



Self-Realization

MAGAZINE

FOUNDED IN 1925 BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

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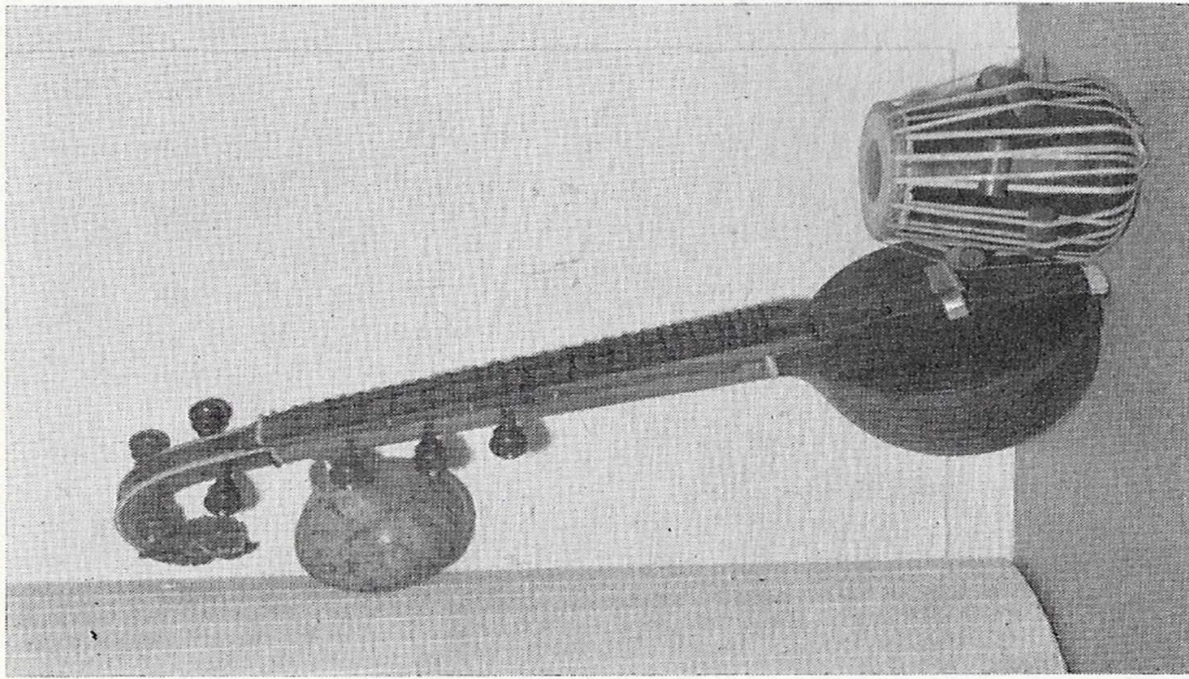
FOUNDED IN 1925 BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



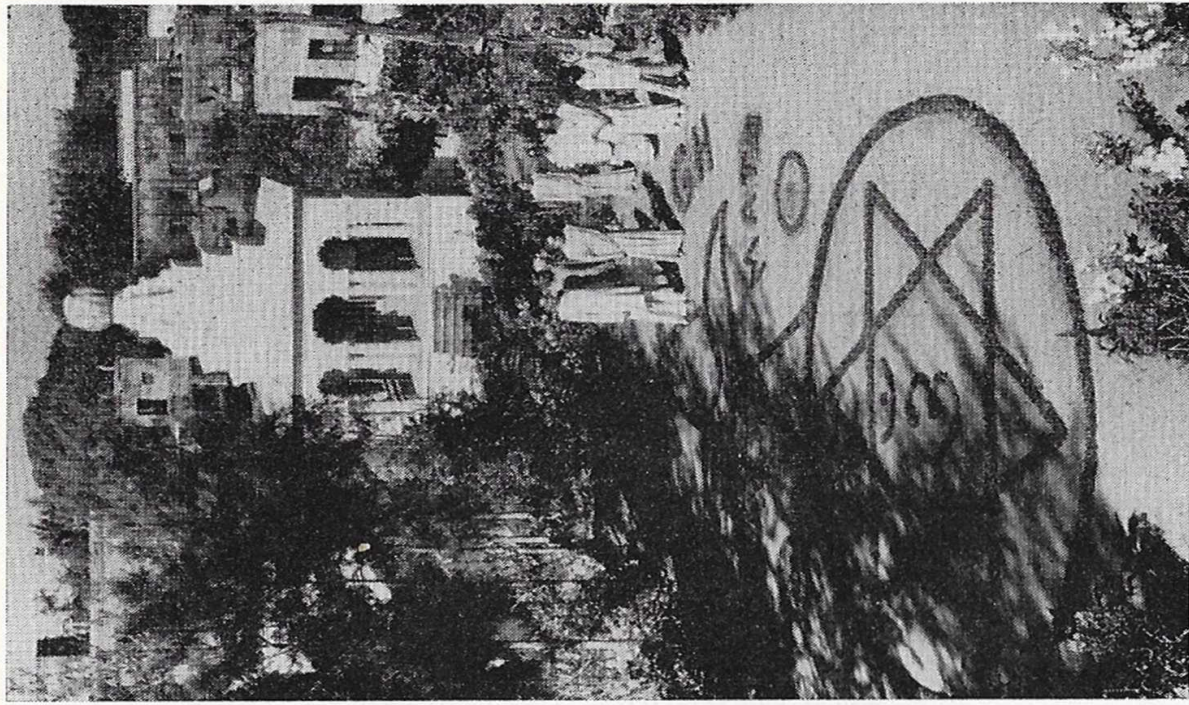
Yogoda Prakasan Karyalaya, an ashram of Yogoda Satsanga Society (Self-Realization Fellowship) in Dakshineswar, India, illuminated by scores of tiny oil lamps for *Diwali* festival, October 1963

April-June 1964

25¢



Indian *vina* and drum used on many occasions by Paramahansa Yogananda; in Yogananda Museum at Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine, Los Angeles



Sri Daya Mata and party at mausoleum of Sri Yukteswar, Guru of Paramahansa Yogananda, on grounds of Yogoda Satsanga Ashram, Puri, India, January 1964

Wisdom of Paramahansa Yogananda



The gate to the kingdom of heaven is at the point between the eyebrows. If you concentrate at that holy spot you will find great spiritual strength and help from within. Feel that there are no barriers — no attachment to the body — and that you are marching on and on into the divine realm. Pray:

“Heavenly Father, open my spiritual eye so that I can enter Thy kingdom of omnipresence. Do not leave me behind in this mortal world of misery, but lead me from darkness to light, from death to immortality, from ignorance to wisdom, from sorrow to eternal joy!”

The minutes are more important than the years. If you do not fill the minutes of your life with thoughts of God, the years will slip by; and when you need Him most you may be unable to feel His presence. But if you fill the minutes of your life with thoughts of God, automatically the years will be saturated with them.

When people are hungry they feed themselves, but when they go into the house of God they often expect someone else to do the praying for them.

It is sad that many persons who know the way to peace and permanent happiness are slow to take advantage of their knowledge and follow it. They take lessons and forget.

Make use of your opportunity for spiritual development. Do not seek knowledge only through intellectuality, allowing the soul to remain shrouded by spiritual ignorance.

We put forth our hands to receive God's gifts of life and sun and food and all His other blessings, but even as we receive that bounty the Giver is forgotten. If you gave an extraordinary gift to someone and he never thanked you or thought of you again, how hurt you would feel! So does God feel about our indifference. Every day we accept His gift of sight, and see with it; through His goodness we are able to think and feel; but seldom do we remember Him.

If you persistently believe that God, who is aware of even the fall of a sparrow, also knows your needs and aspirations, one day He will snatch you out of all dream delusions. Then you will realize that

you are not the body, that you are made in His perfect image. Through the cosmic power of *maya* you now think of yourself as a small isolated mass of solid substance; but the exact opposite is true: you are omnipresent Spirit. Now you are convinced that you have to breathe and eat. When He frees you, suddenly you will learn that your life is independent of air and food. What a delightful surprise is waiting for you!

If God is ever a beggar, it is to beg our love. He is continuously pursuing us. Through the words of saints He is coaxing us to return Home. Let us no longer ignore Him!

When I don't see my friends, I don't miss them; but when I see them I never tire of them.

This world is a "university of hard knocks." We are forced to go through many trials in order to receive the final degree from God. We have to earn the "divine diploma." And it can be done in one life. Those who possess great strength of will and are persistent after God will reach the Goal speedily.

Christ said: "Love thy neighbor as thyself." But without soul knowledge, by which you realize that all men are indeed "thyself," you cannot follow Christ's command.

To me there is no difference among men, because I see each one as God's child. I can't think of anyone as a stranger.

Once in New York City three holdup men surrounded me. I said, "Do you want money? Take it," and I held out my wallet. I was in the superconscious state. The men did not reach for the wallet. Finally one of them said:

"Beg your pardon. We can't do it." They ran away.

On another night in New York, near Carnegie Hall where I had just delivered a lecture, a man with a gun approached me. He said,

"Do you know I can shoot you?"

"Why?" I asked calmly. I was in God.

"You talk about democracy." He was obviously a mentally disturbed person. We stood silently for a while, then he said:

"Forgive me. You have taken away my evil." He ran from me as swiftly as a stag.

Those who are in tune with God can change souls.



Daya Mata and Uma Mata meditating with devotees in Yogoda Math, Ranchi, India, during ceremony on January 5th in honor of the birthday of the late Paramahansa Yogananda, founder of Yogoda Satsanga Society and Self-Realization Fellowship



Yogoda Math, headquarters of Yogoda Satsanga Society, Ranchi, India, founded in 1918 by Paramahansa Yogananda

THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Reason has its place, only it must not usurp the heart. If you will go through any twenty-four hours in the life of the most reasoning man you know, you will find that most of his actions during that time were done by feeling, not by reasoning. The moral is that reason once developed acts automatically and rejects what is superstitious or immoral if the heart is sound. Reason is a corrective and is in its place when it remains at the door ever watchful, never moving. . . . Life is duty, i.e., action. When the necessity for action is reasoned away, reason has become a usurper and must be dethroned.

I hold myself to be incapable of hating any being on earth. By a long course of prayerful discipline I have ceased for over forty years to hate anybody. I know that this is a big claim. Nevertheless I make it in all humility.

Mine is not an exclusive love. I cannot love Mussulmans and Hindus and hate Englishmen. For if I love only Hindus and Mussulmans because their ways are on the whole pleasing to me, I shall soon begin to hate them when their ways displease me, as they may well do at any moment. A love that is based on the goodness of those whom you love is a mercenary affair, whereas true love is self-effacing and demands no consideration. It is like that of a model Hindu wife, Sita, for instance, who loved her Rama even whilst he bade her pass through a raging fire. It was well with Sita, for she knew what she was doing. She sacrificed herself out of her strength, not out of her weakness. Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable.

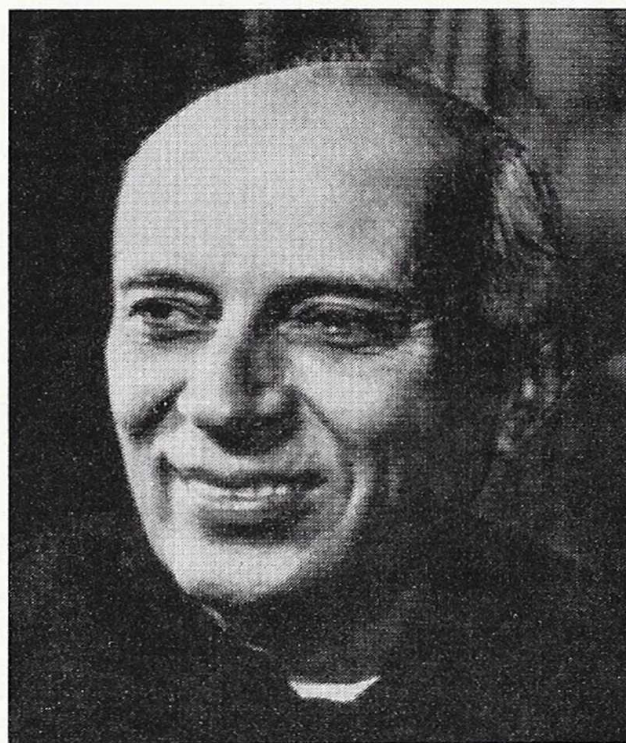
The appalling earthquake in Quetta [in India in 1935] paralyzes one. Human aid must be given always. Those who are left behind must have help. Such reconstruction as is possible will no doubt be undertaken. But all this and much more along the same line can never be a substitute for prayer.

Why pray at all? Does not God know what has happened? Does He stand in need of prayer to enable Him to do His duty?

No, God needs no reminder. He is within everyone. Nothing happens without His permission. Our prayer is a heart search. It is a reminder to ourselves that we are helpless without His support. No effort is complete without prayer, without a definite recognition that the best human endeavor is of no effect if it has not God's blessing behind it. Prayer is a call to humility. It is a call to self-purification, to inward search.

Pandit Nehru: In Memoriam

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, died of a heart attack in New Delhi on May 27th. He was 74. Ten years ago he said he had only one ambition: "That in the few years left to me I should throw myself with all the strength and energy left in me into the work of building India. I want to do it to the uttermost till I am exhausted and thrown away on the scrapheap."



Jawaharlal Nehru

In a nationwide broadcast on the night of May 27th the President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, said: "Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the greatest figures of our generation, an outstanding statesman, whose services to the cause of human freedom are unforgettable. As a fighter for freedom he was illustrious, as a maker of modern India his services were unparalleled. . . . As a man Nehru combined a fine sensitivity of mind, a rare delicacy of feeling, with large and generous impulses. To the weak and frustrated his heart went out in profound sympathy. He was an author of distinction. His autobiography, which tells the story of his life and struggles without a touch of self-pity or moral superiority, is one of the most remarkable books of our time." →

Sri Daya Mata, who was in Bangkok at the time of Pandit Nehru's death, sent a cable of condolence to President Radhakrishnan. On behalf of the members of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India and Self-Realization Fellowship of America, she expressed deep sorrow at the loss of the great Indian statesman.

President Lyndon B. Johnson wrote to President Radhakrishnan that the U.S. and India have again "come together in grief over the death of a great and beloved man. History has already recorded Nehru's monumental contribution to the molding of a strong and independent India. And yet it is not just as a leader of India that he has served humanity. Perhaps more than any other world leader he has given expression to man's yearning for peace. This is the issue of our age. In his fearless pursuit of a world free from war he has served all humanity."

Nehru wrote: "If any persons think of me after my death, I should like them to say: 'This was a man who with all his mind and heart loved India and the Indian people. And they in turn were indulgent to him and gave him of their love most abundantly and extravagantly.'"

The great leader asked in his Will that part of his ashes be consigned to the river Ganga at Allahabad, his birthplace. This rite was observed on June 8th before a million weeping persons. He had written as follows about the Ganges (Mother Ganga):

"The Ganga is a river of India beloved by her people, round which are intertwined her racial memories, her hopes and fears, her songs of triumph, her victories and defeats. She has been the symbol of India's age-long culture and civilization, ever changing, ever flowing, and yet ever the same Ganga. She reminds me of the snow-covered peaks and deep valleys of the Himalayas which I have loved so much and of the rich and vast plains below where my life and work have been cast. Smiling and dancing in the morning sunlight, and dark and gloomy and full of mystery as the evening shadows fall; a narrow, slow, and graceful stream in winter, and a vast, roaring thing during monsoon, broad-bosomed almost as the sea and with something of the sea's power to destroy, the Ganga has been to me a symbol and memory of the past of India, running into the present and flowing on to the great ocean of the future."

Extracts from other writings and speeches of Nehru:

"Life is rich and varied, and though it has many swamps and

marshes and muddy places, it has also the great sea, and the mountains, and snow, and glaciers, and wonderful starlit nights, and the love of family and friends, and the comradeship of workers in a common cause, and music, and books, and the empire of ideas."

"The lesson of history has been that out of hatred and violence only hatred and violence will come. We have got into a cycle of hatred and violence, and not the most brilliant debate will get us out of it. We must look for some other way and find some other means."

"The danger of war is not past, and the future may hold fresh trials for humanity. Yet the forces of peace are strong and the mind of man is awake. I believe that peace will triumph. . . . Some persons talk about war's being inevitable. They should say instead that peace is inevitable. That is a much better way of putting it."

"The freedom that we envisage is not to be confined to this nation or that, or to a particular people, but must spread out over the whole human race. That universal human freedom cannot be based on the supremacy of any particular class. It must be the freedom of the common man everywhere, with full opportunities for him to develop."

"I believe that the salvation of India and, indeed, of the whole world will come through nonviolence. Violence has had a long career in the world. It has been weighed repeatedly and found wanting. . . . It is a sad commentary that we should be thinking of burrowing underground like rats, instead of trying to get rid of the terror that faces us."

"We have to build up this great country into a mighty nation — mighty not in the ordinary sense of the word, that is, having great armies and all that, but mighty in thought, mighty in action, mighty in culture, and mighty in its peaceful service to humanity."

Nehru's elected successor, Lal Bahadur Shastri, was sworn in as Prime Minister on June 9th. President Johnson wrote him: "I send my warmest personal good wishes for your success in the great tasks you now undertake, and my assurance of the reliable friendship and cooperation of the United States. Our countries are united in their purpose of peace, their effort for economic progress, and their dedication to human dignity."

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR PRACTICING YOGA ASANAS

Most people benefit by performing the Yoga Asanas, using as a guide the following important instructions:

"Make haste slowly." Unless one is very supple, he should not expect to master a pose immediately. Never overexert or use force. Slow, steady, conscientious practice brings success.

Elderly people and persons with exceptionally stiff joints and muscles should be quite moderate in their practice.

As a general rule, wait three hours after a normal meal, and four to five hours after a heavy meal, before practicing asanas.

The body should be warm; hence the most satisfactory time to perform asanas is after a warm bath.

One should not practice to the extent of becoming fatigued from overexertion. Nor should anyone practice the asanas immediately after strenuous activity; he should first rest, at least half an hour.

Women should not practice yoga postures during menstruation or pregnancy.

Practice of the Relaxation Pose is highly recommended in case of high blood pressure. Otherwise, only walking, or mild exercises such as one's physician may recommend, should be essayed.

Persons suffering from weak heart, weak neck vertebrae, otitis, sinusitis, or who are simply overweight, should avoid practice of *Sirshasana* (Head Stand).

Those with low blood pressure are benefited by the inverted poses, such as the Head Stand.

Young persons who have not reached puberty should not practice *Uddiyana Bandha* (Stomach Exercise).

Persons with tenderness in the abdominal and visceral regions, especially in the case of an enlarged liver or spleen, should never practice *Bhujangasana* (Cobra Pose), *Salabhasana* (Locust Pose), or *Dhanurasana* (Bow Pose).

Please ask your physician if you are in doubt about practicing any pose.

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Free copies of these instructions are available upon request

Yoga Postures for Health

By B. TESNIÈRE, M.D.

VAJRASANA — THE DIAMOND POSE

The late-medieval yoga text called *Gheranda Samhita* appears to be the first to describe *Vajrasana*. Its author explains that this pose, which consists in sitting on the folded legs (*Fig. 1*), causes the thighs to become "tight like *vajra*" (2:12). This evidently refers to the tightening of the quadriceps muscle in the thighs.

The word *vajra* derives from the Sanskrit root *vaj*, to be hard, to be strong (compare English *vigor*), and has many other meanings, such as diamond, and thunderbolt (especially that of Indra, Hindu god of the sky). Which of these meanings the yogi Gheranda had

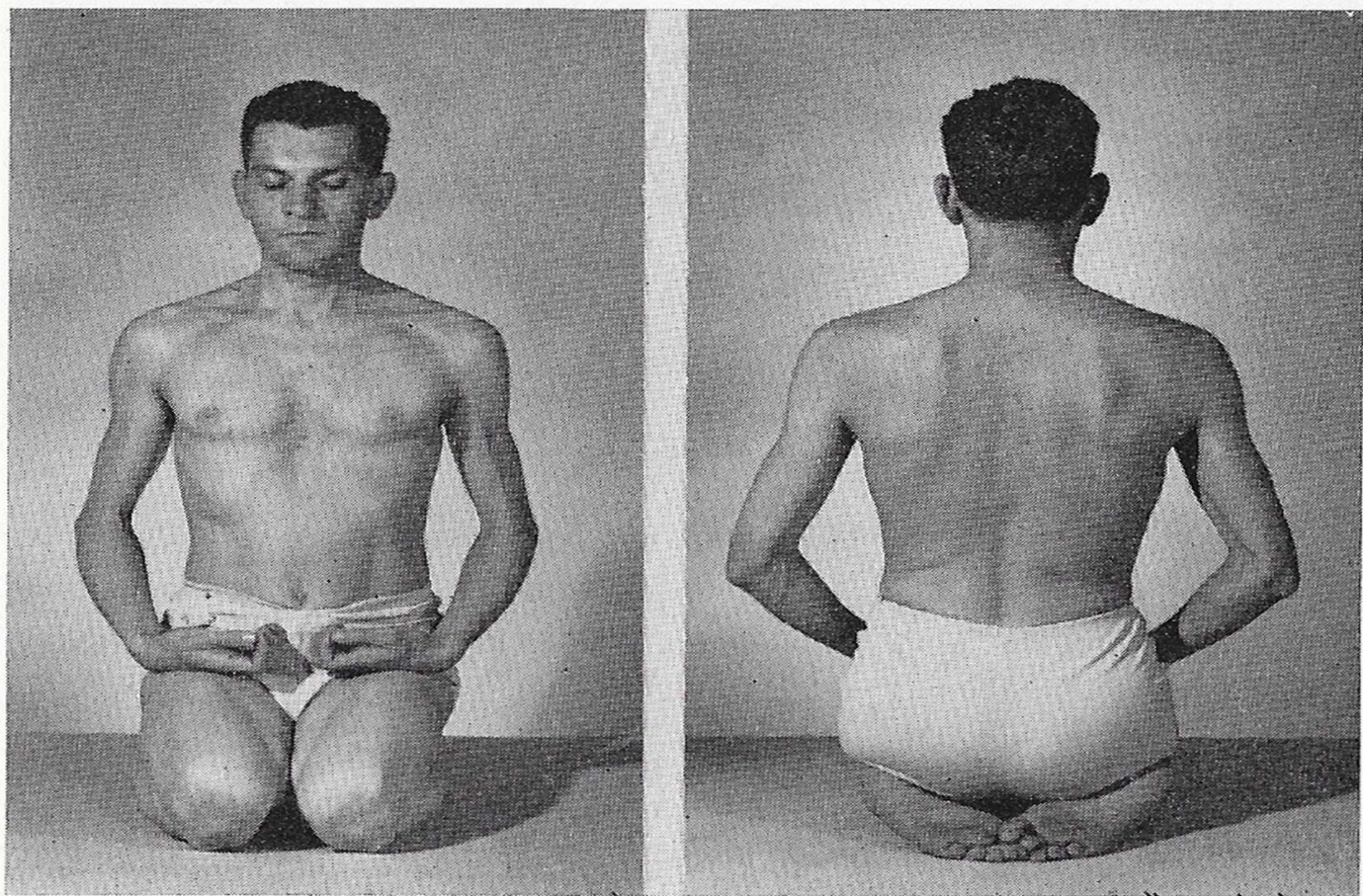


FIG. 1 — VAJRASANA, THE DIAMOND POSE

in mind is not specified in his *Samhita* (collection), and in modern times various translations of *Vajrasana* have been proposed.

The *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, another late-medieval yoga treatise, uses (1:38) the term *Vajrasana* as a synonym for *Siddhasana*, the Perfect Pose. This is a cross-legged sitting pose in which the ankles are placed in front of the body, one on top of the other. It is quite different from the Diamond Pose.

The *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* follows the tradition of an earlier text, *Yoga Kundali Upanishad*, which mentions (1:6) only *Padmasana*, the Lotus Pose, and *Vajrasana*, which it describes as a cross-legged pose.

Other yoga texts such as the *Yoga Sikha Upanishad* (1:84 and 1:112) and the *Siva Samhita* (4:51) refer to *Vajrasana* without describing it, thus offering no clue to the meaning they attached to the word.

Examination of the literary sources mentioned reveals two different opinions and possibly two different traditions concerning the name *Vajrasana*: an earlier one according to which *Vajrasana* is merely a synonym for *Siddhasana*, the Perfect Pose; and a later one, now prevalent, which considers *Vajrasana*, i.e., the Diamond Pose, a posture in its own right.

The Diamond Pose is valued by yogis for its stability and its simplicity of execution. It is conducive to concentration on the various spiritual techniques of yoga.

HISTORY OF THE DIAMOND POSE

We find the pose depicted in sculptures of early civilizations in Sumer and Egypt (*Figs. 2 and 3*), and it is often seen today in Indonesia, Africa, and Mexico.³ In the United States children frequently adopt this pose when they watch television, play on the beach, or sit on a chair at the dining table.

In some of the great religions of the world, sitting in the Diamond Pose forms a part of the ritual or religious practice: the Moslems, for example, sit in a pose akin to *Vajrasana* for their *namaz* worship; in Zen Buddhism the pose is commonly used for meditation purposes.

In Japan the pose constitutes the formal way of sitting and is called *seiza* — literally, “proper” (*sei*) “sitting” (*za*). *Seiza* is a posture of everyday life, assumed during tea ceremonies, weddings, par-

³ Superior figures refer to the bibliography at the end of the article.

ties, mealtimes, while playing musical instruments, and so on. At such times people sit in the pose without moving until the ceremony is over.

How *seiza* became a Japanese custom is not clearly known. Dr. Irizawa, who studied the pose from both a historical and a medical standpoint,⁴ holds that it may be religious in origin: statues and images of the Horyu-ji Temple represent the pose as early as the 7-8th centuries; later documents (13-15th centuries) show priests, monks, and nuns sitting in the *seiza* posture. But he does not exclude the



FIG. 2

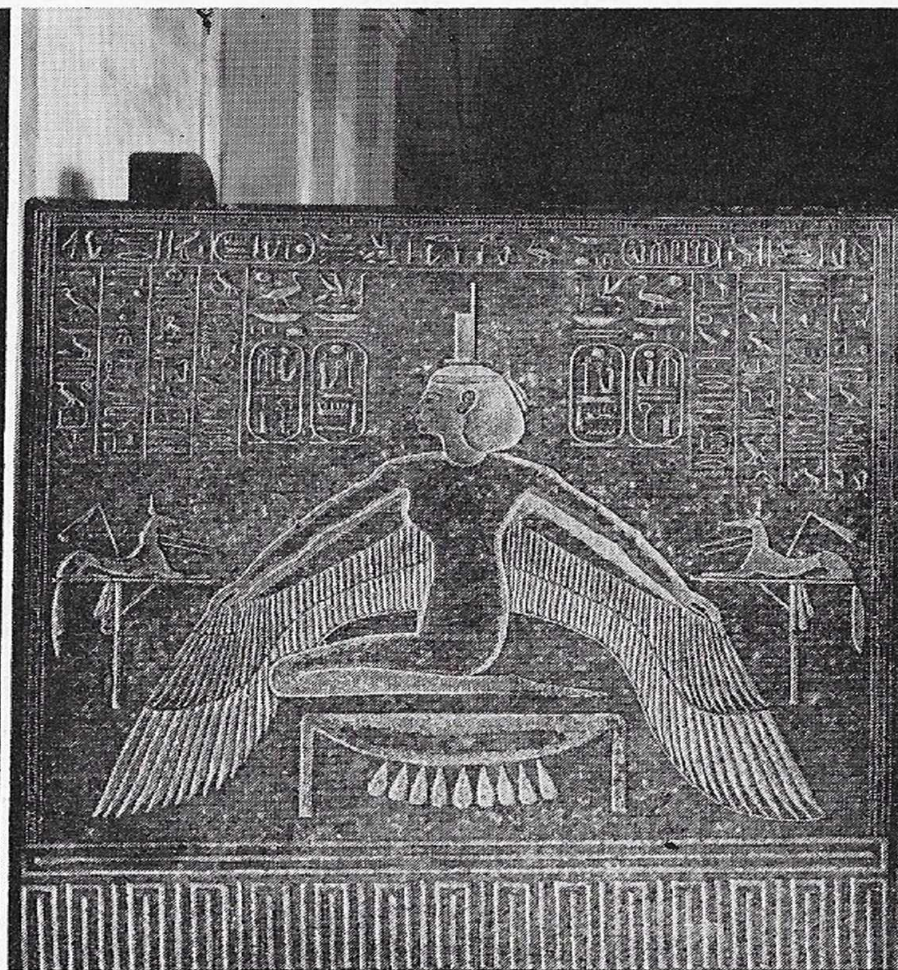


FIG. 3

TWO ANCIENT FIGURES IN VAJRASANA

(Left) Kneeling figure from the Square Temple at Tell Asmar, Mesopotamia, 3rd millennium B.C. *Courtesy Iraq Directorate-General of Antiquities, Baghdad.*

(Right) The Goddess Isis. Relief on the sarcophagus of Ramses II, XXth dynasty, Egypt, 2nd millennium B.C. *Courtesy the Louvre, Paris.*

possibility of a social origin: an 11-13th-century picture of the Japanese aristocratic way of life ("Genji Monogatari Emakimono") shows dignitaries sitting on chairs imported from China while their wives sit in *seiza* — from which pose they can rise quickly and without difficulty to serve guests.

TECHNIQUE OF VAJRASANA

The easiest way to assume the Diamond Pose is as follows (*Fig. 4*):

- (1) Kneel with both legs together and touching the floor from the knees to the toes; the feet with soles up, heels turned out (away from the body), and big toes overlapping.
- (2) Slowly lower the buttocks until they rest in the cavity formed by the feet. The hands may be placed on the floor on either side to help support the body weight as one lowers the trunk to a sitting position.
- (3) Straighten the back, neck, and head.
- (4) Cup the hands over the knees; or place the hands, palms upward, on the thighs where they join the abdomen.

Another method⁶ of assuming the Diamond Pose is to start from a sitting position with the legs extended in front. Bending one leg at a time, draw the knee upward toward the chest; then grasp the ankle and draw it back until the shin lies flat on the floor and the foot is placed under the buttock (*Fig. 5*). In this method it is necessary to lean the trunk alternately to the left and right, raising the buttock, in order to pull the folded leg backward into position.

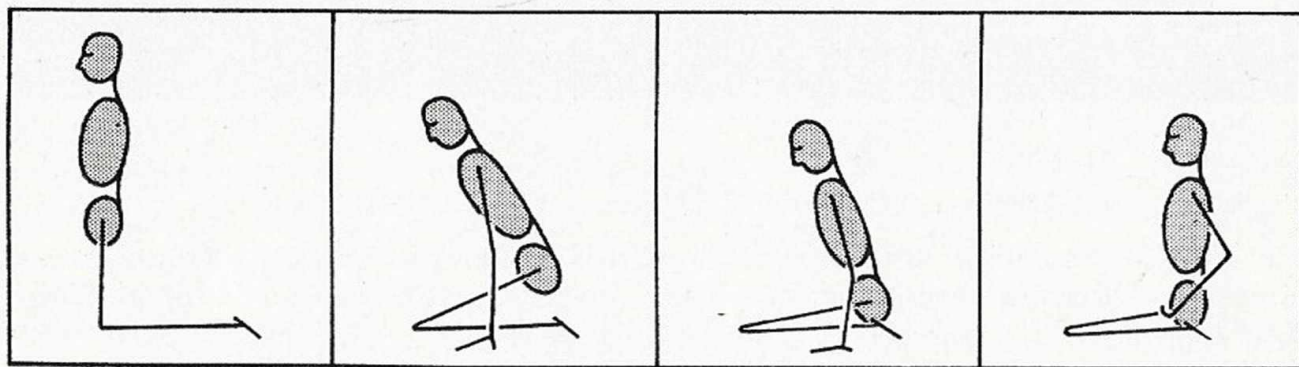


FIG. 4 — Easy way of entering *Vajrasana*

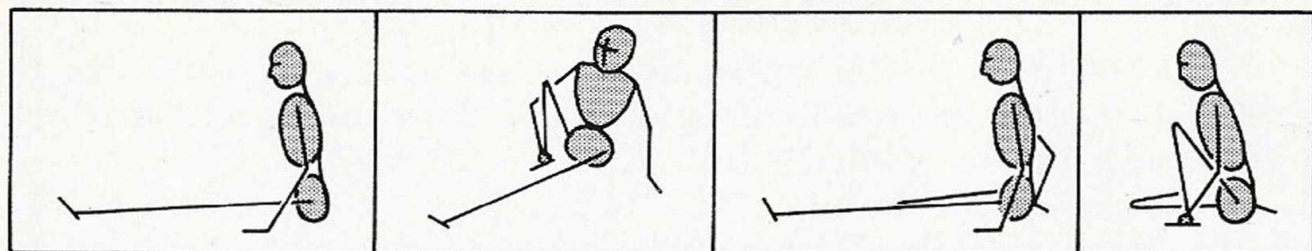


FIG. 5 — A more difficult way of entering *Vajrasana*

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

The timing of the pose varies. In the beginning *Vajrasana* is maintained only for short periods, from fifteen seconds to one minute. Later, as proficiency increases, the pose may be held much longer — half an hour, for example. In Japan, children are trained from the age of three or four to sit in *seiza* for 1½ to 2 hours at a time.

The breathing is normal. The spine should be straight, the muscles relaxed, especially those of the lower limbs. If the pose is assumed for the practice of concentration and meditation, the eyes should be closed and the attention held at the spot between the eyebrows.

Whereas children often adopt the Diamond Pose spontaneously, adults usually encounter difficulties in assuming the posture because of stiff joints in knee and ankle, or large leg muscles.

As aids in getting used to the pose and in practicing it painlessly, some experts suggest the following:

Assume an inverted pose to reduce the amount of blood in the legs and thus to facilitate doubling them up.

Spread the knees apart (the wider apart the knees, the easier the pose).

Push the calves outward to make it easier to fold the legs.

Raise and lower oneself on the knees several times while supporting the body weight with the hands and arms.

Place a pillow either under the ankles or between the feet and buttocks.

Massage the knees and ankles with oil.

In any case, one should proceed gradually, without forcing or making sudden movements, until the joints of the legs have recovered their natural mobility. Then one may safely sit with the full weight of the body on the knees and ankles.

VARIATIONS OF VAJRASANA

The variations of the Diamond Pose are numerous. They can be classified under three headings: position of the hands, position of the legs, position of the spine.

Position of the hands. The hands may be placed variously: on the knees (side by side or one on top of the other, with palms upward or downward); on the lap; in front of the chest in an attitude of prayer, a variation called *Dhirasana*, the Steady Pose (*Fig. 6a*); over the head, with the arms crossed; flat on the floor on each side of the body; or grasping the heels, a variation known as *Ananda Mandirasana*, the Temple Pose (*Fig. 6b*).

Placing the hands palms upward at the junction of thighs and abdomen (*Fig. 1*) has been found by yogis to be conducive to mental collectedness and concentration. In such a case, both palms and soles are upturned as in *Padmasana*, the Lotus Pose, which yogis have practiced for millenniums as a meditation posture.

Position of the legs. The two main variations of the Diamond Pose belong in this second category: sitting between the ankles (instead of on the ankles) with the feet pointed straight back (*Fig. 7*), or with the feet turned outward so that the inner edges rest sidewise on the floor (*Fig. 8*). No particular name has been given to these two variations; we shall simply refer to them as Variation I and Variation II when later we consider their specific benefits.

When the knees are spread apart widely so that the thighs are almost in a straight line, the pose is given the name of *Mandukasana*, the Frog Pose (*Fig. 6c*). This is really an altogether different pose; and so also is kneeling with the heels upraised under the buttocks, with the balls of the feet supporting most of the body weight (*Fig. 6d*).

(Continued on page 51)

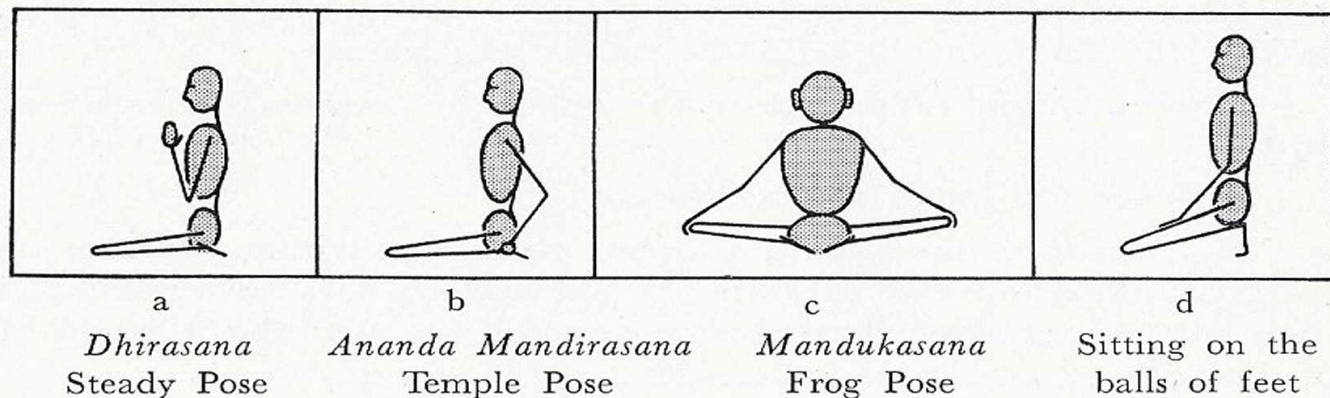


FIG. 6 — ARM AND LEG VARIATIONS OF VAJRASANA

Prayer for a United World

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



May the heads of all countries and races be guided to understand that men of all nations are physically and spiritually one: physically one, because we are the descendants of common parents — the symbolic Adam and Eve; and spiritually one, because we are the immortal children of our Father, bound by eternal links of brotherhood.

Let us pray in our hearts to establish a League of Souls and a United World. Though we may seem divided by race, creed, color, class, and political prejudices, still, being the children of one God, we are able in our souls to feel brotherhood and world unity. May we work for the creation of a United World in which every nation will be a useful part, guided by God through man's enlightened conscience.

In our hearts we can all learn to be free from hate and selfishness. Let us pray for harmony among the nations, that they march hand in hand through the gate of a fair new civilization.

Unique Meeting of Two Shankaracharyas

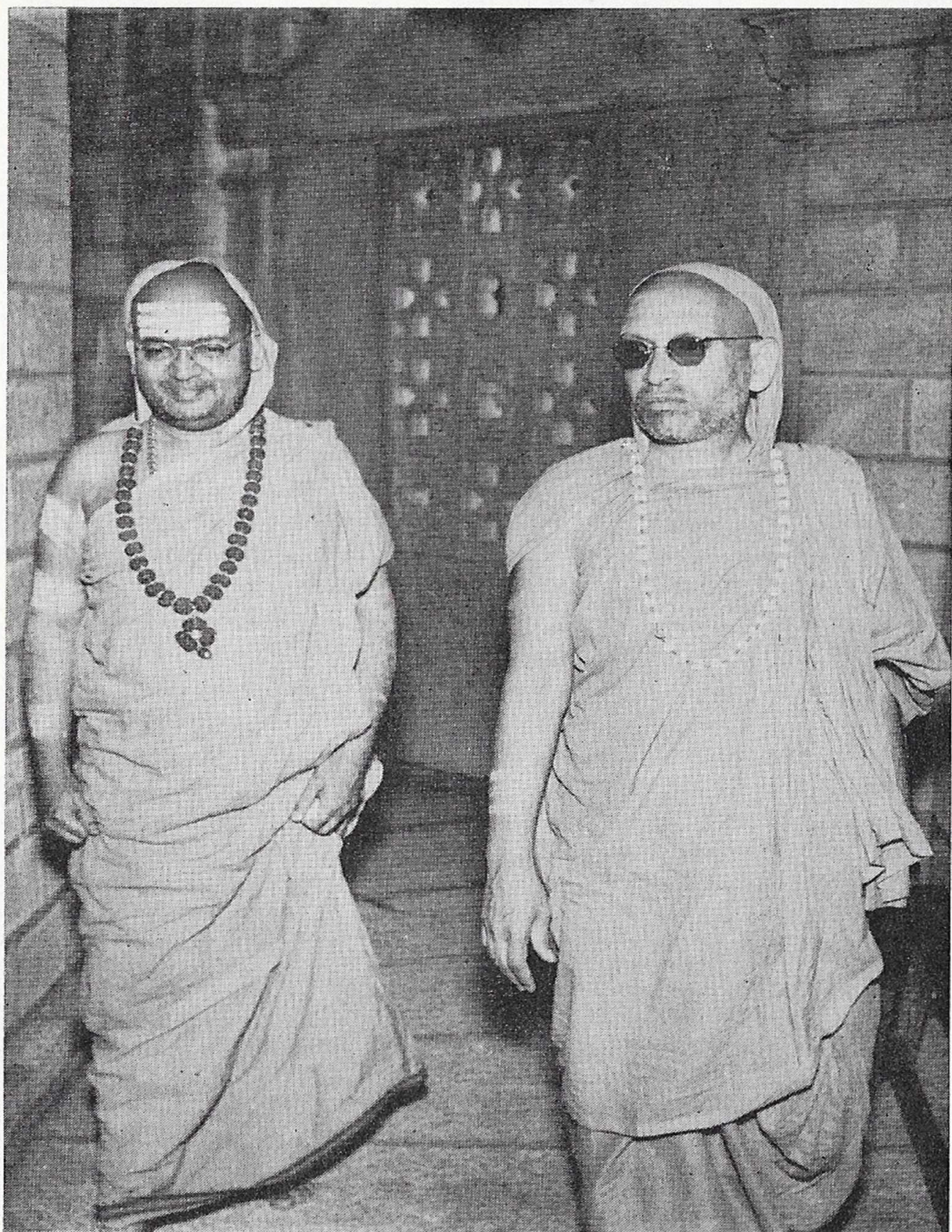
Those who attended a meeting on May 3, 1964, in Bangalore, Mysore State, South India, witnessed a unique sight: the presence of the Shankaracharya of Sringeri and the Shankaracharya of Dwarka. In the long history of their *maths* (monastic educational centers), it so happened that never before had the heads of Sringeri and Dwarka found occasion to meet each other in person, though they generally kept in loving touch by correspondence.

In the ninth century, Adi ("the first") Shankaracharya reorganized the ancient Swami Order. He established *maths* in four localities: Sringeri in the south, Dwarka in the west, Badrinath in the north, and Puri in the east. These monastic centers, which exist to this day, have always been headed by men of extraordinary merit. Each of these teachers has been held in reverent esteem by millions of Hindus.

For a thousand years all apostolic successors of Adi Shankaracharya have been noted for their wisdom and purity of life. Each Shankaracharya must be a lifelong celibate, must be well versed in the *Vedas* and other scriptures of the Hindus, must be of sterling character and unblemished reputation, and must be a *sannyasi* (renunciant who has forsaken all worldly ties).

The recent presence of the two Shankaracharyas in Bangalore attracted a huge throng of devotees who humbly received the blessings invoked for their spiritual welfare by each of the two leaders. His Holiness Sri Shankaracharya Sri Jagadguru Subramanya Bharati of Sringeri Math in Mysore and His Holiness Sri Shankaracharya Sri Jagadguru Abhinava Sachidananda Tirtha of Dwarka Math gave inspiring speeches.

They pointed out the privilege of birth as a human being. "On this earth only man possesses the ability to distinguish between good and evil. Only man has the power to do good to all. It is a matter for deep grief that man has often assumed a demoniacal nature and has plunged the world into strife and misery. His lack of true faith in Divinity and his attachment to sense pleasures call for a reorientation of his attitude and for the cultivation of noble sentiments. 'The universe has its support in *dharma* (righteousness, duty),' the *Vedas* say. To attain eternal bliss man should discharge his proper duties and should worship God in the form that is most dear to him."



Sri Shankaracharya Sri Jagadguru of Dwarka (*left*) and Sri Shankaracharya Sri Jagadguru of Sringeri in a historic meeting at Shankara Math, Bangalore, May 3, 1964

The Three Yoga Paths

By SRI BHARATI KRISHNA TIRTHA

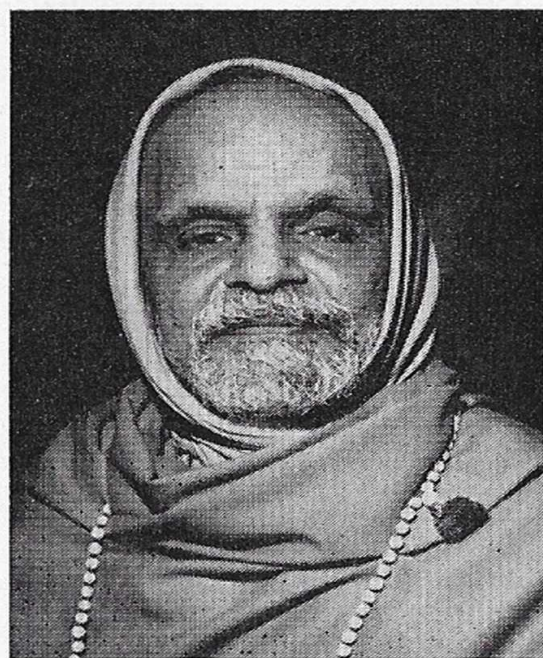
The late Shankaracharya of Gowardhan Math, Puri

There are the three paths of *Karma Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga*, and *Jnana Yoga*, which are famous as the three paths described in the scriptures of all various religions for the spiritual aspirant in order to achieve his goal of Self-realization. We have this in our Vedic and other scriptures of Hinduism, and we find the same characteristic in the scriptures of other religions also.

In the Bible we find *Karma Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga*, and *Jnana Yoga* all similarly dealt with. St. Peter and St. James emphasized *Karma Yoga*, the path of works, good works for the purpose of the goal of oneness with the Divine. St. John emphasized love, or what we call *Bhakti Yoga*, with *shraddha*, faith, and other ingredients of *Bhakti Yoga*. St. Paul laid utmost stress on wisdom, *Jnana Yoga*.

There may be two explanations for this difference in the kind of emphasis laid on the three paths by the three evangelists. Their own particular temperamental personal equation may be held accountable for it. But, much more than that, I feel that it is due to the difference, not in the temperamental predilections of the evangelists themselves, but in the background, the exigencies, the circumstances, and the needs of the audiences whom they were addressing, the disciples to whom they were laying down their instructions.

Whatever the reason may be, there are the three paths. It is also clear that, from the standpoint of Christ himself and of the evangelists themselves, as in our scriptures of the Vedic religion, we have no conflict between the three paths or between any one of them and the other two. The emphasis is laid on one particular aspect by a particular evangelist, and that is all. But we find that later on, as generations passed by,



The late Shankaracharya

people took up one particular aspect which was congenial to them, which pleased them intellectually and otherwise, and not merely emphasized that particular line but began talking in terms of the objectionable character of the other paths, ignoring the fact that different mentalities, different temperamental idiosyncracies, in fact the personal equation as one may call it, should be held responsible for these divisions, and that there can be no mechanical rule by which all people can be fitted harmoniously into the same path.

The Path of Karma Yoga

Karma Yoga is the path by which we are told to do the various things enjoined in the scriptures, with regard to the ritual, ceremonial, and other external actions, the outer rules and regulations for people to follow; that is the path of works. With regard to *Karma Yoga*, we may say at the very outset that the path of *Karma Yoga* is bound to have one great disadvantage for the majority of people: that it does not prescribe one path for everybody. There are various subdivisions, and sub-subdivisions in each subdivision. We are told that such-and-such thing should be done, and, when we go into details, one text will say that a certain ritual or ceremonial should be performed by sunrise or before sunrise, and another text will say that it should be done after sunrise.

And, even if there were extensive description, it would be difficult for every person to decide for himself the best course in that particular case. It is like a doctor prescribing medicines, diet, and so on for different patients suffering from different complaints; one rule would not apply, either in regard to medicines or in regard to diet. Each case has to be taken on its own intrinsic merits. In heart disease, for instance, salt-free diet is prescribed. In the case of diabetes, a sugar-free diet is prescribed. And generally it is not possible for the patient himself, who does not know the exact diagnosis, to find out what exactly ails him, and prescribe a treatment for himself.

The Difficulty of Proper Diagnosis

It is not a question of absolute prohibition or absolute enforcement. It is a question, very often, of proportion. And when that comes in, the mathematics of it will make it more complicated, and the patient himself will not be able to decide what exactly he should have of diet and medicine. So, in all these cases, the expert is necessary. And even the experts very often fail in their diagnosis.

All are not evangelists. Even the evangelists' own immediate disciples of the first generation made mistakes. Infallibility cannot be claimed by anybody in respect to any kind of scientific question. And the consequences of a wrong step may be serious. Owing to our not being all-knowing, we cannot claim infallibility. All that we can say is, "Such-and-such is my inference." And even with regard to that, you will find in actual experience that, as the English saying runs, "Doctors differ." In fact, they go to the extent of saying, "No two doctors ever agree." Even when experts are on the scene, you cannot expect their being unanimous in their opinion on a subject.

The second handicap is that even when we know exactly what ails us and exactly what is the proper treatment for that ailment, the things prescribed are not always available to us. If a particular medicine that is the proper cure for a particular disease is not available within a short time, when the critical juncture has been reached, the delay in our obtaining the necessary medicine may result in the death of the patient. Twofold trouble is possible because on the one hand we are not all-knowing, and on the other hand we are not all-powerful. All things are not available to us. So even with the best of intentions, with the best of knowledge about the things needed, we are often unable to do what is required when it is required to be done.

On account of this double handicap, *Karma Yoga*, good works, however splendidly performed, have this inherent defect and cannot be relied upon altogether. And this is why, in the Indian scriptures, we have at the end of every ritual a prayer for forgiveness for whatever deficiency may have occurred in the proper performance of that ritual. The All-knowing One, who looks into the hearts of people, and who can always decide rightly, is the *Karma-phaladata*, the Person who gives the fruits of action. He knows that the heart or right intention has not been lacking. And taking the heart into consideration, He will excuse all deficiencies with regard to other things. The heart must be taken into account and one must think and say, "I surrender with all my heart." But with regard to other things, "I am not powerful enough; I am not knowing enough," and therefore, all defects arising from these two causes should be pardoned.

The *shraddha* portion, the devotion portion, the *Bhaktikanda* portion, comes into *Karma Yoga* when we say, "God, the knower of the feelings, the sentiments, and the desires, should take these facts into consideration and take the intention for the actual action."

The Path of Jnana Yoga

We now take up the *Jnana Yoga* path. We are told that continual study, continual meditation, logical and psychological thinking, introspection — all these should be so mastered that a person never loses his mental balance. Things of the outside world should not get us off balance. We should be able to control our mind and heart in such a manner that whatever may happen we remain unaffected, unperturbed, unruffled. That means that eternal peace, the final goal, has been already achieved. "A person who has attained that stage need do nothing more." It is not the case of a *sadhaka* (devotee) asking what he should do. It is the case of a person who has attained the loftiest level possible, and there is nothing further left for him to attain. There is nothing further required of him in order to enable him to reach the goal; he has already reached the goal.

The Path of Bhakti Yoga

Bhakti Yoga is the path that is suitable for most persons. *Bhakti Yoga* will help us through to our goal with the least worry on our

"The Three Yoga Paths" is a chapter in a new book by the late Shankaracharya of Puri, Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha. He paid an unprecedented visit to America in 1958 under the sponsorship of Self-Realization Fellowship. His inspiring talks before American universities and on the radio and TV won him a host of admirers.

Sanatana Dharma (The Eternal Religion) by the late Shankaracharya was published in 1964 by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chaupatty Road, Bombay 7, India, \$1.50 postpaid. With the insight of a scholar and a saint, His Holiness expounds various subjects, including "The Meaning of Sanatana Dharma," "Wrong Views About Our Religion," "Our Social System," "Sanatana Dharma and Science," "The Basic Unity of Religions," "India's Religious Hospitality," "Humanity's Goal," "Immortality of the Soul," "On God and Man," and "Shankara's Vedanta."

An appendix gives the text of a talk on "World Peace" jointly conducted by His Holiness and British historian Dr. Arnold Toynbee at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. In the Introduction to the book a faithful disciple, Manjula Trivedi, who accompanied the Shankaracharya to America, has written a beautiful and eloquent tribute, "My Beloved Gurudeva." "His spotless holiness, his deep piety, his endless wisdom, his childlike peacefulness, sportiveness, and innocence, and his universal affection beggar all description. May all the world benefit by the example of a life so nobly and so simply, so spiritually and so lovingly lived."

part. It is like giving over the driving of our car or other vehicle into the hands of an expert driver. We have a certain goal to reach. And that goal is in our minds. Owing to our weakness, we ourselves cannot consciously analyze properly and describe the great goal. We want happiness. We all seek happiness, and not partial happiness, fractional happiness, but "complete, all-round, perfect happiness." And we do not know where it is to be found, the path which will lead to that goal. Under such circumstances, handing over the reins to a person who knows how to reach the goal is the first thing to do, and we do it when we make the Lord Himself the Charioteer. He alone knows the path to it because it is He Himself. What we are trying to reach is the Divinity within.

In the *Gita* we have the relationship of Arjuna and Sri Krishna. Arjuna represents man. He is the *Nara*. *Nara* means man, humanity as such, without excluding any person at all. And Narayana is the Lord. What is the relationship between Arjuna and Sri Krishna, between *Nara* and Narayana? Sri Krishna is the charioteer, who drives the car; the person who is being driven to his goal is Arjuna, that is, *Nara*. *Nara*-Arjuna is not asking for himself alone; he is our spokesman, our representative, humanity's delegate. He places before the Lord all the difficulties and sufferings that he has been passing through. His mental troubles, his other worries are our own; and the questions he asks are the very questions which we ourselves feel impelled to ask from time to time. So, he is there in the position of the person who is being driven along to his destination. And God is the Driver of the chariot. The Lord, being omniscient, knows our goal and the path to it. We know hazily where we have to go, and we tell the driver to drive there. He knows both the goal and the way thereto and we trust him.

But is it sufficient that the driver knows where we should be taken? Has he the capacity to take us there? Yes. Being all-powerful, the Lord can do that. He is not merely all-knowing; He is all-powerful too. A large number of people know many of the theories, dogmas, creeds, and so on. In my own days, when I was teaching students, I would talk to them about the development of the steam engine: Watt's model, Stephenson's model, and this and that. I taught them a number of theoretical matters with regard to the way steam worked, the boiler and the engine and the safety devices in the shape of brakes, rear brake and front brake, and all sorts of things. I would talk to my

(Continued on page 41)

Soul Whispers

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



May I realize, O Spirit, that even my worst enemy is still my brother; and that, even as Thou lovest me, Thou lovest him.



O Sun of Life, as Thou didst first peep into mortal cups of mind, filled with the molten liquid of Thy vitality, Thou wert caught within the microcosm of human feelings.

From Thy gaze each of Thy children retained a unique facet of Thine individuality. In their lives I behold expressions of Thine inexhaustible variety.



Never will I do anything that reminds me not of Thee. Actions springing from ignorance lead to nightmares. May I weave only sweet dreams of noble achievements, for they are Thy dreams.



O Father, my little raft of meditation is buffeting furious storms of distraction. On this boisterous mental sea I am yet heading toward Thy shores. Master Mariner, come, take charge of my boat!



O Omnipresent Protector! when clouds of war send rains of gas and fire, be Thou my bomb shelter.

In life and death, in disease, famine, pestilence, or poverty may I ever cling to Thee. Help me to realize I

am immortal Spirit, untouched by the changes of childhood, youth, age, and world upheavals.



O Spirit! teach us to consider no other duty to be more important than our sacred duty to realize Thee, since work of any kind is possible only because Thou hast given us the power for its performance.

May we love Thee above everything else, because, without the grace of Thy life, Thy love, we could not live or love at all.



With the touch of the vagrant breeze Thou dost caress me. In my loving thoughts of Thee and Thy children Thou art showering on me the silent soothing rain of Thine affection.



Let my daily difficulties act as antidotes against delusion and rid me of false hopes of worldly happiness.



O Father, with folded hands I come to offer Thee my whole being. I saturate my prayers with deep love. Give me toward Thee the simple, sincere devotion of a child.



Buffeted by gusts of chance or drenched by rains of misfortune, I nevertheless direct my mind to look always toward Thee.



I would solve the difficulties of life through thoughts and acts of love, not of hate. Bless me, that I heal anger hurts in myself with the salve of self-respect, and anger hurts in others with the balsam of kindness.



Golden Lotus Gateway to Mahatma Gandhi World Peace Memorial, Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine, Pacific Palisades, California. On the site is a two-acre natural-spring lake. Each year thousands of visitors enjoy this garden sanctuary, dedicated to world peace in 1950 by Paramahansa Yogananda.

A LETTER FROM DAYA MATA IN JAPAN

In a letter dated June 22, 1964, from Tokyo, Daya Mata wrote: "I met with a group of Japanese students in a room of an ancient Buddhist temple on June 17th. I gave them *Kriya* initiation on June 18th. I was filled with joy to see their earnestness and sincerity and devotion as they came forward to pay homage before the photos of our divine Gurus. On June 21st I was with the group from 2:30 to 8 p.m. I answered their questions and then we had a long meditation. Afterward Ananda Mata said to me: 'It was just like being back at Mt. Washington Center, meditating with the devotees there.' With the Japanese group we felt such a deep spirit of stillness and complete dedication to God.

"We expect to return to Los Angeles about mid-July."



Sri Daya Mata, president of YSS-SRF, with a group of teachers at Yogoda Satsanga Vidyalaya (school), Ranchi, March 1964. Second from right is Sri A. M. Banerjee, the principal of the Vidyalaya. At extreme right is Yogacharya Binay Narayan (formerly Binay N. Dubey), the general secretary of Yogoda Satsanga Society.

A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE *BHAGAVAD - GITA*

(India's greatest scripture, a part of the "Mahabharata" epic)

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



Chapter XV, Stanza 15

I am seated in the heart of all beings; and from Me come memory and knowledge, as well as their loss. Verily I am That which has to be understood in the Vedas; indeed, I am the Veda-Knower and the Author of the Vedanta.

Man, in his dream consciousness, perceives a dream and uses his memory and knowledge, and the likes and dislikes of his heart, to play the drama of dreams. But when he ceases to dream, his dream experiences vanish.

Similarly, through His power of *maya* God hypnotizes deluded man to use his perception, memory, and heart to play the drama of dream material existence. A person becomes attached to his dream experiences because he does not realize that he is only an actor speaking the lines given him; the Lord is the only Playwright.

By ecstasy the devotee tries to get away from the misery-making pairs of opposites of the cosmic dream and to awaken in God. He

realizes that the limiting dreams of human perception, memory, and the entangling emotions of the heart, though they come from God, can be dissolved by attaining his true and divine identity.

The ordinary person, immersed in his dream existence, remains in ignorance, deeming himself to be a physical man. The emancipated devotee, by the awakened memory of his Divinity, dismisses the dreams of human perception, of mortal likes and dislikes. The yogi who is one with omnipresent God finds Him seated in all men in the heart, memory, and powers of perception, confusing mortals through these means. He also perceives God dissolving those states of consciousness in Self-realized souls.

God is the Essence of All Knowledge

God is the Essence of All Knowledge. He is the Source of all the wisdom in the *Vedas* and in the *Vedanta (Upanishads)*. He directs the processes of all forms of human cognition; He is the consciousness of all sentient beings: angels, deities, yogis, ordinary men, goblins, animals, and all other forms of life.

The Lord knows all the states of the soul as it descends from Spirit into the human form. He knows all the perceptions of the body-bound soul, all its sensory and motor experiences during the state of delusion. God also knows the perceptions of a soul as it climbs back toward His liberating presence.

The Lord's Omnipresent Awareness

As all the waves dance on the bosom of the sea, so all perceptive processes of all sentient creatures occur within God, within His unbroken awareness. That is why Jesus said of sparrows that "not one of them is forgotten before God."* The Infinite Spirit is conscious of all the perceptions and vibrations going on in the dream ocean of His being.

Divine men feel the Lord as centered in the hearts of all, and perceive human memory and cognition as originating in Him. Evil men, through wrong actions, cannot see God in the hearts of all. They impair even their ordinary memory and powers of perception, degrading their human status, as well as forgetting the Divine Presence within them.

**Luke 12:6.*

Chapter XV, Stanza 16

There are two Beings (Purushas) in the cosmos, the destructible and the indestructible. The creatures are the destructible, the Kutastha is the indestructible.

This stanza refers to *Prakriti*, ever changing Cosmic Nature, and her host of creatures; and to *Kutastha* or the changeless Divine Intelligence that informs the universe.

Chapter XV, Stanza 17

But there exists Another, the Highest Being, the Supreme God. As the Eternal Lord He permeates the three worlds and upholds them.

God is not Revealed by Nature

The *Vedas* speak of *Sat-Tat-Aum*, which in the Christian Bible is called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The preceding stanza of the *Gita* mentioned the *Aum* aspect (*Prakriti* or the invisible vibratory force, the Holy Ghost) and the *Tat* aspect (*Kutastha* or the Son, the Christ Consciousness in creation). Stanza 17 refers to the Father or *Sat* aspect of Reality. He is the Ultimate Self, the Supreme Spirit, the transcendental Cause of all. Although He is immanent in creation, He is not revealed by Nature or known by man until the devotee overpasses the vibratory realms of changefulness.

The "three worlds" are the physical, the astral, and the ideational.

Chapter XV, Stanzas 18-19-20

I (the Lord) am beyond the perishable (Prakriti) and am also higher than the imperishable (Kutastha). Therefore, in the worlds and in the Vedas (in the intuitive perception of liberated beings) I am proclaimed Purushottama, the Uttermost Being.

He who, freed from delusion, knows Me as the Supreme Spirit obtains omniscience. He worships Me with his whole being.

Thus, O Sinless One (Arjuna), have I taught you this profound wisdom. Understanding it, a man becomes a sage, one who has fulfilled all his duties.

(End of Chapter 15)



Town of Encinitas, California, showing dramatically the shoreline of the Pacific Ocean and the Fellowship Colony. The main hermitage overlooks the palisades at left; St. Ignace is at right.



Ocean. The entire foreground shows the buildings and grounds of Self-Realization
RF India Restaurant and Golden Lotus Towers are visible at extreme right.

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Letters from SRF Kriya Yoga Students

"To a great extent *Kriya Yoga* has cleared my mind of earthly and fleshly desires. This helps me to live more closely to the ideal of service, of doing my best in whatever task I am given. Sometimes in the ordinary work that I am engaged in I find instant guidance to do certain things and they always work out perfectly. So I find it quite true, as said by Sri Yukteswar: 'In meditation one finds His instant guidance, His adequate response to every difficulty.'" — A.J., *Potchefstroom, South Africa*.

"*Kriya Yoga* has for me been a revelation of what can be accomplished by the individual; and what good, through the grace of God, can be quietly demonstrated for others as well. I know now that God dwells within me, and that when I am in tune He guides my every action and thought." — L.D., *San Francisco, California*.

"I am in better health than I have ever been before, and I feel myself gaining more control over my thoughts and emotions. This is gradual, but it gives me a feeling of confidence hitherto unknown. *Kriya Yoga* is a divine nectar that lifts one's consciousness out of this world entirely and into spiritual realms. No other gift on earth could bring such joy and peace and contentment. I am truly grateful to Master and the Great Ones for giving this blessing." — M.J., *Los Angeles, California*.

"I attended the recent *Kriya Yoga* Initiation — unforgettable evening! full of beauty and wonder. If people only knew the joy they would find in *Kriya* they would not dilly-dally, they would come straight to this path and stay on it. There is a song in my heart, a beautiful tender song: 'Master, Master mine, Thou wilt lead me, Thou wilt guide me, I will follow Thee.'" — R.M., *Manhattan Beach, California*.

"How wonderful and beautifully spiritual was the *Kriya* ceremony! The memory of it will be with me always; indeed, it grows in beauty within me, surrounding my soul with a robe of spiritual tenderness. The former dark years of torment were little enough to pay for so glorious an awakening." — G.F., *Boston, Massachusetts*.

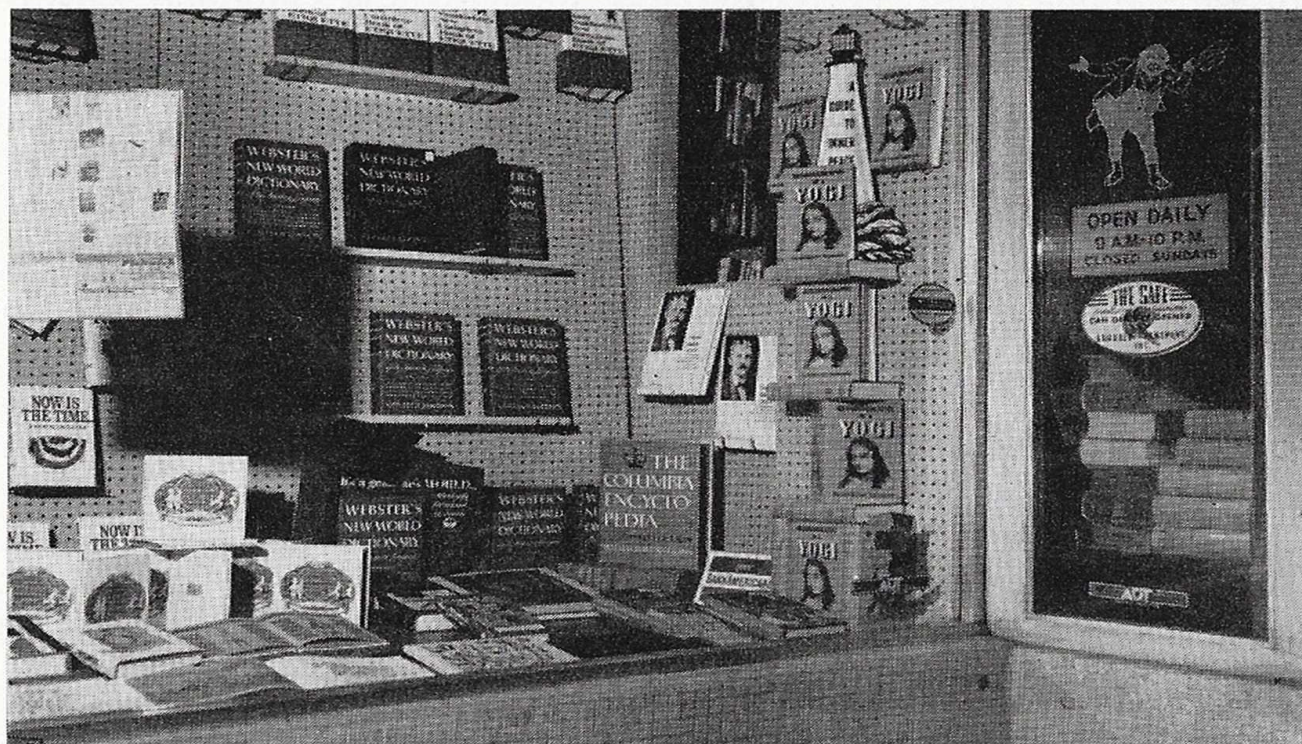
"There is no technique that can be compared with the SRF *Kriya Yoga* techniques, *Hong-Sau*, and communing with the *Om*

sound. These three sacred techniques, plus the SRF body-disciplining exercises, cover everything we need for harmonious development. The results of peace and tranquillity are beyond what tongue can tell." — *J.B., Nigeria, West Africa.*

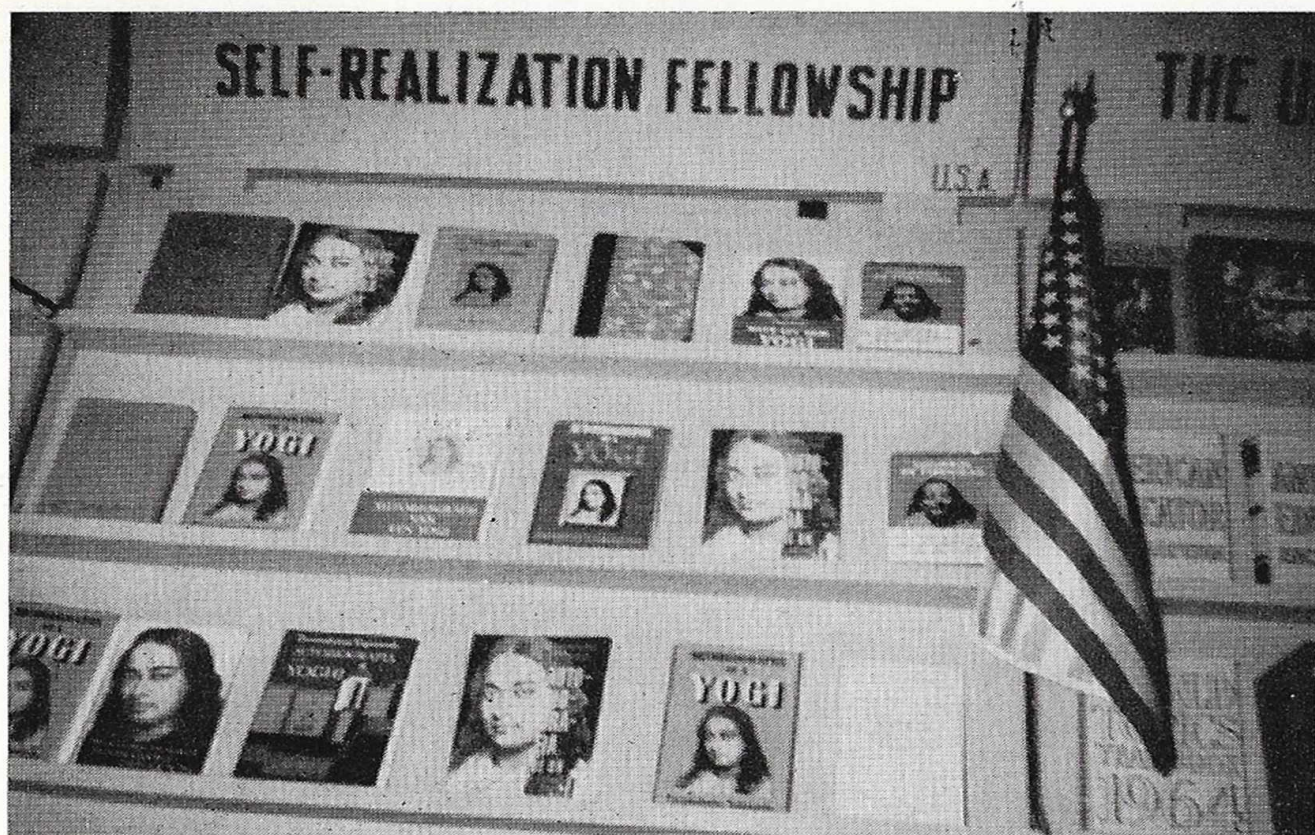
"*Kriya Yoga* is a great blessing. I withdraw my mind faster in meditation; some of my wrong habits have just dropped off without any effort on my part. I am sure this is due to *Kriya*." — *N.M., Los Angeles, California.*

"A few days ago, while practicing the *Kriya* technique, I felt the spiritual currents in the spine, as described in the *Kriya Yoga* Lessons. I could only say over and over, 'I love Thee, God, I love Thee, God.' My heart is filled with boundless hope, and I have but one ambition: God Alone." — *E.M., Beaver, Oregon.*

"I am more and more surprised and overwhelmed by the wonderful results I have had during the first few weeks I practiced *Kriya Yoga*. Almost overnight I felt a deep clarity in thinking and meditat-



Autobiography of a Yogi by Paramahansa Yogananda, displayed recently at Pickwick Bookshop, Hollywood, California, largest bookstore in western America. The white tower (*upper right*) calls attention to Yogananda's book as "A Guide to Inner Peace."



Editions in various languages of *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda displayed in June 1964 at the Continental American Publishing Exposition in Mexico City, Mexico

ing. The ability to concentrate has doubled: whereas it often used to be a difficult chore to put my thoughts on God, I now feel almost immediately an overpowering joy that lasts not only during meditation but also carries me through the day." — *R.P., San Francisco, Cal.*

"No other philosophy can compare with the wisdom one acquires and the joy one attains in the practice of these divine teachings. Since this study, how much more understandable do I find Christ's teachings! He may have practiced the same techniques." — *R.N., Douglas, Wyoming.*

"The lessons from SRF are truly inspiring and illuminating; I study them over and over again. Paramahansa Yogananda was a great master and teacher. Reading his *Autobiography* was a soul-moving experience. Through that book the blessed spirit of Yogananda helped me to overcome my long sickness." — *A.F., Chicago, Illinois.*

Books by Paramahansa Yogananda

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI. 8th ed., 514 pp., \$4.00.

WHISPERS FROM ETERNITY. Heartfelt prayers that convey to man an infinite hope. 1959 ed. Cloth, 266 pp., \$3.00. (*Spanish edition, 1962; cloth, \$3.00.*)

COSMIC CHANTS. Devotional songs, arranged for piano. 1963 ed., plastic bind.; 106 pp., 9 pp. Indian art prints, \$2.50.

THE MASTER SAID. A collection of Yogananda's sayings and wise counsel to his disciples. Cloth, 116 pp., \$2.50. (*Spanish edition, paper, \$1.50.*)

THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION. Happiness as the goal of all religions. A clearly written exposition of man's inescapable search for God. The four main paths to the Goal. Cloth, \$1.50. (*Spanish edition, cloth, \$1.50.*)

METAPHYSICAL MEDITATIONS. Daily thoughts for divine peace. 115 pp., paper, 60¢; cloth, \$1.25. (*Spanish edition, paper, 60¢; German edition, heavy paper, \$1.75.*)

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Comments on "Autobiography of a Yogi"

"Through *Autobiography of a Yogi* a great new world of spiritual thought was opened to me. The book satisfies my soul. It stimulates in me a burning desire for deeper penetration into its teachings. Its guidance is like a direct, positive connection to an infinite source of wisdom and energy." — G.K., Anchorage, Alaska.

"How I love *Autobiography of a Yogi*! I am reading it for the third time — each time understanding more than before and getting a deeper appreciation of its greatness. The love of Paramahansa Yogananda is actually felt in those pages. I have a strong feeling of having been guided to this philosophy. The SRF Lessons are precious to me." — H.C., Nanaimo, Canada.

"For the second time in less than eight months I am reading the *Autobiography* [Spanish edition]. Through this book Yogananda has opened a door for me, letting me see and feel something real that I had longed for, something that I had sought for many years." — M.R., Santurce, Puerto Rico.

"I'm so grateful for the hours spent reading *Autobiography of a Yogi* and other books of Master's, as well as the Lessons. A wonderful feeling of peace and harmony flows from these writings, as from the SRF meditation and concentration techniques. A lifetime could not be enough to absorb these truths fully." — V.H., La Jolla, Calif.

"I can truthfully say that from no other source have I ever received so much inspiration and happiness as from *Autobiography of a Yogi* and *The Master Said*." — I.M., Clapham, Australia.

"When I was offered a copy of *Autobiography of a Yogi* to read, I did not know what a treasure I was taking home! It is so fascinating, so stirring, and there is so much to learn from it. I am inspired with the wish to be initiated in the teachings of Self-Realization Fellowship." — A.M., Dar es Salaam, East Africa.

"Only one thing really matters: the Goal, the Divine Goal and Harbor, the 'Self-realization,' the 'fellowship with God' promised by our divine Guru. With perseverance and with faithful daily practice of the blessed techniques given us by the enlightened Masters, we shall at last be able to 'go back Home.' Each day for me is a 'Thanks-

giving Day' because, at the precise moment it was necessary, the *Autobiography* came into my hands." — M.G., Madrid, Spain.

"The warmth, the love radiating from the *Autobiography* by Paramahansa Yogananda is a rarity in books of today." — K.F., Calawadda, Australia.

"*Autobiography of a Yogi* is a monument of a book. I am filled with love and joy by even this first acquaintance with your founder. The work you and your associates are carrying on is truly appreciated by this humble onlooker." — W.S., Chicago, Illinois.

"*Autobiography of a Yogi* is the most gripping and compelling book I have ever read." — G.M., Cincinnati, Ohio.

"I am really searching for my true self and the truth in all things. *Autobiography of a Yogi* has been an inspiration; an inner force is telling me I have found the right path to God." — F.P., Vancouver, Canada.

"I have just completed a third reading of *Autobiography of a Yogi* — the most fascinating book I have read in many years." — P.C., Youngstown, Ohio.

"I read with wonder and love the *Autobiography* of Master Yogananda. Nothing in the world of modern spiritual books can compare with it." — E.B., Montreal, Canada.

"*Autobiography of a Yogi* is the most inspiring book I have ever read. Its ideas, although quite contrary to those given me in my upbringing, are much more sensible and scientific than the ideas of any other science, religion, or philosophy I have heard of." — J.K., Denver, Colorado.

"I have had a copy of Paramahansa Yogananda's book since 1955 and have read it many times. I have received more joy from this book than from any other I ever possessed." — D.S., New Orleans, Louisiana.

"I have been day and night reading the wonderfully enlightening book, *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda. I am always thinking of this great man and his Gurus. India is proud of such masters; they are an inspiration to us young Hindus." — S.S., Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana.

(Continued from page 24)

students at great length and with much knowledge; but if a railway train had been entrusted to me for driving, it would have been an immediate danger to the persons who traveled in it. The theoretical side is easy enough for anybody to talk about.

With the combination of the two essential qualities in the driver, knowledge and ability, will our success be assured? The question is asked because, in a great number of cases in the worldly professions, both these qualifications are found, yet are not beneficial to us. Take for example a lawyer. Does the man know law? Oh yes, he knows it very well. Can he practice law? Yes, he does so, he does it day after day; that is his profession. But if he will not do it *for us*, if he does not care to do it, what happens? His knowing the law, and his practicing of it day after day, will not benefit us, unless he is willing to do it, and actually does it. Suppose the fees he demands, for example, are beyond our means to pay. Then all his knowledge, all his experience, will not save us at all. So, a third thing is wanted, willingness. This third factor is the most important of all, because without it everything else is wasted.

For Arjuna and Krishna, the devotee and God, the person driven along to his destination and the driver, what is the relationship? The Lord is not merely all-knowing and omnipotent, He has not merely the will, the inclination to be of help to the devotee, He Himself is the devotee's Devotee. He does not go against the wishes of the devotee. That is the essence of the relationship. So St. John summarizes, "God is Love." He is not merely a loving person, the subject of a predicate; He is of the very nature of love — abounding love, illimitable love, love to all those who have faith in Him, who strive to make use of whatever knowledge they have by surrendering it in His service. Once we surrender, as Arjuna does, and hand over the reins into the hands of the Master, who is all-knowing and all-powerful, and at the same time is the devotee's Devotee, we are absolutely safe.

If you obtain an expert driver who knows where to drive you, who knows how to drive, and who has the will and eagerness to do anything necessary for your speedy attainment of the goal, you should not interfere and try to catch hold of the wheel and drive the car according to your own wishes. That would be dangerous. The driving wheel has to be handed over entirely to the person having the three qualifications. And here the all-knowing One, the all-powerful One, the loving One, who is Love itself, is the driver. So, the relationship

between ourselves and the Lord should be like that which obtained between Arjuna and Sri Krishna. We hand over everything. That is the meaning of self-surrender — self-surrender not with any egoistic interest but with full faith.

Take the case of a small child who is seated on a high level of ground. The father, the mother, the older brothers, all come and stand in front of him, stretch out their hands, and ask him to jump. The child does it, does it immediately. He is aware of two things, that the father and the mother and others concerned are his well-wishers and are capable of protecting him. If he has the least doubt on either of these two points, he will hesitate, he will refuse to come down. He may feel that the mother and others are well disposed enough, loving enough; but suppose they would not be able to sustain him, sustain his weight? He would fall to the ground and break his legs. He would therefore be afraid to come down.

Suppose he knows that the person who stretches out the arms is powerful enough, strong enough to hold him, to sustain him, but does not possess the necessary love, and may cheat him. Then the boy will think, "When I jump from here, suppose that person withdraws his arms; what will become of me?" In the attitude of the child toward his relatives, there is this feeling — he is completely sure in both respects — that there will be no cheating, and that they have sufficient power to catch hold of him and to sustain him. He jumps down. Similarly with us, in regard to *Bhakti Yoga*. We have the awareness, the certainty, that God is capable of supporting us, that He is all-powerful. And secondly, as regards His love toward us, we are absolutely certain of it. Hence there is no reason for any kind of anxiety. We jump into His hands.

In this path of *Bhakti Yoga*, once you have come into it there can be no difficulties at all. The defects I have outlined in regard to *Karma Yoga* and *Jnana Yoga* are not applicable in this case. In a radio transmitting station and receiving station, generally if one of them goes wrong there will be no communication. But in *Bhakti Yoga* the transmitting station (God) cannot possibly go wrong. And if there is any defect, it must be in the receiving station (us). The receiving station ought to correct itself, and there will be nothing further to worry about.

We are told of the three paths in another manner. These roads are also connected with the main paths of *Karma*, *Jnana*, and *Bhakti*.

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Then there is the second path for those who cannot do that, who cannot concentrate absolutely on the Lord. It is called *Markata nyaya*. God has already provided for all contingencies, for all requirements; everything is there already. Before the need arises, the needed thing has been created and provided. That is the law of Nature. That is the law of God. And that is why we speak of God as Providence: One who provides beforehand for all needs.

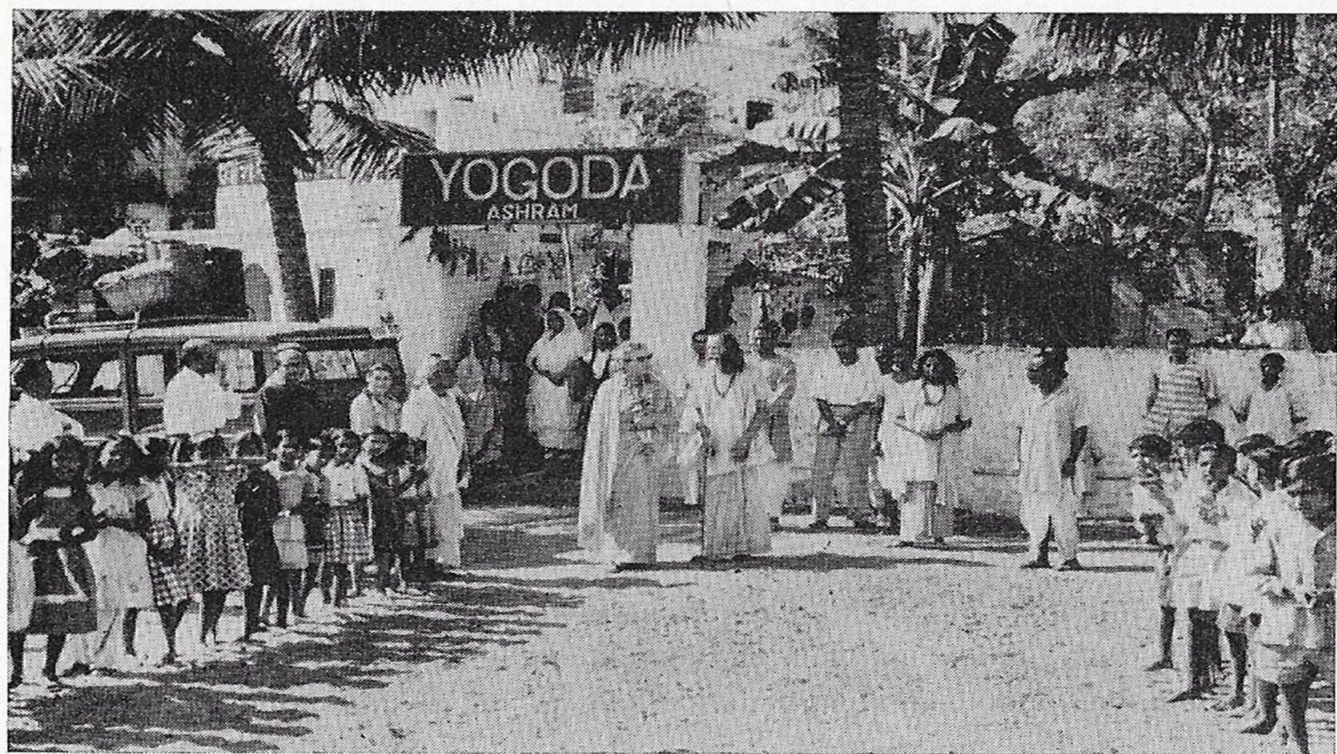
God's Providential Law

Here is an example of Providence. After a monkey gives birth to a child, and the mother jumps from one tree to another, what can the child do? It cannot jump soon after birth; but provision for it has already been made by Nature: the child grips the mother in such a way that there is no possibility of loosening its hold. When the mother monkey jumps from one tree to another, the child monkey is carried along with it. No effort is needed on the part of the little monkey. Everything is done by the mother until the stage is reached when the child monkey can act for himself. And that is the provision made in advance by Nature, by God, for that kind of animal.

There is a third kind of path called the *Marjara nyaya*. In the case of the monkey, we have the provision that the child monkey can catch hold of the mother and cling to her. But a kitten does not have such an ability. We find that the mother does everything. With her own teeth the mother grips the child and carries it from place to place and looks after everything necessary, until the kitten is able to look after itself.

The great majority of us who are aspirants on the spiritual ladder come under the *Markata nyaya* path. *Bhakti Yoga* is the path best suited to us. That is to say, we are like Arjuna with Sri Krishna —

one the owner of the chariot and the other the driver of it. We rely on the Lord. We do not have knowledge of our own to move about by ourselves, to discuss things for ourselves, to decide things for ourselves, and to do things for ourselves. We have not that capacity. So we rely on the Lord. And whatever we can do, in accordance with the instructions given to us by the Lord, that we do. With regard to other things, we leave them to Him. He looks after them. He need not be reminded by us of His duty in the matter at all. He knows everything, He does everything, and we leave it to Him. But, where we have the orders, and those orders are such as we can carry out, there can be no pretending that we are in the "kitten" stage or in the "monkey" stage. In the great majority of cases, with our mind intent on reaching the goal, with absolute faith in God, there is no need for further anxiety in the matter. Like the child standing somewhere above and jumping down into the hands of its loving father, we have only to jump into the grace of the Lord. That is the essence of the doctrine of *Bhakti Yoga*.



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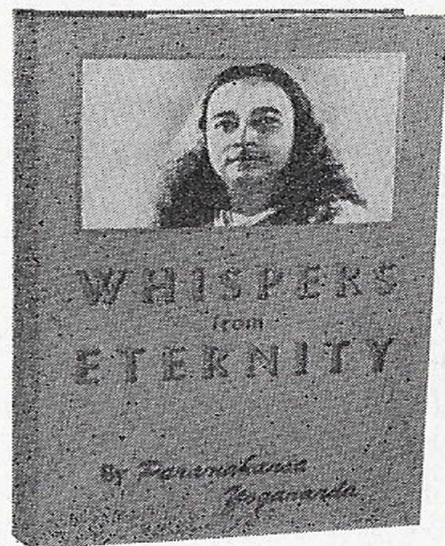
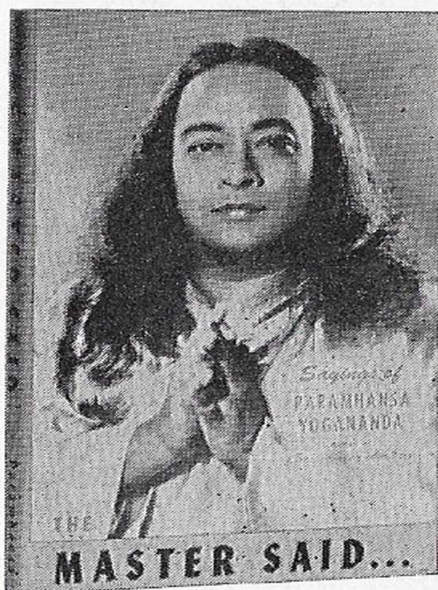


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Members of YSS Center in Bombay with (left to right, wearing garlands) Ananda Mata, Daya Mata, and Uma Mata at VT Railway Station, Bombay, October 19, 1963. At left of Ananda Mata is Mr. V. K. Pathak, secretary to the late Mr. N. B. Bhagat, prominent Bombay businessman and Yogoda Satsanga Society devotee; directly behind Mr. Pathak is Mr. K. M. Rath (*wearing glasses*), leader of Bombay YSS Center. Daya Mata and her companions are about to entrain for Calcutta after a week of speaking engagements and meetings with YSS devotees in Bombay.

(Continued from page 16)

Position of the spine. While sitting in the Diamond Pose, one may bend the spine forward until the forehead touches the ground. If practiced with the arms doubled up alongside the trunk (*Fig. 9a*), this pose is called *Kurmasana*, the Tortoise Pose, in reference to the turtle's habit of withdrawing its limbs under its shell in time of danger. In *Ardha-Kurmasana*, the Half-Tortoise Pose, the arms are extended in front (*Fig. 9b*).

The backward bending of the spine until it lies flat on the floor constitutes an advanced development of *Vajrasana* known as *Supta-Vajrasana*, literally the Supine Diamond Pose (*Fig. 9c*). This posture is sometimes considered a separate pose and not a mere variation of the Diamond Pose, because of its particular physiological effects.

Finally, twisting the spine to the left and then to the right while one sits in *Vajrasana* is a little-known yet interesting variation of the pose (*Fig. 9d*).

VAJRASANA BENEFITS MUSCLES AND JOINTS

The most obvious benefit of *Vajrasana* concerns the muscles of the legs, particularly the quadriceps in the front part of the thigh. This muscle is stretched and thus hardened — a result that accounts for the name of the pose. The Supine Diamond Pose (*Supta-Vajrasana*) lengthens and strengthens the quadriceps even more.

Muscles are like sponges filled with blood. During the Diamond Pose the blood is squeezed out of the leg muscles by the folding of the legs and the pressure exerted by the body weight. When the legs are extended again, blood rushes back into the muscles. Circulation in the limbs is thus stimulated, explaining the therapeutical value ascribed to the pose in cases of myalgia in the lower limbs.^{7, 8}

The improved circulation in the legs after short practices of the Diamond Pose may also be credited for its slimming effect on the thighs and hips.

Vajrasana exercises the joints of the legs to the limit of their range of movement. Knees, ankles, and hip joints are rendered more supple. Each of the variations of the Diamond Pose has a special limbering effect: Variation I (*Fig. 7*) limbers the knees particularly; Variation II (*Fig. 8*) limbers the ankles; finally, when one is sitting with the feet as far apart as possible (in either Variation I or Variation II), the hips are limbered and the thighs are twisted so that

their anterior surfaces face each other.⁵ The farther apart the feet, the greater the twist and the more difficult the pose.

Because the joints of the legs are much exercised in *Vajrasana*, they receive a beneficial irrigation of blood that helps in the cure of knee- and foot-joint diseases such as arthritis and gout.^{7, 8} Gout characteristically affects the joint at the base of the big toe, which is subjected to appreciable pressure (with resultant benefit from increased circulation) in Variation II of the pose.

THE DIAMOND POSE COMPLEMENTS THE LOTUS POSE

Sitting often and long in the Diamond Pose exerts a profound influence on two particular ligaments of the knees, the inner and outer meniscus. Attention has recently been called to this point by Professor Tamikazu Amako, who has made a twenty-year study of the menisci of the Japanese.¹ In this race the inner meniscus gains a greater range of mobility and becomes less susceptible to injury.

To yogis who are eager to master *Padmasana* (Lotus Pose), the meditation pose par excellence, Dr. Amako's observations are of immediate interest, for as we have explained in a previous article,⁹ the forcible execution of the Lotus Pose may injure the inner meniscus — the very ligament that is apparently strengthened by practicing *Vajrasana*. It is thus advantageous to combine the Lotus Pose and the Diamond Pose — a procedure already advocated by yogis on the premise that *Padmasana* bends the knee inward, whereas *Vajrasana* bends it outward, and that the successful performance of either pose hastens mastery of the other.

CHANGES DUE TO CONTINUAL PRACTICE OF VAJRASANA

The Diamond Pose is beneficial when practiced as part of one's daily routine of yoga postures, and may be held for several hours if one feels no numbness or other discomfort. However, the pose should not be practiced for long periods day after day, because gradual changes then take place in the structure of the leg bones, joints, and muscles, in the same manner that occupational deformities develop.

For example, on the instep or somewhat to the side, where pressure is exerted by the body weight, a knobby enlargement of the bone may appear. The irritation of pressure on the bone produces this bulge in the same way that a tight shoe produces a bunion over the joint at the base of the big toe.⁵

More serious is the shortening of the Achilles tendon, which

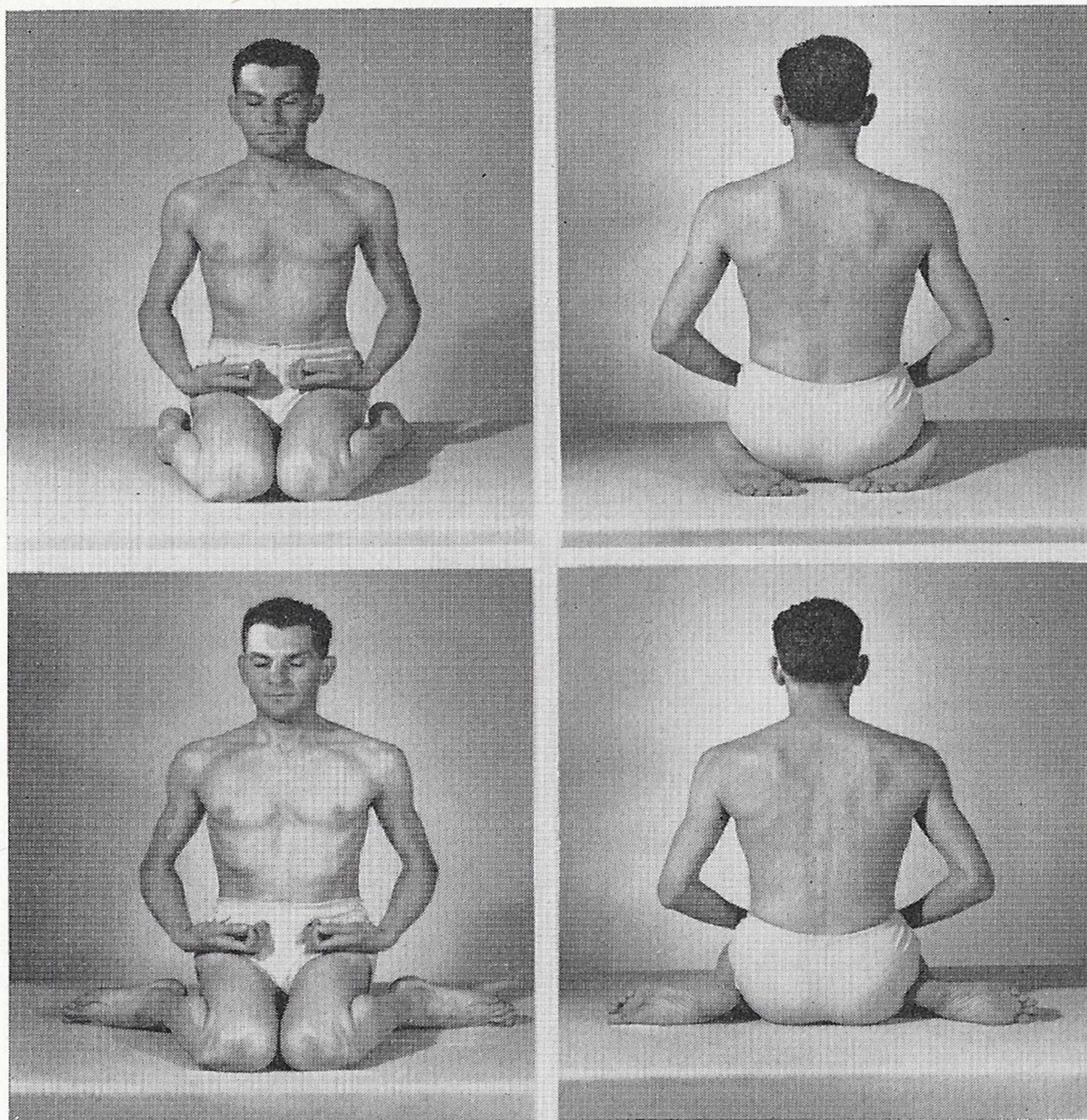


FIG. 7 (above, left and right) and FIG. 8 (below, left and right)

ADVANCED VARIATIONS OF VAJRASANA

(Above) Sitting between the ankles, an advanced variation of *Vajrasana* that limbers the knees particularly.

(Below) Sitting between the ankles with the feet turned outward, a difficult variation of *Vajrasana* that limbers the ankles.

prevents the flexion of the ankle at a right angle. As a result one walks pigeon-toed, as may be noted in older Japanese women and in women who wear high-heeled shoes constantly. This calls for corrective exercises that stretch the Achilles tendons, such as sitting in a kneeling position, but with the heels raised so that only the toes and the balls of the feet rest on the floor (*Fig. 6d*).⁵

The most troublesome change comes in infants who sleep on the stomach with the legs doubled up under them (*Kurmasana* — *Fig. 9a*). This position, when assumed day and night for weeks, produces a twist of the legs between the knees and ankles. When the child learns to stand up, he is bow-legged and walks pigeon-toed. Pediatricians sometimes recommend the *Kurmasana* position as an aid in the expulsion of gas and to prevent the baby's choking on regurgitation. However, infants should not be left in this position for long periods, but should be helped to sleep in various positions.⁵

EFFECTS ON BLOOD CIRCULATION

The Diamond Pose, by doubling up the legs, produces a fold in the main artery of the leg (the popliteal artery in the back of the knee). The blood circulation in the legs and feet is greatly reduced: hence the numbness experienced there when one has been sitting in *Vajrasana* for a while. When numbness occurs, indicating impaired circulation, the legs should be extended to allow the blood flow to become normal again. One may then resume the pose. However, practicing the pose for more than two hours is not recommended if numbness is experienced during that period.

The regular practice of *Vajrasana* for as long as it is comfortable seems to lengthen the period of time before numbness is felt in the legs, possibly because the collateral circulation develops, particularly in the network of small arteries surrounding the knee joint.

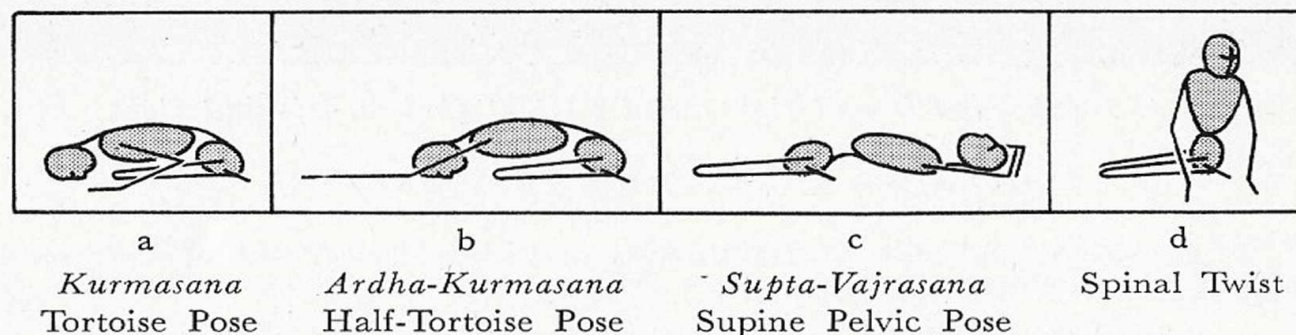
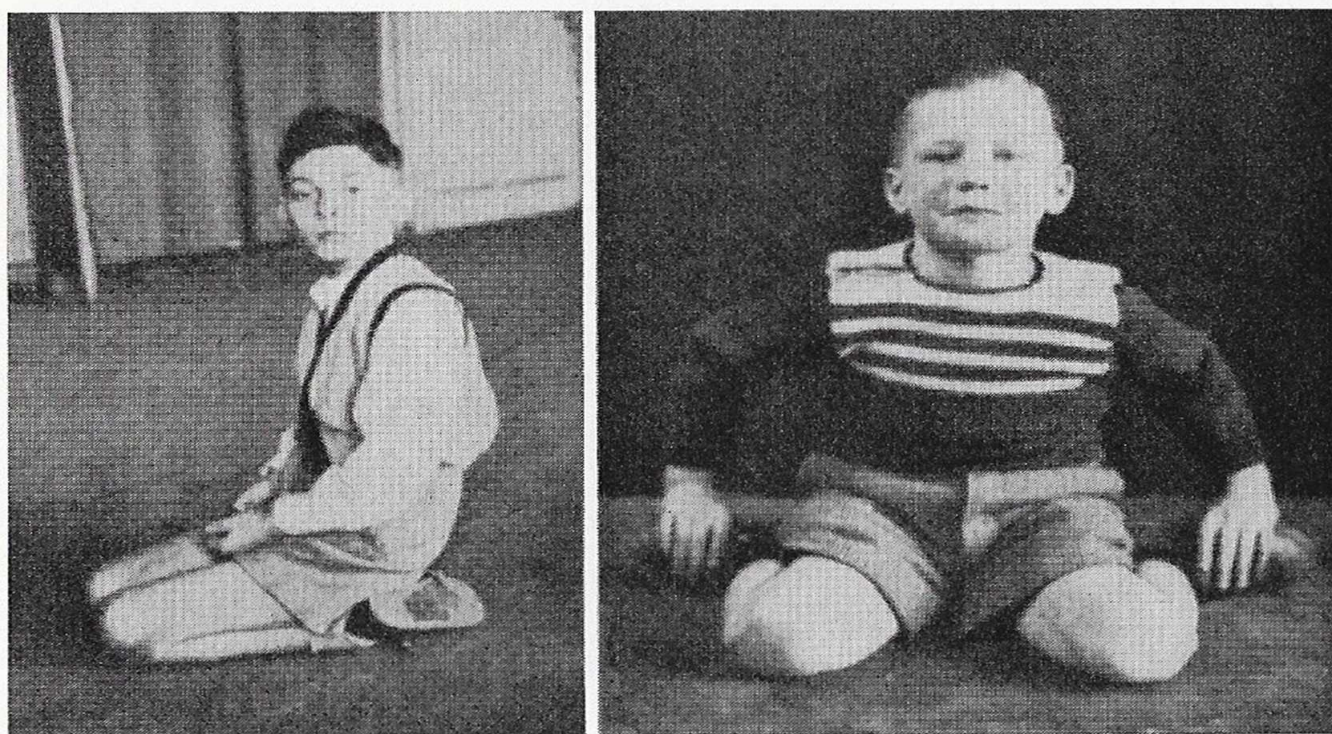


FIG. 9 — SPINAL VARIATIONS OF VAJRASANA

With the reduction of the circulating blood in the legs there is a corollary increase of circulating blood in the organs of the trunk (pelvis, abdomen, thorax). Some authors emphasize the benefits to the pelvic region; they even freely translate *Vajrasana* as the Pelvic Pose.⁶

Other authors stress its benefits to the digestive organs through the increase of blood in the abdomen; they say that holding the pose for half an hour immediately after a meal speeds up digestion; and that its practice greatly helps dyspeptics and persons suffering from flatulence.⁸

Still others note that the augmentation of the blood circulating in the thorax is beneficial to persons suffering from certain types of heart diseases. Dr. Jean Gravier, who studied in detail the posture of children affected with congenital heart diseases, found that *Vajrasana* is occasionally adopted spontaneously by such youngsters (*Fig. 10*).



Photos courtesy Dr. J. Gravier

FIG. 10 — *Vajrasana* is occasionally adopted spontaneously by children affected with congenital heart disease, such as the two boys shown above. The ten-year-old at left sits in *Vajrasana* proper. After exertion, he regained his breath easily in this pose. Following a successful heart operation, he no longer tended to sit in *Vajrasana*. The child at right sits in Variation II.

He observed that the children, after exertion, regain their breath easily in this pose.²

So far as we know, no scientific study has been made of the changes in the volume and the rerouting of the circulating blood in the Diamond Pose, but the observations and opinions just presented indicate that this field may be worth investigating.

VALUE AS A MEDITATION POSE

The resemblances between the Diamond Pose and the Lotus Pose are many. Two of them have already been mentioned: the upturned soles of the feet; the limbering effect on the knees. In addition, both poses check the blood circulation in the legs, divert the blood flow toward the organs of the trunk and the nervous system in the spine, stabilize the body in its upright position, and aid in interiorizing the mind.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find the Diamond Pose often practiced as a meditation pose, just as the Lotus Pose is favored for this purpose.

The question naturally arises: which pose is better? There is no doubt that the Lotus Pose holds the trunk more securely upright than does the Diamond Pose. However, since it is not uncommon to encounter considerable difficulty at first in mastering the Lotus Pose, it is sensible to practice meanwhile the Diamond Pose, which is relatively stable, and in which one can become proficient after a short period of practice.

Try sitting in *Vajrasana* and find out what it can do for you, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

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SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP

Founded in America by Paramahansa Yogananda in 1920

YOGODA SATSANGA SOCIETY

Founded in India by Paramahansa Yogananda in 1918

UNITED STATES

California

LOS ANGELES — SRF-YSS international headquarters, Mount Washington Center, 3880 San Rafael Ave. Tel. CApitol 5-2471. Visitors welcome, Sat. and Sun. 1 to 5 p.m., other days by appointment.

HOLLYWOOD — SRF Church of All Religions, SRF India Center, 4860-66 Sunset Blvd. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m. (regular service and Sunday School), and 8 p.m. Thurs. 8 p.m. SRF India Restaurant at India Center open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily except Mon. and Tues. Telephone NOrmandy 1-8006.

PACIFIC PALISADES — SRF Lake Shrine Church of All Religions and Mahatma Gandhi World Peace Memorial, Yogananda Museum, 17190 Sunset Boulevard. Sunday 11 a.m. (regular service and Sunday School), and 8 p.m. Thurs. 8 p.m. Tel. GLadstone 4-4114. Open to visitors daily except Monday.

LONG BEACH — SRF Chapel, 430 E. Ocean Blvd. Sun. 11 a.m. (regular service and Sunday School). Thursday 8 p.m.

ENCINITAS — SRF World Brotherhood Colony, Highway 101 at K Street. P.O. Box 758. Tel. 753-2888. SRF India Restaurant open noon to 7:30 p.m. daily except Mon. and Tues. Tel. 753-3626. SRF

Retreat, guest accommodations for SRF students and friends. P.O. Box 758. Tel. 753-1811. Services Sun. 11 a.m., SRF Retreat Chapel; Thurs. 8 p.m., SRF Hermitage.

SAN DIEGO — SRF Church of All Religions, 3072 First Ave. Sun. 11 a.m. (regular service and Sunday School). Wednesday 7:30 p.m. and Thursday 8 p.m.

OAKLAND — For information regarding Sunday Services telephone THornwall 3-4407.

REDONDO BEACH — 1731 Harri-man Lane, Sun. 11 a.m. (regular service and children's service); Wed. 9:30 a.m. (meditation); Thurs. 8 p.m. (midweek service).

LOS GATOS (near San Jose) — SRF Center, 15840 Kennedy Road (Chapel 1/6th mile up winding drive from main road). Sun. 11 a.m.; Thurs. 7 p.m.

Arizona

PHOENIX — SRF Church of All Religions, 1800 W. Monroe St. Sun. 11 a.m. Tel. ALpine 3-3658.

Michigan

DETROIT — Detroit Institute of Arts: Main Auditorium, Sun. 11 a.m.; Lecture Hall, Thurs. 7:30 p.m.

LANSING — Women's Club House, 603 South Washington Ave.; first Monday of month, 8 p.m.

Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS — YMCA, Rm. 402,
Sunday, 11 a.m.

New York

NEW YORK—Fisk Bldg., Room 230,
250 West 57th St., Sun. 11-12 a.m.
(meditation); Wed. 7-8 p.m. (meditation); Fri. 7-7:45 p.m. (meditation) and 8 p.m. (regular service).

CANADA

MONTREAL, P.Q. — 3593 Ontario
Street East. Tues. 8 p.m. Telephone
LA. 1-9081 or LA. 5-4050.

VANCOUVER, B.C. — 3538 W. 34th
Avenue, Wed. and Thurs. 8 p.m.;
Sun. 11 a.m., 7:30 p.m. At 807-
809 Thurlow St. Mon. 7:45 p.m.
Tel. MU. 3-4940 or AM. 6-6728.

MEXICO

CHIHUAHUA (CHIA.) — Calle
Doblado No. 117, Depto. 2. Tues.
9 p.m. Write c/o Apartado 323.

MEXICO, D.F. — Monterrey Street,
Num. 132, 5th floor. Tuesday 6:30
p.m. Tel. 24-22-31. Distributing
center for SRF Lessons in Span-
ish; write to Apartado 1680.

MONTERREY (N.L.) — Calle Sala-
manca, 1246, Colonia Las Mitras
Norte. Wednesday 8:30 to 10 p.m.

CUBA

HAVANA — Masonic Bldg., Carlos
III Street and Belascoain, 9th floor,
Nos. 937 and 938. Tuesday and
Thursday 6:30 p.m.

PUERTO RICO

SAN JUAN — San Agustin 413, Stop
8, Puerta de Tierra, Sun. 10 a.m.;
Wed. 7:30 p.m.

SOUTH AMERICA

ARGENTINA

BUENOS AIRES — Av. Juncal No.
857. Sat. 5 p.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m.

CORDOBA—Calle Dorrego 372, Vil-
la Cabrera. Sat. 5 p.m.

BRAZIL

RIO DE JANEIRO — Rua Urbano
Santos, 15 Praia Vermelha. Sun.
10 a.m. Telephone 26-5823.

CHILE

SANTIAGO — Los Serenos 470, 6°
 piso, Oficina 64, Clasificador No.
846. Mon. 7 to 8:30 p.m.

COLOMBIA

BOGOTA — Calle 20, Número 481.
Wednesday 8 p.m.

CALI — Calle 8a. No. 6-10. Tues. 7
to 9:30 p.m.

PERU

LIMA—Avenida La Paz 1493, Mira-
flores. 2nd and 4th Friday each
month, 8 p.m.

VENEZUELA

CARACAS — San Mateo a Vargas,
No. 10. Wednesday 8:30 p.m.

EUROPE

ENGLAND

LONDON — 33 Warrington Crescent,
Maida Vale, W. 9. Thurs. 7 p.m.

FRANCE

PARIS — Meetings twice monthly.
For information write to Mr. Pierre
Saillard, 113, Rue de Rome, Paris
17e.

SWITZERLAND

GENEVA — 74 Avenue de Bel-Air,
Chêne-Bourg. Tel. 36-00-83. Serv-
ices biweekly.

ZÜRICH — Karl der Grosse, Kirch-
gasse 14, jeden 2., 3., und 4. Sonn-
tag im Monat, 19.00 Uhr. Aus-
kunft: SRF-Zentrum Zürich, Post-

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3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90065

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DETROIT — Yogacharya J. Oliver Black, 18094 Parkside Ave., Detroit.

New Jersey

EAST BRUNSWICK — Mr. A. E. Bardwell, 62 Jensen St. Telephone CL. 7-6638.

CANADA

VANCOUVER — Mr. & Mrs. C. H. Davis, 807-809 Thurlow St., Vancouver 5. Telephone MU. 3-4940.

MEXICO

MEXICO, D.F. — Yogacharya Jose M. Cuaron, Apartado 1680. Telephone 24-22-31.

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BUENOS AIRES — Mr. Rodolfo Zenlenka, Calle S. Bustamante No. 1612.

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NEW ZEALAND

AUCKLAND — Mr. Reginald Howan, C.P.O. Box 904. Tel. 44-710.

INDIA

RANCHI — Write to the Secretary, Yogacharya Binay Narayan, Yogoda Math, Yogoda Satsanga Society, Ranchi, Bihar (YSS India headquarters), for information about YSS meditation centers in India.



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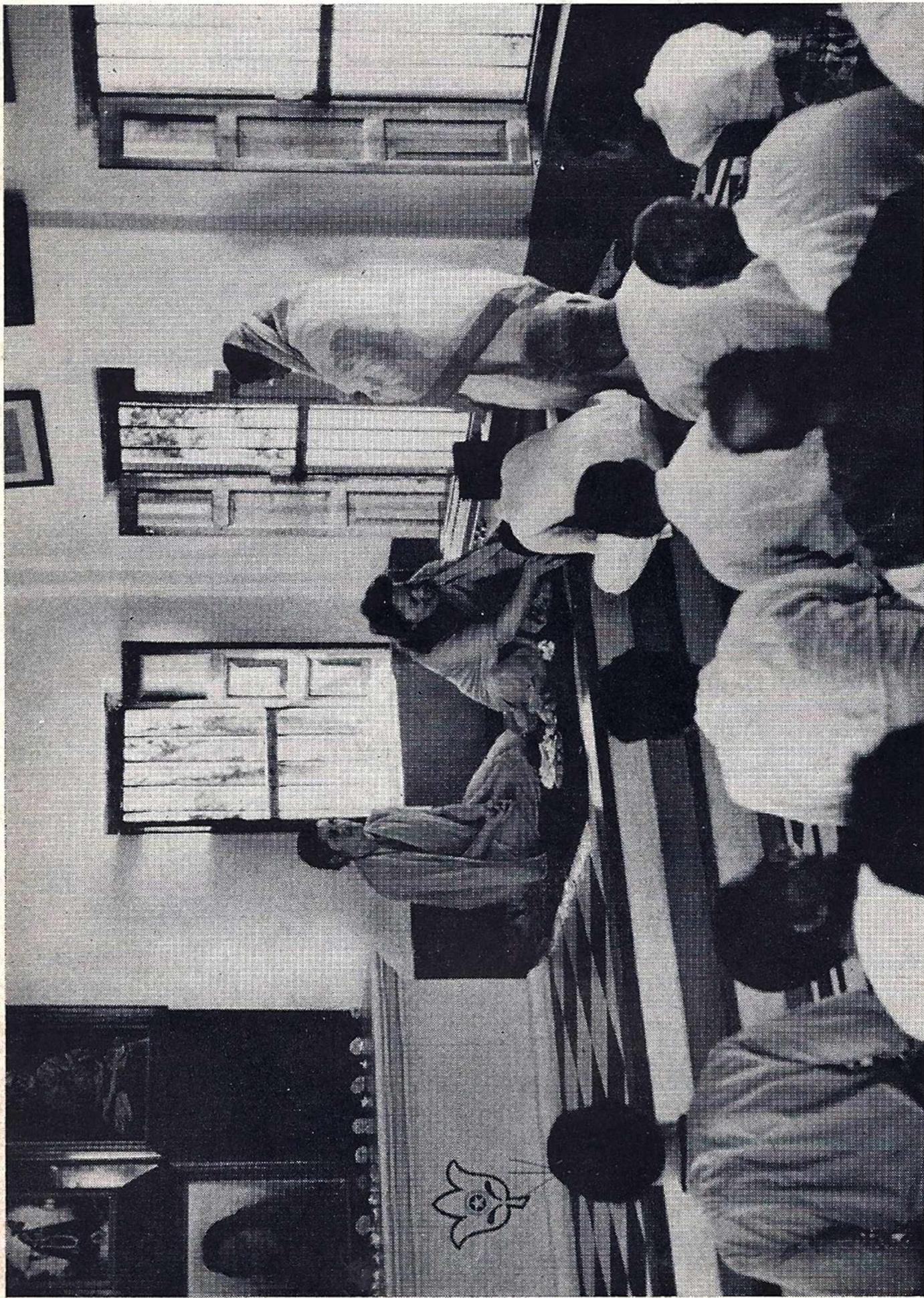
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Sculpture by Yashwant Shetty

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Sri Daya Mata (*center*) greeting a YSS devotee at conclusion of one of her daily *satsangas* (meetings for meditation and spiritual discussion) in the Paramahansa Yogananda Guru Mandir (shrine) on grounds of Yogoda Satsanga Society headquarters, Ranchi, India, March 1964