natives called human flesh "long pig". This is probably because no pig had a hind part so long as a man's leg. Rumour has it that the taste of both are similar. Although rightminded people regard the missionary with repugnance, among the cannibals he could have been more welcome than we suppose. There is no record of how many missionaries vanished in this way, but one might suppose the numbers could have been less sufficient than we could hope.

Now from an obscure corner of recent press reports from Western Papua (New Guinea) there emerges an interesting story glittering in its primitive simplicity and innocence. In a remote village a native had been killed in a family feud. Seven of his neighbours went to his relatives and volunteered to dispose of the body without cost or trouble to themselves. This was agreed and the corpse was taken away to fulfil the promise. Their method of disposal became an Epicurean fantasy and after cutting the body into pieces of suitable size, they were deposited in a cooking-pot and boiled into a gruesome stew to which herbs and condiments had been added.

When cooking was complete the delectable contents of the pot found its way into the stomachs of the seven tribesmen.

Somehow the incident attracted the attention of the police and the tribesmen were rounded up and dragged into Port Moresby. There they were charged with "improper and indecent interference with a corpse" in a legal terminology more suitable to some supposed sexual perversion than a simple act of cannibalism. One cannot help thinking that a few years ago, especially during the mania of the missionaries to "civilise" native people, the seven epicures would have suffered some dire punishment as a warning to others with similar appetites. But in these days of open permissiveness and legalisation of homosexual relationships, tolerance of prostitution and broadminded indifference to aggressive warfare and murder of the innocents, eating dead bodies was pronounced as not being illegal. In dismissing the charges against the seven consumers of human goulash, the judge ruled that "cannibalism is a normal and reasonable behaviour for some remote New Guinea villagers." Eating the dead was to be regarded as legal and comparable with burial or cremation as a means of disposal. Obviously New Guinea is no place for vegetarians, vegans or sea-weed consumers. However, real live cannibals could be a great tourist attraction.

In an age when the world is threatened with over-population and the threat of possible food shortage, the question of human flesh as diet might yet have to receive official consideration. It now becomes obvious that many countries are throwing into holes and burying that very commodity which might be of food value to the hungry. There is little doubt that if suitably canned it could be an export commodity

and find a ready market. at least In New Guinea. In the not too far distant future it might be the only means left to satisfy the palates of non- vegetarians.

Upton Sinclair, in his book, The Jungle tells us of a human being falling into the giant mixing-vat in an American meatworks, and was processed, canned and later eaten without any complaint from the consumers.

The gruesome Aghoris of India are said to have been given human flesh to eat at their initiations. This was generally choice pieces filched from the cremation ground rather than specially cooked morsels. Shri Ramakrishna, the Bengali Saint, is said to have undertaken a similar initiation but shrank from actually eating the human titbit. He satisfied the initiation rites by tasting it with the tongue. The Aghoris took this meat to prove to themselves and others that the concept of opposites - good and bad, nice and unpleasant (also mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita) -- only existed in the mind. The Lord Shiva is also known by the name Aghora and meaning that there is nothing really horrible, or can be in a world supported by delusion. Yet it will probably be a long time before ready cooked and packaged thigh muscles find their way into the American Supermarket, although the legs of frogs have already done so (exported from vegetarian India from a Mysore State factory). Of course the Archbishop would never approve, not even if Mr. Nixon were to appear on television masticating the mammary glands of a Vietnamese village belle. It took a lot of propaganda to condition Westerners into eating dead wheat flour, cornflakes of worthless food value, a diet embellished with coloured dyes and preservatives as well as fruit and vegetables flavoured with insect sprays and fertilisers, but otherwise tasteless. Yet homo-sapiens has taken to eating homo-sapiens without

propaganda advertising and outside pressure. From archaeological evidence it is deduced that primitive man was not only a cannibal but broke open the tough bones to suck out the succulent marrow.

If we have tended to be facetious and deal lightly with a ghastly and ghoulish subject it is only to ask what are the virtuous or moral standards which make it ethical and permissible to eat the flesh of animals yet shrink from consuming the flesh of human beings? And where does mankind go from here?

The Magick Path of Tantra

The Preposterous Exordium: This manuscript is not a history of Tantra, although it will dwell much on the past and also write a new history for future generations, if there will be any future generations. This manuscript is more in the nature of a perfunctory peep at a remarkable phenomenon in Mankind's progress and development. The spark of Tantra was ignited in India but was exported and burst into flame in other countries. Although Tantra had a firm spiritual basis, it was not so much a religion as a way of life. There are now many indications that several Tantrik communities existed in different parts of India, communities which shared vast areas with other Hindu communities and lived in harmony.

"Tantra" and "Tantrik", as applied to a unique way of life is a fairly modern expression and development. Tantra means a treatise, but a treatise or manuscript dealing with occult and esoteric subjects like astrology, secret medicine, numerology and spiritual expressions of sex. The words Kaula or Natha were originally used for the unique way of life or life style we now know as Tantra. This word has now

established itself and appears in all modern dictionaries and literature. For this reason we will continue to use the words Tantra and Tantrik in this manuscript. Thus Tantra, as a word, still relates to the Naths and Kaulas, now become synonymous.

Tantra, as a way of life, is the golden thread which runs through all the manuscripts I have written for the Western Nath Order and the higher grade Magickal Order of AMOOKOS (Arcane Magick Order of the Knights of Shambhala) and these include the Trilogy of Twilight Yoga - Ecstasy, Equipoise and Eternity; The Magnum Opus and Esoterikos. I have frequently titled my manuscripts with Greek words as I think the Tantrik Way of Life was also expressed in the pastoral paradise of Pan though without the final attainment, but where gods mixed with man and man mixed with gods. We don't know whether the esoteric aspects of enlightenment were experienced in other nations, at other ages. Insight would indicate that it must have been so.

India was unique in proposing various methods, philosophies and theories relating to enlightenment. This Supreme Attainment, "Atma Jnan", Self Realisation, Moksha, Enlightenment was the greatest spiritual concept which emerged among humans. It is the process of development of the human spirit till it becomes one and unites with the Infinite Cosmic Spirit. To assist lesser minds, this Great Cosmic Spirit was symbolised and made more tangible as Gods and Goddesses, male and female, positive and negative, aggressive and receptive aspects. In Tantra the Lord Shiva and his Shakti Parvati dominated.

These deities also symbolised the love, tenderness affection and enduring partnership which permeated the Tantrik way of life. All this

was bound up with the supposition that the spirit was constantly reborn as god, man or animal and that this rebirth process had to be brought to an end. Rebirth on the earth plane, whether as man or animal was a fate one tried to overcome. Tantriks did not claim to know much about rebirth as a god or celestial. It was only temporary and rebirth as an animal or human could still take place again and again. All three are sensory planes of pain and suffering and all relate to the material cosmos.

Tantra lore maintains that only enlightenment, attained by meditation or breath control, culminating in Self Realisation could end rebirth and bring about reunion of the Spirit with the Supreme Spirit of the Cosmos -the Purusha (Cosmic Spirit). But Tantra claims that there is another secret method by which this self realisation is attained easily. The supreme moment when the mind awakes to this realisation also can be attained at the moment (or seconds after) the attainment of a super orgasm at the termination of sexual intercourse.

The expectation is that the yogi and his shakti both attain this at approximately the same time. That is why Tantra insists on a "trained shakti" as both are entitled to enlightenment and this is hardly possible with a casual woman who may think of sexual intercourse as only sensory joy and to be extended as long as possible and who may know little of it as a medium of spiritual attainment. The relationship of a yogi with his shakti is also unique. Although they both accept a standard of sexual equality, ability and entitlement, yet still the yogi will treat, worship and think of his shakti as his goddess and a personification of the Earth Mother. Tantra develops in the three aspects of high thinking - Insight, Intuition, Imagination. By these, developed in meditation, the mind awakes to understanding and union

with the Cosmic Purusha and rebirth on the Earth Dimension is no more.

From the Cosmic Spirit we came and to the Cosmic Spirit we must return

Historically, there was something odd about these Tantrik Nathas and the communities in which they lived. They thought that peace, freedom and happiness were the rational aim of human life. Undoubtedly, the supreme orgasm which exploded into the "awakening" was their ultimate aim and ideal but many were not ready for this yet. So it was quite in order and practical that the human ideals of peace, freedom and happiness were turned into reality and enthusiastically maintained. These ideals were symbolised by Gods and Goddesses. In time their way of life became a tradition which others followed. A tradition must be more than mumbled prayers or prayer flags fluttering in the breeze; it must have substance, reality and strength and become an integral part of our life style.

A disciple asked, "Dadaji (Mahandranathji), is it better to be reborn as a woman or as a man?" Dadaji answered, "It is better not to be reborn at all."

The Tantrik Nath or Kaula way of life is based on the profound knowledge that men and women are not machines, animals or robots. They are not pawns in a cosmic game nor must they accept the face value of the cards dealt out by the "Dealer". For most, the general program of their lives is a routine they must accept and most of it is easily predictable. Too many people are resigned to this and when some event bursts in their face or shatters the roundabout routine,

very few are prepared to manipulate the event or have the thinking ability to control it. As the routine, and life in general, becomes more complicated, the "Think Power" diminishes. They become, more and more, one of the crowd and willing to be carried on the wavecrests of convention and corruption. They become the people who vote in haste and repent at leisure. The future well being and welfare of human society is much in our own hands on both material and spiritual levels.

Second only to the supreme orgasm, Tantriks and Nathas learned the power to develop their way of life. Traditions and custom were useful guidelines but a spiritual way of life, its magick, mantras and fantastique patterns must be realised in the mind and created from practical thinking. The Nathas did not have to hunt through old manuscripts or turn the pages of ancient volumes to find new methods or formulae for their magick and to make life more delightful, or give them the power to work wonders. They knew that by simple meditation, breath regulation and a relaxed attitude to the world, they could create and formulate their own mantras and powerful vibrations to transform the sordid into the most beautiful.

They energised the will and made things happen. They made madness a spiritual observance and insanity an escape syndrome. They knew that life was an enigma and that divine grace could often be grotesque and dangerous. The most reliable method was for mankind to solve their own problems and set out their own practical way and lifestyle. A Tantrik is not dedicated to serve God or religion. The only goal is to attain enlightenment. Enlightenment is an expression of divine equality.

Most of the older Kaula Tantras were composed in the form of a dialogue between Shiva and his Shakti. As we are dealing with a period when all texts were hand-written on palm leaves, we must realise that we are also probing a period when interpolation or alteration of the original text was a routine procedure. Fortunately, the Nath Tantriks value the development of the three super-psychic faculties of insight, intuition and imagination and can determine errors and incongruities with astonishing rapidity.

These three super faculties or master powers also enable them to create their own texts, mantras, rituals etc. and all having utility and being in harmony with Cosmic law. The faculties of insight, intuition and imagination are the building blocks on which we build our occult world and magick way of life.

The Tantra or Nath way of life can best be described as a state of mind. In no way can it be mistaken for an agglomeration of rules, morals and prohibitions. It assumes that human beings can and want to live without them. Even when it advises you to do or not to do something, it is not a rule but a guide-line to spare you trouble and pain. But you are still free to do and think as you wish. Of course our way of life has many physical aspects but our minds still determine the success or the pleasure from an act. Our life should have plan and purpose since most people blunder their way through life and generate misery for themselves and for others too. Our aims in life are to enjoy peace, freedom and happiness in this life but also to avoid rebirth on to this Earth plane. All this depends not on divine benevolence but on the way we ourselves think and act.

Metamorphosis of a Nath-Tantrik

The personal attitude, determination and outlook of a man or woman can bring about their successful transformation from a mundane clot or rat-racer into a magician. A magician, in the sense in which I use the word, is one whose life and living is not occasioned by the exterior world and environment but one who is able to manipulate the world and to live a life of peace, freedom and happiness.

While I have a tendency to shun autobiographical notes, there are occasions when they may serve as guide-lines to others who want to experience the explosive awakening into our spiritual reality.

The Nath-Tantra-Kaula way of life is a state of mind and only positive, powerful "think" can guide us to success.

I have communicated to the Western Nath Order and AMOOKOS my experiences in self-realisation and included essential, practical know-how about meditation and vital mental attitudes in earlier manuscripts. I have not, as yet, revealed my personal experience of Tantra and enlightenment by orgasm. The experience was not planned but developed as part of my meditative hermit's life.

It came about this wise. I long looked for a small town where the traditional "peace of mind" was a part of the environment. I was living with a Brahmin family in Ahmedabad, the Garden of Ahmed, who set himself as Raja of the city. Ahmedabad became, until recent times, the capital of Gujarat. Raja Ahmed had a young brother Mehmada, to whom he gave a small kingdom of which Mehmadaabad was the capital. Mehmada built his palace by the Vatrak river which flows by Mehmadaabad.

A group of disciples took me from Ahmedabad and put me in a hut by that same Vatrak river. Mehmud was unique. He was outwardly a Muslim but was well known as a sincere devotee of the Goddess Maha Kali. When he was a baby, his mother practised the art of Mithradatism on him and gave him small but increasing doses of poison to give him immunity against the action of any intending poisoner. In those days a flask of wine or a plate of food could sometimes be your last. The name is taken from Mithradates VI ("The Great") King of Pontus, (120-63 B.C.) who developed immunity to poisoning by taking gradually increasing doses.

The Kings Ahmed and Mehmud, in order to move troops to assist each other if their towns were besieged, built an underground road between Ahmedabad and Mehmudabad which must have been a great triumph of engineering in its time. The road still exists but both ends have been closed. Hindus and Muslims as well as other minor religions have all lived in peace and tranquillity and no conflicts or race riots have been known in this town. Mehmudabad has been my home for fifteen years.

One Sunday, a Parsee disciple brought a taxi load of Western people to my little hut by the river. The distance by road is only 30Km. and it is surprising the number of people they get in an Indian taxi. They had come to Ahmedabad to take a course of training for people working in nursery schools. They all invited me to visit them the following weekend. The visit took place and was very eventful. Many of them, mostly the ladies, asked me to give them a Sanskrit name. One of them asked me to sleep in a spare room, next to her own. I gave her the name Shakti Devi. Some complicated plan was developing and Shakti made a bed for me in the room next to her. Unfortunately a clash matured. Shakti woke in the night and found my bed empty. She

found me in bed with another girl. Fortunately Shakti was a clever girl. She took a holiday from the course and stayed with me in the hut for a couple of weeks. I still did not relate Shakti to my Tantrik way of life.

Future events confirmed the expectation. Shakti dropped out of the course at Ahmedabad and returned to America. Many months passed in silence. Quite unexpectedly, a letter arrived bearing the postmark of the Virgin Islands in the West Indies. I pondered a while because I could think of nobody I knew who would be qualified to live in a place of that name. When I opened it I saw it was from Shakti Devi. She was working in a hotel as a barmaid but was very unhappy. Could she come to Mehmadabad and live with me in the Kutir by the river. She had enough money to support herself and an answer by return was imperative. I replied, "Come at once or even sooner." Shakti came and the curtain arose on a new drama.

Sometimes I think that before swine I'm casting

Great pearls of Tantra and Joy everlasting

Gentle the art of the Magick Connection

Glean from the Cosmos the supreme selection.

Sometimes I muse that when Vishwakarma, the Celestial Architect made Aphrodite, he must have chosen Shakti as her model. Shakti was not only a superb beauty but her figure was perfect; a combination which would drive most men mad and enlarge their organ until it cast a shadow. Fate had, for me, devised a protecting gulf as I was ever conscious of the fact that I was treble her age and although I was in

my sixties, I had never, however much I tried, fallen deeply in love with any woman. When I saw the pathos of attachment all around me I had cause to ponder. It was fortunate for me, as Shakti's affection was like a monkey jumping from stump to stump. But I saw clearly that it was the time to manipulate the unique situation for my big experiment.

A leap into the Cosmos

I will be ever grateful to Shakti for stimulating my second great experiment in attaining realisation or enlightenment. My first experiment was made after World War II. I volunteered for -service as soon as was declared. I served in the R.A.M.C. as a physiotherapist and occupational therapist. Due to the grotesque and bizarre paradoxes of the British Army I only held the rank of Corporal and unpaid and acting Sergeant. I was recommended for a commission five times but as I had earlier fought in Spain with the International brigade I was suspected of political associations which I did not hold. If you criticised blunders and muddle you would be classified as a dangerous agitator. I took the opportunity to investigate the occult world and practise some spasmodic meditation, several times in the Great Pyramid and the Sphinx Temple at Gizeh as well as at many other ancient locations in the Western Desert and Italy.

After the war I had the use of a small field at High Beech, on the edge of Epping Forest. I lived in a tent for three years. Near this field, on a vast tract of land owned by the Salvation Army, I noticed a small memorial. I climbed the locked gate and read the inscription. It marked the spot where Queen Boadicea took poison after her defeat by the Roman troops. She knew that if captured alive she would be taken to Rome to suffer the indignity of being sold and of serving as a slave. What a woman! Walking a path without guidance and one about

which I had no previous experience, I assumed that realisation would take place during one of my meditation sessions. It was not to be.

As I had to attend to some mundane chores I returned to my small flat for the week-end. I took a hot bath, then went to the lounge, put on the gramophone and went back to the bathroom to collect a few oddments. It was a self contained flat so I was wearing no clothes. It was time for the freak-out. As I returned to the lounge and was crossing the carpet in the centre of the room, everything seemed to vanish and I was floating above the houses. Before me there was a vast dense cloud. As I looked at it, it seemed to evaporate and to reveal a giant image of Shiva made of ice or some transparent material. I looked down to see the dark grey slate roofs of the houses, only to find myself suddenly standing on the carpet in the middle of my lounge. I felt I knew everything but most of all, I knew I had to go to India. There was to be some delay. I went to Australia to enjoy their delightful climate and to save some money I went on a population expansion scheme which required one to pay only £10 for the trip. After this delay I did not arrive in Bombay until Guru Purnima, Sunday 14th. of July 1953.

Shakti solved a great problem. I installed her as my goddess in my hut by the Vatrak river in Mehmabad. I had already found this location, unique among all the places in India. I mused many times on the people in foreign lands who craved peace of mind and the place in which they could attain it. Mehmabad was such a place and I had found it. I talked to Shakti about the Nath-Tantra trip but Shakti's interest was only in sex and not the trimmings. She had overstated her financial position and had only one thousand rupees when she arrived. Six hundred of these rupees she spent in the first few days on coloured photographs.

I manipulated her visit to a Cosmic event. I would have liked to share this with Shakti but our objectives moved in two different directions. In a bid to try for the supreme orgasm of ecstasy I had to ration my own sexual expression without starving Shakti. It was easier than I had anticipated. At twilight on the third day Shakti received my oblation and I expanded into the Cosmos. My feeling and awareness were identical to the occasion when I had attained Atma Jnan in London. Shakti's visa was now running out and she had an urge to return to the USA. A disciple took her to Bombay and the Airport and an interesting and delightful frolic came to an end. Shakti's visit was just another trip but I had gained a treasure I would keep and enjoy for ever.

The way of life of Tantra is constructed with a mind boggling uniqueness which is flavoured with the divine and miraculous. Sex is a normal activity among humans and is essential to good health. But Tantra does not advocate promiscuity, homosexuality or lesbianism. Tantra is based on natural sexual enjoyment between men and women. If this is not easily available, men and women release their pent-up sex energy by masturbation. (auto eroticism) Although Tantra has based the supreme orgasm of ecstasy on the He and She business, experiment might yet prove some aspects or degrees of enlightenment can be attained by auto eroticism.

After all, even though Tantra bases enlightenment on the orgasm attained in bisexual union, we must not overlook the fact that the goal is essentially a mind process and transformation and other things are only incidental in relation to how much the mind has developed. Nath/Tantriks are people of sound common sense and do not have to

be told of the dangers of promiscuity and the diseases which might be contracted through casual sex partners.

Meditation, breath regulation, relaxed sitting are part of an Indian science known as Yoga, a Sanskrit word meaning union in the sense that it can unite the soul or spirit with God. God in the Indian meaning of the Cosmic Soul or Cosmic Spirit from which the human spirit originally came and to which it must eventually return. Delay to this return is caused by the spirit being reborn on the Earth plane again and again.

The Nath/Tantrik way of life is permeated with gems of wisdom. These are intended to prepare the mind to escape from rebirth on any sensory plane. This is the magnum opus of enlightenment. This enlightenment or atma jnan can also be realised in several stages in so much as it is seldom completely attained at one event or experience. Tantra can be described as an amoral life style. The things we do or accept in its unique pattern are not moral or immoral. This, in turn, requires a neutrality in the thinking process which is beyond discrimination. In modern society sex has become obscenity, something to be hidden, but even though, to be exploited as some subversive activity.

Young people are less guilty of this than adults. It is now a far cry from the clean and natural way of life that Mother Nature must have intended. In Spiritual Yoga a simple natural life and even nakedness have always been the ideal to pave the way to realisation. The teachers of great religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism lived this so simple life and went naked. Their names are many but we

can quote a few such as Rishabha, Sukhdev, Jadabharata, Dattatreya, Gautama the Buddha, Mahavir and a host of others.

Although Jains in modern India seldom appear in public completely naked, it is maintained by both sects of Jains - the Digambar and Svetambar - that nudity is still essential to obtain enlightenment. Now the new "moral outlook" and modernisation have weakened religious and spiritual life so the real sages and yogis have vanished also. Sex abnegation was a development of the Vedic doctrines. We find no such teaching in the ancient patterns of spirituality. But Nathas and Tantriks must always remember that a superior way of life is not restricted or determined by any current social patterns or moral superstitions.

Sunset and Silence

It is rare to see a sadhu run. I had been spending several hours in the smashan near Ganganath Temple and was returning to the market. Suddenly I noticed a sadhu running towards me. As he came up to me he asked "Dadaji Mahendranath?". "Yes", I replied, "and what is your hurry?" "I have been looking for you all over Mehmabad", he said. We returned to the temple and sat down. "I have some news from Calcutta. Pagala Baba is dead. I saw him before he died and he told me to go to Gujarat and tell you that he was giving up the body. He wanted you to know but it has taken more than a month to find you as he thought you might be living in Ahmedabad".

It was a touching moment for me to hear that Pagala Baba had thought of me in his last moments. I felt indebted to the sadhu for the part he had played in this sad drama but when he spoke again he only created a confusing situation. "Dadaji", he said, "I want the initiation into the

Uttara Kaulas. Please grant this to me". I remained silent. The passing of Pagala Baba had created a unique situation. It now meant that although I was an Englishman by birth, I was now the only sadhu holding authentic initiation and guru status as a Tantrik or Kaula in the whole of India.

Later, in 1977, I was made to realise I was the only living paramahansa in India also. The ancient spiritual pattern was now dead and the bright galaxy of yogis and saints had passed away, perhaps for ever. This I tried to compensate in the following year by founding the International Nath Order. Much information and religion is still to be found in books but the intimate know-how and guru instruction may be tactfully presented to the world in a few English manuscripts. This work has been done and is completed and so I now rest content.

I had to explain to the sadhu two obstacles preventing me giving him Tantrik diksha. The first obstacle, which could not be overcome, was that I could not give diksha in the Uttara Kaulas to one who had been refused this diksha by my guru. Secondly, I had decided not to initiate anyone of Indian origin into the Uttara Kaula or the Adi Nath Sampradayas. As sanyasi or sadhu there was the danger that after I had entered Mahasamadhi and was unable to deny, that someone might claim that they had been given sannyas diksha and claim authority as a guru by succession. I wanted the International Nath order to have gurus and leaders who were in office by assent or election. The modern age demands this. The sadhu who brought me the message was not a great problem. I took him to Shambhala Tapovan and we took a good meal and I gave him a few rupees for travel as he wished to return to the Ganges area where he knew so many people.

Circumstances in India and the world have periodically forced me to confess that I am an Englishman by birth and have a British passport. This has not always been pleasant as I have always regarded the British as a backward race. I have, in fact, always thought of myself as a cosmopolitan and not limited by any ideas and not part of the social, political or intellectual world. The world is my city; the cosmos my land. The word cosmopolitan was first used by Diogenes, the naked Greek Cynic philosopher about 400 B.C. When will the human race grow up to recognise that there are many people who are not nationalists and want to be free of labels and locations? Why, in this modern day and age is it expected that all humans should grow up and conform to the patterns and ideas of the country and zone into which they are born? We are really still a long way from being a civilised and advanced culture.

India is more advanced in its social patterns than most western nations. If life gets too heavy it is perfectly legal to commit suicide and if you fail in the attempt, there are no legal repercussions. Any woman, married or single, can have an abortion anytime, anywhere, and the service is free. If there is confusion in India, it is only because the old conflicts with the new and conflicting interests are too numerous. Tantra has now reached bottom and is popularly regarded as promiscuity or porno. The word Tantrik appears frequently in the popular press, but always to indicate some sadhu who is up to magick tricks for money or is a blatant scoundrel.

Authentic sadhus now avoid the word as much as possible. In the press we hear from time to time of some remarkable religious enthusiasm, shades of a more barbaric day, leading to police action.

Sati, the burning of young wives on the funeral pyres of their husbands has been illegal since British times. It is still practised by fanatical in-laws and many cases have been brought to light but many are unknown as the police lack evidence to prosecute because few people will speak up or give evidence. Human sacrifice is thought to belong to a bygone age but this is far from true.

A pious mother-in-law was recently convicted of bride-burning. Even the court was shocked and the Judge ordered that the murderess be hanged in public at Jaipur. It was thought that the public execution would be a warning to others not to play the same horrible game. Alas, the then Chief Justice cancelled the order on the grounds that it was barbaric. Many people questioned which was more barbaric: the burning, alive, of an innocent girl or the hanging of a murderess in public.

Let the Indian press tell of new adventures in barbarism. Times of India editorial 3.12.87 tells us: Last Monday in Panchi Village under Kharkauda Police Station near Meerut, a seven year old boy was beheaded by his father to propitiate Kali in order to be blessed with lots of land and money and a big car. The child was pinned down by his mother as he bent to touch her feet at her bidding. The father hacked off his head, dipping his finger in the warm blood and anointing his wife. The severed head was placed before a picture of the Goddess. On Dussehra day in 1987, a fifteen month old child was kidnapped in West Delhi's Prem Naga. The girl's body was smeared with ashes and a corrosive fluid provided by a sorcerer. The child was then drowned in a water tank. On August 19, 1987 in Annakaran in Palghat district of Kerala, a schoolteacher cut off the head of his one year old son and drank the hot blood of the child. In April 1987 in Virli Village near Amgaon a couple gouged out the eyes of their son and inserted an iron

pipe in his throat to appease the gods. In March 1987 a six year old girl was reported to have been sacrificed to propitiate a deity in Baisair Village. End of Press quote.

One of the unique features of India is the Tilak, the red mark used to denote that one belongs to the Hindu community. Although it is used by all women it is used by men also. Its ancient origin is amusing. In the long distant past, when a girl had her first monthly period she became an adult and the parents wanted to get her married as soon as possible. Propaganda was used in various forms to let the local bachelors know that it was now time to speak up and pop the question. This method was not favoured among the young girls and most were shy and embarrassed by a man going around the town beating a drum and shouting "Gulub is having a bloody time". Prayers to Vishwakarma solved the problem. Taking a rest from constructing large galaxies, suns and planets, he found time to visit India. At constructing a better situation he proved ideal. He promulgated a new rule that when the girls had their first Luna blood, the mother should put her finger in the right place and then use the blood to mark a spot or streak between the eyes on the forehead. Thus marked, the girls were proud to walk round the town and no words need be spoken.

The Naked Saints of India

In some of the oldest scriptural texts of India, we find references to naked saints and sannyasins. In the Rig Veda of Vedic Aryan tradition reference is made to them but worded in such a way that shows the Brahmins did not properly understand them but were held in wonder by the spiritual and psychic powers some of them possessed.

These naked Sadhus belonged to the non-Vedic or pre-Aryan religion which flourished long before the Vedic religion was introduced into India. The scriptures of these people were known as Agamas and the same teachings were later written as Tantras. The earlier texts of the Agamas are mostly dialogues where the spiritual teaching is put into the mouth of the Lord Shiva as Guru teachings to Parvati the Mother Goddess as sishya. The same teachings found their way into the Vedic texts and were known as Upanishads. The Agamas tell us of naked sannyasins as revealing the highest expression of renunciation and suggests that he who wants nothing of the world does not want its rags either.

Another reference tends to be critical of one who claims to be a high initiate and yet hides the lingam (penis) which is the sacred symbol of Shiva. The sannyasins of the non-Vedic religion practised tapas or austerity. It was the path between needless and foolish physical discomforts on one hand and sensual luxury-seeking on the other. It was the path of moderation which was later introduced into Buddhism as the Middle Way. These sadhus did not take any vow or make any promises.

Nakedness was accepted as part of their way of life, but there was nothing to prevent a sadhu from using clothes to protect himself from extreme cold or in time of sickness. There can now be little doubt that complete nakedness was the accepted pattern for the majority of sadhus and a pattern which still existed till the time of Gautama the Buddha and Mahavira the Jaina. Although the Buddha probably remained naked until the day he died, his followers introduced robes into the Buddhist order. Also among the Jain followers of Mahavira, there came a division into two separate sects -- the Svetambars, clad in white cloth and the Digambars who sometimes wore clothes but

were expected to end up naked at some future date. Nakedness was never practised by laymen in the Jain community. Many foreign visitors have often rushed to see a Digambar Jain only to find he was a decorously dressed shopkeeper. Household Jains take their designation from the sect which they follow.

The feature of naked sadhus is still fairly common, even in modern India. Overseas visitors seldom see them because they seldom live or visit the tourist fleshpots and city terminals. When Allen Ginsberg, the American poet, visited India some years back, he expressed in letters which were printed in City Lights his sad disappointment at not seeing even one naked sadhu. This could be surprising because in Banaras, which he visited, it is doubtful if this great city of Shiva has ever been without naked sadhus and in considerable numbers.

Banaras is still the one city in India where you can walk about naked and yet remain unnoticed. Even beggars display mutilated genitals to reveal a mental inclination to celibacy and a great sacrifice which would make physical delinquency impossible. In these days most naked sadhus wear a cloth in public or when travelling. They neither wish to draw needless attention to themselves or amuse the schoolboy population now sadly conditioned by modern education. Hindu Digambar sadhus have outnumbered, and still do, the naked Jains by thousands to one. Many city councils have introduced bylaws forbidding public nudity even among sadhus. A new sense of Western respectability has come to India just at a time when the West is abandoning its Puritanism.

Even today the great names and outstanding sadhus of Indian history and tradition have mostly been naked. In the years which followed the

Muslim invasion of India it became obvious that there were many things which they did not like about Indian Paganism. They showed their aversion to images by smashing them and destroying temples. They loathed the sight of the naked sadhus, yet for some reason feared to interfere with them.

There is only one record where a man was executed by King Aurangzeb for public nudity. He was not actually a sadhu. Born in Persia as a Jew, he became a convert to Islam. As a Muslim he came to India selling embroidered garments in Delhi. There he changed again and became a devotee of Rama and wrote many beautiful songs. Even this might have been ignored but he began to dance around the streets in the nude. The Muslims would not recognize that a Muslim could possibly embrace another religion. He was executed by the king as a degenerate Muslim who exhibited himself naked. Indian

Paganism made its inroads into Islam and in India, unique among all other Muslim communities, we have records of numerous Muslim and Sufi saints who adopted nakedness. Some exist even today. It was the Muslims who seem to have first used the word Hindu and therefore it is a very recent addition to Indian words. It sprang from their own references to "people living on the other side of the Indus," who were the "Indus" and later refined to Hindu. Many Indians still find the word unacceptable although it enjoys common usage. It is not found in the Vedas, Upanishads or the Bhagavad Gita. Since there was a time when the religion of old India enjoyed a monopoly, a name was unnecessary. After the invasion of the Aryans, the non-Vedic people began to use the term Sanatana Dharma, the eternal wisdom or teachings. When the Vedic and non-Vedic religions merged, the term came to be generally accepted.

The Agamas of the original Indians have been ignored by Western scholars in favour of Vedic literature. This, in spite of the fact that it is the Agama teachings which have dominated Indian spiritual life for three to four thousand years.

They and not the Aryan Vedas form the basis of all that is taught in all the Puranas, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Uddhava Gita and other Gitas.

The Avadhut Gita and the Jivanmukti Gita, generally studied only by sadhus, are regarded as teaching the highest principles of spiritual life and refute much of what is taught in the Aryan Vedas.

Historically the sannyasin goes back to primordial times. Some Indian scholars, free from Western conditioning, have speculated that they began in an age when nobody wore clothes and retained their naked status even after woven cloths and linens came into common usage. It is only an idea but the spiritual leaders of many religions do tend to preserve customs and forms long after the lay population has abandoned them.

Beyond this, we can consider that stronger than all other motives was the desire of the sadhu to remain a natural man in his natural environment. This separated him from the tendencies of worldly people to become more and more affluent and cling firmer to those delusions which he had abandoned.

All Upanishadic and Gita teachings lead to the one simple but inescapable truth that we are not bodies but immortal souls. So what does an immortal want to hide and should they try to look like worldly men? The word Digambar is taken from the Sanskrit Dig-ambara. Its literal meaning is wearing the sky or sky-clothed. Though often used as a synonym for naked, it has a much deeper meaning. A householder is separated from his environment by his clothes, and when he removes his clothes he is separated from his environment by his skin. He fails to understand or realize the oneness of all nature and life. This should not be so with the sadhu and when he is digambar he is one and absolute with everything.

Notes on Pagan India

Dattatreya Gurum Devam | Dhyayannisham Sadashivam |
Tanmantram Tasya Gitam Ca | Vyakurve Tat Prasadatah

Dattatreya Guru and God, I meditate on Him, auspicious one;
His Mantra and His Hymn; I expound by His Divine Grace.

The Golden Thread

Non-Indians, and even Indians themselves, making an investigation into the spiritual life of this land, soon find they have stumbled on the most complex and outwardly confusing pattern of thought which has existed in any place in the world or at any time throughout history. Its scriptural texts are enormous, its deities so numerous, its teachers so diverse, and in a land of teeming millions everyone seems to be a separate sect of which he is the only member. Yet it is without dogma or damnation, and everyone is free to believe and interpret as he thinks fit. How strange that in this mystic world of such diversity there

is always that Golden Thread of the Absolute which runs through all and everything.

Within the sections of this Notebook it is intended to present the great spiritual sciences of Yoga, Shastra, Tantra, Vedanta (Upanishads), the early Vedas, and to deal with initiations, rites, rituals, customs and practices. We will base our Fundamentals on Absolute Wisdom, realized by Saints and Yogis in the heights of Samadhi, and brought down to a worldly level as their teachings. India is a land where the ancient way of life continued for thousands of years and presented a happy contented people who knew the real joy and rhythm of life. These were a people who knew how to be spiritual and when to be resigned, who taught the law of Karma and Rebirth to the world, who knew how to fulfil their duties, attend to their livelihood and enjoy the harmony of sexual pleasures, just as did the Great God Shiva with Parvati the Mother Goddess, to whom all Hindus bow in respect. This way of life goes beyond the sterility of mere theory. It finds fulfilment only in the living fire of practice.

Tantrik Origins

In its earliest known development, Tantra presented a revolt against established ideas. Until this time, all schools of Hindu Paganism maintained that in order to obtain Liberation (Moksha) and Self-Realization (Atma-Jnana) it was necessary to renounce the world. The aim of the original Tantra and its basic theory was that householders could attain Liberation if they trained their minds to think of the joys of sexual intercourse, eating tasty foods, etc., as being a form of ecstasy related and similar to the Bliss of Liberation. By training the mind in this way the Ultimate Liberation would be made quite easy. We will never know to what extent these ideas were ever successful and history is silent on any reports of vast numbers suddenly becoming

realized. But we do know that Householder Tantra slowly slipped back into purely devotional forms.

Yet it was from this beginning that there emerged groups of Tantrik Sadhus and Ascetics. It was these Tantrik Sadhus and Yogis who not only kept Tantra alive, but brought it to the real peak of development. Some of these Sadhus combined into separate sects such as the Aghoris and many others now extinct. In a land which had realized most of that which can be realized and taught most of that which could be taught, where the wisdom schools had reached the highest peaks, we cannot expect something new and unique either in teaching or in the outward form. It is therefore easy to understand that Tantra, especially the Tantra of the Yogis, presented a similar pattern in appearance to older and more ancient traditions, but gave it a new meaning.

The Descent of the Absolute

The first part of this article was prefaced by a Shloka or verse: a dedication to Shri Bhagavan Dattatreya. Unique among men it would not be an exaggeration to describe him as the "Greatest Man who ever lived." His teachings occupy the very highest strata of Hindu thought. He was the Master Yogi par excellence. We read of Sri Dattatreya in the Upanishads and one Upanishad bears his name. He was one of the great Naked Saints of India and took foremost place amongst a galaxy of spiritual giants. Of his life and teachings we will deal later. Here it is sufficient to say that he was an Avatar or incarnation of the Lord Shiva. He was the Adi-Guru, or First Teacher, of the Adi-Nath sub-sect of the Nathas, into which I was initiated.

If Sri Dattatreya was an incarnation of the Lord Shiva, who or what is Lord Shiva? Both Vedic and Tantrik paths present and accept a multitude of Gods and Goddesses. Yet, in spite of their numerical

strength, Indian Paganism teaches and propounds only one God or Absolute of which all Divine Names and Forms are but a manifestation. Different sects and schools of thought may differ in their acceptance of manifestation, but all accept the Absolute (Paramatman or Brahman) as being Supreme. So the manifestations and personifications become the product of the descent of the Absolute into the worldly plane.

Long before the Aryans came with their castes and Vedic teachings, the Lord Shiva and his Shakti (or consort) were worshipped throughout India and probably in many parts of Europe also. There is considerable evidence that the religion of Europe, before it was suppressed by Christianity, was a form of Phallus and Yoni worship, such as existed and still exists in India.

The Alchemy of the Absolute

The first and highest strata of Hindu life, both as Vedanta or as Tantra, must be given to the Absolute, the Cosmic Soul (Paramatman). This was never defined, explained or given characteristics. It is the Supreme Reality and the only real substance. But man, with his many limitations and imperfections, prefers to see THAT in manifestation and form. It is true that in the life of Sadhus and Sannyasins their aim was the Absolute, but there always existed that deep understanding that men, for the most part, could only see and think of the Divine in the form and qualities they understood. In creation, or the process of manifestation, the actionless Absolute had to resort to action, and the non-dual gave rise to duality. Thus there came into existence the Purusha, or Cosmic Personality, and his Power or Shakti the operative force of natural manifestation.

The Tantriks continued the non-Aryan tradition of Shiva as the Cosmic Person and his Shakti personified as the Mother Goddess. Tantra eventually developed three harmonious schools based upon this. One gave first prominence to Shiva and another gave first prominence to Shakti. The third gave equal status to both. In the Tantrik scriptures, some present Shiva as the Guru with the Shakti as the Sishya receiving the teachings, while the Shakti schools reversed the position to present Shakti as the teacher giving instruction to Shiva. To discriminate between Gods is very relative and all comparisons have a very bad smell. Yet in spite of this there is something unique, wondrous, miraculous and most fascinating about the very concept of Shiva and his lovely Shakti. Nowadays iconography has degenerated to a very low level, where pictures and paintings of Shiva are more concerned with passing the censor than presenting Him as the scriptures described Him to be.

Guru And Sishya

Gurus as subjects could fill volumes, but here we are dealing with the word Guru as a spiritual guide and teacher, and not of the teachers who instruct lesser creatures in music, dancing or the three R's. In India the word Gurudev is generally used to mean the Spiritual Guru or Divine Preceptor.

The Guru-Sishya relationship is an indispensable part of Vedic and Tantrik Practice. Though theory can often be gathered from books, a living Preceptor, who has already trodden the path successfully is essential for all practice. It is based on the obvious recognition that disciples who are without practical experience of real spiritual life must receive competent instruction from a qualified person. There is also the dynamic magic of initiation to be considered. The Diksha rite, in which the Guru transmits something of himself to the Sishya, often

increases or manifests his awareness. This Guru-Sishya relationship is a very intimate one and needs to be so for the Sishya's success. Actually it is a two-way process, for the Guru, in turn, is enabled to have a more intimate and deeper understanding of the disciple, and thereby is better able to guide and direct the course of progress. To become a Tantrik Sadhu, or Hindu Sannyasin, one must first receive the Sadhu initiation (Sannyasa Diksha) from one who is already initiated as a Sannyasin. This is the initiation of World Renunciation, where the disciple repeats the Praisha Mantra after the Guru. Once this Mantra has been spoken, the Sadhu must never again return to household life in this birth. A householder, following the path of Tantra, takes Guru Diksha from any Tantrik Guru, whether Sannyasin or householder.

Tantra differs from Vedic Hinduism inasmuch as the wife must take Diksha also under the same Guru. Because of the nature of Tantrik initiation they usually take this Diksha at different times. In the Vedic tradition only the man is required to take initiation under a Guru. In Sannyasa sects, even in Tantrik mode, the initiation is sometimes a very complicated procedure subdivided into several stages. A householder can easily be taken on his face value, but for those who think they are prepared to renounce the world permanently, careful consideration and observation is required. When a Guru accepts a disciple, he also accepts a serious responsibility. Even if the Sishya cannot obtain Liberation (Moksha) in the present life, he must live in such a way that he secures a favourable rebirth in the next life, of such a kind that will contribute to his spiritual progress.

Gilt and Gold

Although other religions and ways of life have eventually developed a householder community and a higher ascetic or spiritual community, it was Hindu Paganism which first set the pattern and understanding that there were two distinct and separate paths of behaviours, teaching and general outlook. They are called Pravritti Marga, the Way of the World, and Nivritti Marga, the Path of Return. The Pravrittis, or people of the household life, were not regarded as inferior to the Nivrittis. They have their purpose and function to fulfil. Although the householders bow to the feet of Sadhus, the Hindu Dharma recognized that both had an important part to play. A man was not regarded as inferior or a "sinner" because he could not renounce his worldly life. Instead, a practical outlook required him to give sufficient attention to religious life -- no matter how dual it might be -- and to enjoy life to the full. There always existed the clear understanding that all incarnate souls have to drink well of the river of life until they have their fill. How can it be possible for anyone to renounce anything of which they have had little or no experience? In the long long rounds of countless rebirths, and through the Grace of the Absolute, individual souls or Jivas would realize that these worldly things had lost their taste and were no longer desirable. Then only could one be ready and able to enter the Nivritti Marg of Renunciation, and strive for return to the Absolute.

Between the two very diverse paths of Pravritti and Nivritti there occurs a very special strata of society called the Mumukshas. It means one who has a great desire for Liberation and the Absolute. Mostly they remain as householders, as certain duties still bind them. On the other hand they may not feel desire or readiness to become Sadhus. It is among the Mumukshas that we find the very religious and devout of India, and their sincerity shines like a lamp in the darkness.

Hindu Paganism has always stressed that there are four legitimate aims in life, for which the householder should strive. Collectively they are called the Purusarthas, and they consist of Dharma, Righteousness and Duty; Artha, the Pursuit of Wealth and Property; Kama, Sensual Pleasures; and Moksha, Liberation. There is nothing akin to Western puritanism here. They are a pattern for a serious yet joyful life and one which will have a blissful spiritual unfoldment in the future. The four Purusarthas, the four "Noble Truths" of Pagan Life, are common to both Vedic and Tantrik patterns. He who finds the balance and harmony between these four is one who finds the real rhythm of life.

Naked Magicians

The Tantriks must have welcomed the appearance of Tantrik Sadhus and the new impetus. Indians have always known that the real powers (Siddhis) were more developed in a naked Sadhu than in those who wore clothes. This is far from being a superstition and the idea persists even today.

We are now dealing with an age when the majority of Sadhus and Yogis were always naked and nakedness was regarded as an essential demonstration of renunciation. Even at the time of Gautama the Buddha, Mahavira the Jain, and Gosala the Arjivika, nudity was the accepted pattern among Sadhus. The Tantrik Sadhu could not be an exception and there is little doubt that, from the early developments of Tantra, they became venerated for the display of powers and the blessings that they could bestow.

Naked Sadhus are still plentiful, though foreign visitors claim disappointment because they hardly ever see them. They are not easily found because they do not live in the big cities and tourist centres where the foreign visitors congregate. Also, because of

changed conditions in India, naked Sadhus either only travel at night or wear a cloth when in public. In their Ashrams and Hermitages the ancient custom still persists. A real Sadhu or Yogi generally has no desire to draw needless attention to himself.

Tantra was the sect to introduce nudity, even for householders, when taking Diksha from a Guru. The rule was a wise one because Tantra was so firm in its understanding of the importance of the Guru- Sishya relationship. If a man could not accept the nature of a child before his spiritual father, then he was unworthy of initiation. Ancient traditions, related to forms of magic, stress that a Sadhu should be completely naked when invoking the powers and help of deities and spirits. Even householders, who dabbled in this art, followed the injunction.

Tantrik Initiation

A personal experience may be of interest to others. I received my first Sannyasa Diksha in 1953 and was initiated into the Adi-Nath, a sub-sect of the Nathas which is considered to be the first actual sect of Tantrik Sadhus. I left India for some years and on my return I visited Bihar and Bengal for the first time. Although a Natha I wanted some information on Tantra and actual Tantrik initiation if I could obtain it. It was my very good fortune to meet my fourth Guru. I do not, to this day, know his real or Sannyasa name. At some stage he had started to sign letters "Pagala Baba", meaning "Mad Sadhu". Thus he had become known and those who might have known his original name soon forgot it.

He had previously initiated two disciples, but both of them died, and he made a vow not to give the Tantrik Sadhu Diksha to anyone anymore. After a few days, to my good fortune, he relented and gave me the Diksha. It was only after the Diksha that he gave answers to

my questions and considerable information beyond my wildest hopes. He only spoke Bengali, but a young householder disciple translated the questions and answers. My own background and previous experience, to say nothing of my harmony with the Guru, made all his information easily understandable, and yet it was all beyond the translator. India has always made her most secret wisdom public, yet so much remains esoteric because it is not understood.

The actual initiation consisted of three stages spread out over three days. The first was similar to the initiation I had already received as a Natha. Of the last I cannot speak here, but the second was an experience. It was, in many respects, similar to that given to a householder. I only wore one garment, a Sadhu's robe, the word for which means a shroud. This I was told to remove and to go and sit in the Kali temple for one hour. The Kali temple was the one suitable and empty.

Naked Among the Gods

From Pagala Baba's residence I walked naked to the little temple. Fortunately the translator who came to lock me in brought a mat for me to sit upon. The Kali image was a crude effort made from clay. As I sat in front of Kali Mata the young man said that he would be back in an hour and closed the doors. This placed the interior in darkness and I shivered a little from the cold and damp atmosphere. As I closed my eyes, a wonderland of brilliant spectacle and vision, all in vivid colour, opened up before me.

First there was the shining naked Parvati, moving with life, and yet standing still. I could hear Her rippling laughter as though something filled Her with delight and not amusement. Suddenly the image began to change and I became aware that the figure was the Lord Shiva, as

naked as myself. He too was smiling with some delight, but this was not the same as the laughter of his consort.

I suddenly became aware of two figures standing behind me. Shiva waved his hand, indicating an instruction which the two figures obeyed. They put their hands on my face and peeled off some gauze-like material. As they did so the light and colour became so brilliant that I held my hands over my face. The whole scene changed into a whirling mass of stars and gyrating lights. Then came two simple personal visions relating to my own future. One of them has already matured, but the second can only occur after I am dead. Suddenly a knock and the doors opened. At first I thought that the translator had returned to give some message. I was sure that he had left only five minutes ago, and certainly not more than ten minutes. But the hour of full sixty minutes had passed. During the vision of Shiva I heard a Mantra clearly and loudly spoken. When I returned to Pagala Baba, after my session in the temple, this was the same Mantra which he gave to me. There was no question of coincidence or chance. The Mantra was not only a very unusual one, but one which I had never heard of before.

The Regeneration of the Nathas

Although the vast parade of Nathas wends its way back into prehistoric times, they do not appear to have been a distinctive or separate Sampradaya, or sect. The Nathas became a distinct sect somewhere about 300-400 AD, a period of great religious revival when many new and differing sects were formed.

The real story begins with a Sadhu known as Siddha Kakkuti. He had received initiation and instruction from an ex-prince who became known as Lui-pada, well known in Tibetan legends. Siddha Kakkuti

later took initiation from Siddha Carpati (a Natha) and was instructed by this Guru to complete his Sadhana (discipline) and live in Smashanas (burning grounds).

A simple fisherman named Mina became his lay disciple, continuing his occupation as a fisherman. One day he threw his baited line into the water and sat on the bank to practice his meditation. Suddenly the line, which was tied to his wrist, pulled taut. He tried to haul the fish in, but instead the fish pulled him into its mouth and he was swallowed. Because of the power of his meditation he did not die. Soon another fisherman caught the fish, while helpless in very shallow water. When the fish was cut open, Mina escaped.

Mina again returned to Siddha Carpati, this time taking his son with him. Both were given initiation as Sannyasins. His father became famous as the Siddha Mina and the son as Siddha Matsyendra. It was this Siddha Matsyendra who became known as the founder of the Natha Sampradaya. His two most important disciples were Caurangi and Gorakshanath. The latter was destined to eclipse his Master.

Gorakshanath the Guru

There are books related to the Nathas where Matsyendranatha is stated to be the author. But the real bloom burst forth in the writings of Gorakshanath and even today he is considered as the Greatest of the Nathas. There are several temples in India dedicated to Gorakshanath. His Guru seems to have been forgotten in India, but in Nepal there are temples dedicated jointly to Matsyendranatha and to Avalokiteshwara. There they are considered to be the same person.

In India today there are many caves which are claimed to be places where Guru Gorakshanath spent time in meditation. Most have temples built over them. It was Gorakshanath who wrote the first books dealing with Layayoga and the "raising" of the Kundalini-Shakti, a Yoga which has now become much misunderstood and distorted. Matsyendranatha had proved himself to be a genius in organization and many large Natha Ashrams were built in his lifetime, to give shelter to Nathas. It is not impossible that Laya Yoga was developed to occupy the time of the many Sadhus living in these establishments and to give them a sound practical basis for their search for Liberation. Around this same period the Buddhists had also been occupied with the problems of large monasteries and Bhikkhus residents had devised the Abhidharma as a form of mental gymnastics, in order to occupy and develop their minds. Gorakshanath never became a God, nor was he worshipped by the Hindus as was Dattatreya. The temples where his images are enshrined are actually Natha Ashrams, where he reigns as the sect Guru.

Mad, Mystic and Magic

The Nathas, the Aghoris and the Pashupatis (Vairagyis) are the three most colourful and interesting sects which ever appeared in India. All found their way into Tibet, to add to the vast agglomeration which settled itself into Tibetan Lamaism. All three were feared and yet respected. The Nathas and Pashupatis were Shiva sects, while Aghoris based their way of life on the Devi Purana and worshipped the Mother Goddess.

All these three sects have wilted with time, but the Nathas still remain numerically stronger. None of them were actually celibate sects, but they could not marry as that would have meant the return to household life. Mostly they were naked but one Natha sect adopted

the custom of plaiting a dead Guru's hair into ropes and coiling it around the waist. The Nathas and Aghoris were both associated with magic powers, but while the Nathas were regarded as being the distributors of good luck and blessings, the Aghoris were associated with Black Siddhis or Black Magic. Alcohol was forbidden to Nathas and Vairagyis but the Aghoris were often drunkards. One Natha sect became known as the Pagala Nathas or Mad Nathas, Nath being the colloquial form of Natha. They became known as such due to their mad and insane behaviour. But it was a mystical madness which flouted the conventions of the world for the mad desire for God.

Both Nathas and Aghoris have been closely associated with Tantra, though it was not so with some Nathas. The Pashupatis seemed to have remained completely outside Tantra, but this is probably because as a sect they did not like learning or scriptures, but practised renunciation in its severest forms.

Zen's Zenith of Zest

The Story of the Transmission of Wisdom

RAG ROBI BARE FEET HARD SEAT SIT NEAT

Would you like to become a Buddha? It will be a wonderful experience, and how the neighbours will talk about you ! There are two kinds of Buddhas so you can take your choice. One belongs to the Theravada school of Southern Buddhism where they tell of a Buddha who spent most of his enlightened years making rules and telling other people what to do.

Oddly enough, before he became an enlightened Buddha, we are led to believe that he spent his life either silent or speaking very little. This could have been his most interesting period and more intimate details of his life and experience which led to his great realization could have been of much practical value to his followers. But practically nothing is recorded of this period, only the latter part where we are overwhelmed by sermons.

The other Buddha belongs to the Zen tradition and reveals a wiser man and one who had the wisdom to keep quiet. Zen does have scriptures passed on from ancient tradition, but they are from Mahayana sources, and thereby tactfully, have rejected the whole of the Pali Canon. Although Zen does have these scriptures, now translated from the original Sanskrit, none are accepted as being an authority or final word. The Buddha of Zen presents a different and wiser type. The Pali Canon relates that soon after the experience of Awakening (Bodhi), the Buddha rushed to the Deer Park near Varanasi to preach and convert his former associates. Zen has a very different viewpoint and tells us the Buddha "never said a word". This must not be taken to imply the Buddha lived a life of complete silence but rather that Truth cannot be expressed in words.

Thus the viewpoint of Zen must be that sermons and sutras can never in themselves express the final Truth. Zen had little regard for chronology or history and never tried to invent any. They tell a wonderful and beautiful story which serves to illustrate their viewpoint rather than as an event in history.

The story is told that the Sage Gautama was sitting quietly beneath a tree surrounded by disciples, a curious public and odd sight-seers.

Then suddenly a local panjandrum waddled into the scene, paid his respects, gave his dakshina or offering, and presented the Buddha with a beautiful yellow flower of golden hue. Then, perhaps with a sincere desire for spiritual food or the mere intention to get something for his money, he begged the Sage Gautama to preach a sermon on the golden flower which he held in his hand. When the official was seated, all listened intensely for the sermon. The Buddha held up the flower so that all the audience could both see and gaze at it. Gautama himself did precisely the same thing and sat silently gazing at the flower and smiled to the mystified mob to indicate the sermon was finished. But practically everyone betrayed a puzzled countenance and revealed their bewilderment. When the glance of the Buddha fell on the face of Mahakashyapa, his leading disciple, their eyes met and they both smiled. Then the Buddha knew that of all the congregation, only Kashyapa got the message. Zen calls this the transmission of mind to mind.

Thus Zen dragged Buddhism out of the relative ruts into which it was rapidly sinking. The cult of Zen Buddhism first came to bloom in China and became known as Chan. It was the real Golden Flower and had grown on a spectacular plant which had its roots in the Tantra of the Hindus, Taoism and Buddhism of the Indian school of Mahayana. The Hindu roots are there, and most obvious, but seldom is any reference made because scholars, especially foreign scholars, who write most of the Zen books, have never yet studied the higher Upanishad teachings, and less so the Agamas of ancient India and the expressions of these which are found in the teaching of Sri Dattatreya. So vivid are these relationships and so similar the fundamentals that it would not now appear odd if Bodhidharma, who is said to have taken the Dhyana cult to China, was proved to be a Hindu. He himself never claimed to be a Buddhist but it could easily have happened that the Chinese thought all monks or sadhus from India were all Buddhists. Prior to

Bodhidharma, they had all been so. Certainly the pattern of his visit to the Chinese court, his answers and general behaviour were not the usual pattern of a Buddhist of any' school. The story of Bodhidharma being the twenty- eighth Patriarch of Indian Buddhism is doubted even by the Zen people themselves and no Indian records of his period even mention him. Buddhism in India never did have an exclusively Dhyana school or cult but always existed in -mixed patterns. Ch'an tradition tells us that he arrived in China about 520 A.D. Zen, however rises above all these things, because it is the living lamp which gives the light and not the burnt-out wick of tradition.

Ch'an flourished in China for about 800 years and terminated as a monastic sect with its own Masters in the 13th century. In spite of its brilliance it reached a stage of weakness and became transformed into the very relativistic Pure Land school. Earlier it had spread into Tibet Korea and Japan and only in the latter country was it able to continue as two separate but related schools of Zen. Its existence in Japan in the present day is well known but Ch'an in China never completely died. It continued with separate monks who had access to its vast literature, records and teachings. But nearly all Chinese schools began to merge and the late Patriarch was known by the title of Patriarch of the Five Schools. It also existed in Malaysia where a very fine monk had a temple in Kuala Lumpur and identified himself completely as a Ch'an monk.

People have become somewhat conditioned to think of Buddhism as an atheistic religion. In some schools this could be so, but the interesting feature of early Ch'an is that the Patriarchs and Masters so rarely used the word Buddha or Buddhism. Instead, we find them talking and thinking in terms of the Tao and the Supreme Reality. Lao Tzu was generally the most quoted, not by name, but by the teachings

he had expounded in the Tao Teh Ching. The Meditation Master Fa-Yung tells us: "No-thought is the Absolute Reality". He correctly used the term Ultimate Essence. for the Sanskrit word Sunyata, though it later degenerated into being regarded as "nothingness" or "void". He also used the term of one's "Original Nature" to mean this "Ultimate Essence", but it too became changed, in time, to "Buddha's Nature".

The oldest Zen poem, by Seng-Ts'an, the Third Patriarch begins with the words "The Perfect Tao is without difficulty", and "Follow your nature and accord with the Tao". The early period of Ch'an was much neglected by the recorders, but having become more Buddha-conditioned, they might have neglected what was obviously Ch'an's earlier Tao period. As time passed, the Tao of Supreme Substance was thought of as Nothingness --- a void. Perhaps rivalry with the existing Taoist religion may have had something to do with the change.

Zen values are infinite. It helps one to better understand Yoga Vidya, and Yoga Vidya helps one to better understand Zen. Both can play important parts in man's attainment of Immortality. Now that Zen no longer exists as an organized cult in China, it is useless for Western people to go there to find it, also, unless you are a ping-pong player, you might have potential difficulties. While Japan still retains the Zen cult, even in a modernized form, the country does present great difficulties to the foreigner. Zen training today has now developed into a system of hardening and character building for young Japanese gentlemen and is considered an excellent introduction to a business career. To become involved in this system is not what the sincere seeker of wisdom really wants. The scanty diet and bitterly cold climate in the winter season do not provide the ideal conditions for any foreigner to spend two or three years in meditation. Language is also an insurmountable barrier and even where English is spoken it is

not easy for teachers to translate into those subtle idioms of English which Zen requires.

Yet there is still an answer to the inherent desire of the awakened man to find the Supreme Absolute. To do this does not require any fixed religious or cult patterns. One need not join a new religion or even seek an entirely different way of life. Though these things have their values to the local people of different lands, they might be impediments to one from abroad. It is like trying to put the wind in a bottle. This must not be taken to imply that the cultural patterns and conventions of your own land will provide you with the ideal conditions. You must get the mind and body disentangled from these also. Zen, Yoga-Vidya and Tao all teach a Supreme attainment but one which is only attainable by a natural man or woman. Stories you can read in books, but to acquire naturalness, to be natural, and to revert to your own primitive nature, this you must do yourself and empty the mind of wrong ideas and free the body from its obligations and impediments. Thus Zen can help us much by a study of the teachings and injunctions of those who walked the path, achieved success and became competent as guides for others.

Zen and Yoga-Vidya lie close together. Zen is only the Japanese, but now the most universal form of the Chinese Ch'an. This in its turn is taken from the Sanskrit Dhyana and was the Chinese equivalent to the colloquial form (which generally drops the last letter) of Dhyana. Yoga-Vidya is a rather modern form of Brahma-Vidya or Atma-Vidya. It only means the Science of Attainment. Although popular opinion associates it with the highest form of Hinduism it actually comes from the ancient pre-Aryan Tantric cult. But these associations should not mislead anyone into thinking of them as cult concepts of a separate religion. They arose in Ancient India long before people thought of themselves

as Indians and lived without any ideas of separateness or nationalism. They lived in a world without fences, frontiers and borders. The cult of Yoga-Vidya, of which Zen became another expression, is international and belongs only to the cosmos. Thus it becomes the Science of the Microcosm attaining the Macrocosm. Yoga-Vidya expounds only the One Supreme Reality (Paramatman), the Cosmic Soul. Belief in relative gods and goddesses were only, necessary to people of lower wisdom.

Zen was imported into Japan and developed as two separate but related schools. Soto-Zen is exclusively a meditation sect and tends to imply gradual awakening through mind training. Rinzai-Zen came through a monk who studied under Huang Po and Lin-Chi. It is the "Sudden" school of Zen which utilized the verbal and mental conundrums known as the Ko-an plus the well-directed application of a big stick. This amusing process assumes that some people behave better when battered. At least, it keeps the boys awake, if not "awakened".

The real characters of Zen were always the most fantastic and unconventional. Lin-Chi became so free from entanglements that his own disciples failed to recognize him. When he removed his outer robe and appeared only in his undergarment his students knew him instantly and would playfully cluster around him. Lin-Chi was so pleased with the results that he decided to take the experiment to its obvious conclusion. He removed the undergarment and put on a nude act. But then everything changed and the students ran away. Later he lectured to his boys, "not to try to recognize a man only by what he wears, since a man's clothes are only attachments". He then explained that "To be a great Zen Master one must be free from all these attachments and a good disciple is one who can see and recognize the Master's freedom "

Truth does not become more valid because it is seen by the light of a Chinese lantern or wrapped in a Japanese kimono. The Masters may have been distinguishable because they wore Mongolian masks, but the real souls of Absolutism were universal and cosmopolitan. Take them out of the Oriental environment and they are still great Masters. Many of the greatest are probably unknown, preached but little, did not seek disciples and were never entangled in monastic life. They lived like leaves blown by the wind. If realization does not give real freedom, then it is not realization. Liberation has no entanglements and involvements and those who permit them are not liberated.

Japanese Zen was much reflected in Japanese art, yet the favourite subjects of the artists were Patriarchs and Masters revealed in their Absolute expressions and not as conventional preachers and seat-sitters. Instead they were presented in wild abandonment, shouting, laughing, yelling and scolding. They became the insane ideals of Japanese spiritual life. It may also be noted that the characters most commonly represented were not the big names in Zen, but the obscure hermits Han-Shan and Shih-Te, dirty, ragged vagabonds of the hills and forests.

Another was the fat-bellied folk-god of the Chinese, Pu-Tai, whom Zen transformed into a Zen Bhikshu to make him more welcome on Japanese soil. Here was the real cult of Zen and the men of real value, living in just the same way as their forerunners had lived in India and the true pattern of drop-outs all over the world. One cannot become real Yog, Zen or Tao, until one reaches the stage of Naturalness (Chinese Tzu jan; Japanese Shizen; Sanskrit Sahaja). So if one distinguishes natural differences, then the thinking must be at fault.

Zen maintains complete identity with Yog as both are based on roll-realization as being their essential principle: and that meditation is the method to attain it. I cannot recommend Zen books which should be read but I can recommend many which should be burned.

The worst books in English have been written by Japanese with Europeans panting up behind. Zen literature, translated into English has its own real values. But one does not actually read real Zen but rather absorbs it. If you cannot understand it, then you are not ready for Zen. Too many find Zen, like Yoga-Vidya, beyond them. To make things easier the only practical steps one can safely recommend is for you to kill yourself and try for a better rebirth where you can grow up less conditioned, brainwashed and have less rubbish-soaked brains. You might have to do this several times.

Zen is an excellent approach to the Absolute but it is not the only one. Realization of the Supreme Reality is latent in each and every individual. People like to think that books help them but actually they become an obstacle. This is most true in the West where people have become conditioned to imagine that knowledge and wisdom must always be somewhere presented in black and white. Yet the Supreme Absolute which they seek has not a single word, phrase or sentence which is appropriate to describe it. How then, can it be conveyed by the printed word? Meditation is an experience and improves only with practice while "all-about-it books" lead only to confusion. So where do we go from here ?

Once-a-week Zen is just about as useless as once-a-week Yoga. The Science of the Soul is a way of life and must permeate your thought and action for twenty-four hours of every day. Eat less, sleep less and meditate the more. You will not find it in societies and classes but only within. No guru can help you unless he is a Realized Soul- a Buddha himself. Only the awakened should be the guides to awaken others. Otherwise you are trying to buy purgatives from constipated doctors. Now that someone has already written "Teach Yourself Zen", we are but a short time away from someone who will start teaching Zen by correspondence courses. Then tapes and gramophone records. While there are worms there will always be cunning birds looking for them.

Let us muse and meditate a while on the world of relative comparisons. A Hebrew, Christian or Muslim fanatic will become most aggressively insane if he feels his scripture is insulted. He will die to defend the name of his God and fight those who deny it. On the other hand Zen, not only lampooned itself, but ridiculed those who took the religious tradition and substratum too seriously. Yoga-Vidya went a step further and cracked relativity wide open. Sri Sukodev, the naked yogi, warned his disciples in the following way. "The Supreme Absolute is in all things and manifests as all characteristics and is represented in various ways in all religious systems and presented by learned people, but they are all under the influence of delusion (maya) and so it remains unknown to them".

The Absolute, through the mouth of Krishna as Guru, says, "What theory is it possible to maintain when all are based on My illusion (maya) ?" Speaking of the very life-blood of Hinduism, the manifestations and Avatars of the Supreme Reality, which millions worship, "I have indicated to you, in brief, all these manifestations of

the Absolute but you must know them to be nothing but the fancy of the imagination --mere words, unreal".

Also speaking of Gods and Avatars, Ugrasrava Suta says; "The descents and deeds of the Absolute are likewise illusionary, for the Absolute is changeless and has neither birth nor action".

In Christian patterns talk like this would have had them burned. It is only where there is real strength of teachings that a religion or path can freely express itself. Zen never produced holy or pious men in the usual accepted meaning of the word. Piety was even recognized as a defect and an outward show which need have no relationship to one's inner understanding.

Niu-T'ou Fa-Yung was one of the Ch'an Masters who lived in the early part of the 7th century. Having passed through considerable study of Confucianism, and Chinese History, he embraced Buddhism. Soon after, he went to live in a cave on Niu-T'ou Mountain as a hermit. Here he spent his days in the conventional patterns of Buddhism and developed such a condition of piety and holiness that a hundred birds would come every day and drop flowers and other things which birds drop, into his lap as he sat praying or meditating. Fa-Yung should have been in a glass case. He might well have died and rotted away in the odour of sanctity if the Fourth Patriarch, Tao-Hsin, had not chanced to pass that way and visit him.

The Zen Masters did not always use the word Buddha in the sense it came to be used in Theravada and Mahayana schools, yet their use was more in accord with the real meaning. The medieval courtesy title

of Buddha only meant an Awakened One. It was identical to the stage of Pratibha -- awakening, insight or illumination and in Japanese they use the term Satori and the Chinese Tun-Wu Thus, when a Japanese student attains Satori it means he has become an Awakened One, but this does not imply or mean that he has reached the stage of Moksha or Enlightenment and is free from rebirth. Zen did not really intend to make men into Buddhas of the Theravada type, although the Theravada attitude is somewhat inconsistent, for the fundamental basis of the whole Buddha. story is to demonstrate that what one man can achieve, others can do also.

The Theravada outlook is that a Buddha appears only once in millions and millions of years but this has the germ of its own degeneration and only presents the ultimate goal as being impossible for ordinary men. They also think of a Buddha as only being a man but cannot explain why there could not be a female Buddha. Zen is much aloof from these relative entanglements but it is important to understand what they actually meant and implied by "Buddhahood".

Zen is not achieved by a calculating mind, nor by the intellect. Men become trapped by their own thoughts and these lead to other thought traps. Like Master Nan- ch'uan's goose in the bottle, it is not really the goose which needs liberating from the bottle but man himself.

Master Nan-ch'uan related to one astonished disciple, "Last night I gave Manjusri and Samantabhadra twenty blows with my stick and drove them out of the temple". This was the way of telling the disciple that those seeking for Truth must not become attached even to Buddhism or its concepts. Other Ch'an masters made the same point

when they said, "If you meet the Buddha, kill the Buddha; if you meet a Patriarch, then kill him also".

Master Wen-Yen gives us the warning, "To grasp Zen you must experience it, and if you do not have that experience, do not pretend to know." And "when the great awakening takes place, no effort needs to be made by you. You will then be no different from the Buddha or any of the Patriarchs". And "Search for the coin in the river where you lost it."

People all over the world have shown an interest in Zen. Many must feel it has something they want. But how can they grasp it? From a world of names, symbols, forms, classifications, groupings and mechanical packaging, it is not easy to grasp something which cannot be grasped easily and defies not only reason and classification but thought itself. To such people an attempt to understand Zen can only be like trying to get horse dung from a rocking horse. But there is no law to prevent one trying. Realization is always something outside and beyond normal control.

As Sri Dattatreya taught about 4000 years ago, "It is spontaneous and comes of itself". It cannot come to "normal" people, because the civilized "normal" man is so artificial. He will strive for something and make efforts which prove to be obstacles. He will try to reason, debate, memorize and wrangle to improve his knowledge and the Essence only gets further and further away. To become natural and stop reasoning and calculating often proves to be impossible because he has been conditioned and educated that way. He is always tempted to seek knowledge from someone he thinks has studied more and read more books than himself. This leads to more confusion.

The Master Ma-Tzu summed this up by saying: "Cultivation is an obstacle for attaining the Tao. All you can do is become free from defilements (conditionings). When the mind is tainted with thoughts of life and death or intentional action, they are defilements. Grasping the Truth is a quality of everyday mindedness. Everyday mindedness (spontaneity) is free from intentional action, free from the concepts of right and wrong, taking and giving, the finite or the infinite. All our daily activities should be natural responses to situations as we deal with all circumstances when they arise. All this is Tao".

The time will soon come when the simple expression Zen will have common usage, and be used in a general sense to express the essence of a new freedom, previously unknown in the West. Hitherto, the Western approach to Zen has been much too conventional as it has been presented as an orderly, scrupulously clean and neat temple and monastic life with strict disciplines. None of this is really Zen and it can have no outward forms or patterns. Most of the ancient Indian gurus were more Zen than much which is found today in Japanese temples. The same is also true of the celebrated dropouts of European history, not to mention many of the tramps and hobos of Europe and America. Zen can have no fixed patterns and it is a Truth which needs no robes. Japanese Zen is too much entangled in Confucian and other ethics. The real Masters are the hermits, vagabonds, and disembodied rogues who live in nature's wilds, blown about like leaves in the wind.

Thus Zen must be the simplest of all simple patterns. It can have no methods beyond the spontaneity of natural people. It cannot be preached, for there is nothing to preach. It is the Golden Flower beyond explanation or definition. Children and insane vagabonds are

nearer to Zen than most of the people who call themselves Zen masters. Its real history and records are written in the trees, plants and stones, and its only temples and monasteries are the hills, mountains, rivers and clouds. It belongs to nature and to natural man. You will not find it in the cities because it cannot live or survive there.

The first approach to Zen is the first approach to the Absolute Reality. It means you are already Zen just as you are also Supreme Reality. It is only ignorance and delusion of maya which prevents you seeing this. Stop reading newspapers, listening to radio and watching television. Worry not about what you wear or how you are dressed. Stop planning and living in the delusions of a vague future. Live only in the bliss and detachment of the present moment. Cease holding opinions and being well-informed. If you sincerely seek the Absolute, remember only verse 13 of the Book of Ashes:

All the materials of the higher path,

All the foundations for spiritual gain,

All and everything to attain the goal

Are sleeping latent in the human frame.

WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ?