



Self-Realization

MAGAZINE

FOUNDED IN 1925 BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

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MAGAZINE

FOUNDED IN 1925 BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



Entrance to Self-Realization Fellowship Church, Hollywood, California,
founded in 1942 by Paramahansa Yogananda

January - March 1964

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PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA
Chapultepec, Mexico, July 15, 1929

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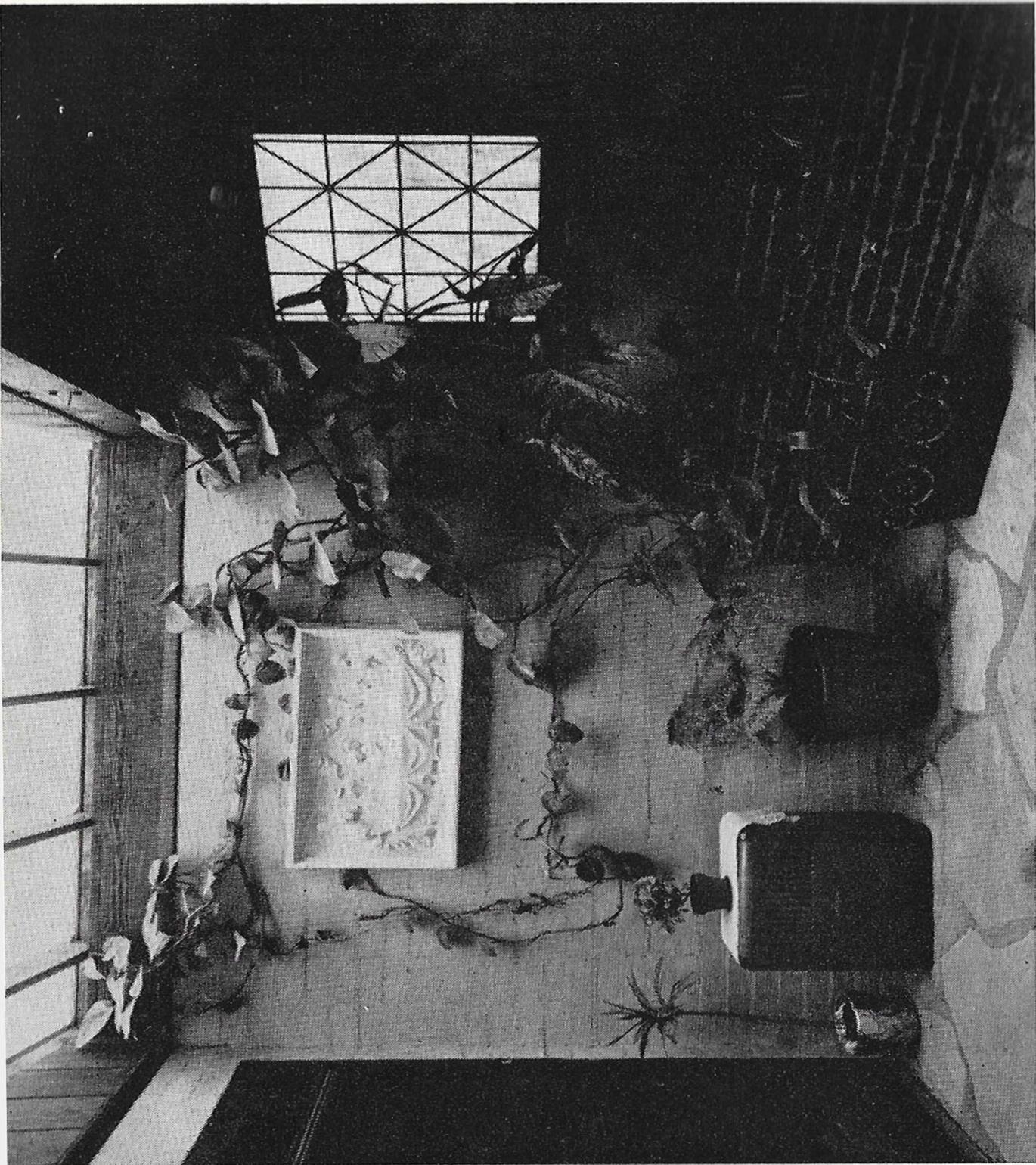
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Paramahansa Yogananda, founder. Sri Daya Mata, president.

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Skylighted alcove in Chapel at Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine, Pacific Palisades, California.
On wall is plaster relief depicting Da Vinci's "Last Supper."

A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE *BHAGAVAD - GITA*

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

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



Chapter XV, Stanza 12

The light of the sun that illumines the whole world, the light from the moon, and the light in fire — know their radiance to be Mine.

The Christian Bible contains the following passage: "God said, Let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good."* The Lord vibrated His cosmic consciousness into subtle light and found it good, that is, suitable for the purpose of creating the universe of coordinated energies: gases, liquids, and solids — different vibrations of the One Light. The light of intelligent life-energy, the Word, is the first manifestation of cosmic consciousness in creation. When this divine force vibrates more heavily or grossly, it becomes the electrons, protons, and atoms of the universal structure.

*Genesis 1:3-4.

Spirit is the Light that Supports Creation

The sun and moon and fire are composed of the grosser light of electrons, protons, and atoms, which in turn are made of cosmic energy. And cosmic energy emanates from cosmic consciousness. Therefore it is the Mind of Spirit that manifests as the sun, moon, fire, and all other objects and forces in the cosmos.

Chapter XV, Stanza 13

Permeating the soil of earth with My life force, I support all beings; acting through the watery moon, I bring forth all plant forms.

The omnipresent light of Spirit evolves all creatures and forms and forces in the universe, and sustains them by the continuous manifestation of that light. When a cinema beam of light is withdrawn, the pictures on the screen automatically disappear. Similarly, during the period of cosmic dissolution when God withdraws His creative beam of light, the scenes of life on the screen of space instantaneously melt away.

In this stanza of the *Gita* the earth, living creatures, the moon, and plant life are mentioned together to indicate their close relationship. The light of God creates the planet, the home of living creatures; the moon, which rules water and all other fluids, aids the growth of vegetation that nourishes all beings.

All Creatures and Forces are Expressions of One Light

The earth, the living creatures, the moonrays, the herbs and plants — the home, the devourers, the productive rays of the moon, the devoured objects — all these, performing different functions, are yet manifestations of the one same cosmic light.

Chapter XV, Stanza 14

As Vaishvanara (fiery power) I exist in the body of living creatures; and, acting through Prana and Apana, I digest food that is eaten in four ways.

God's cosmic light is present in man's stomach as *Vaishvanara*, the fiery power of assimilation; and as *Prana*, the crystallizing metabolic life-current of digestion; and as *Apana*, the poison-and-decay-eliminating life-current. Through the proper action of these two cur-



Pink roses near Windmill Chapel at Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine,
Pacific Palisades, California

rents, man can take food in the following four ways: masticating, sucking, licking, and swallowing.

When one's health is impaired by greedy, intemperate living, in this or a prior life, his glandular secretions and his digestive juices do not function properly. When the *Prana* life-force current is disturbed, the eliminating current of *Apana* is automatically affected, producing disease in the body.

It is the cosmic life present in human life that is really responsible for all body processes. In cases of chronic ill-health, only one's deep faith in God's limitless power can heal him. Man's healing methods to cure physical maladies, such as indigestion, usually take note of only the symptoms of the disease and do not seek the root cause — the disturbed life force. By man's continuous faith the Lord can guide the all-healing life force to cure his body of all ailments in a seemingly miraculous way. The *Gita* is here hinting to all persons who suffer from chronic or incurable maladies to seek succor from God, who placed the supreme healing power of *Prana* within man.

This stanza also points out that the Lord is the unseen head-chef in the human body, who distills the life force out of foodstuff to nourish man and to supply him with energy. Man is an atomic being sustained by atoms of energy distilled by the divine force from food. All devotees should depend on God for their well-being, and not solely on lesser methods of sustenance and healing. Medicine, dieting, fasting, and other curative methods are often useless without God's help. Man's faith awakens the supreme inner forces of healing. All lesser methods of physical healing partially awaken the supreme power of divine healing.

True yogis unconsciously neutralize and control the crystallizing current of *Prana* and the eliminating current of *Apana*, to keep the body a holy temple under the government of Spirit; they entertain no egotistical desire for physical life.

Man is Born to Seek the Love of God

Jesus said: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat" (*Matt. 6:25*). That is, don't fuss about it constantly; eat to live just for service to the Lord and not for material enjoyment. Eat properly with the thought of preserving the body to attain divine realization. Man is born to seek the love of God, a goal he has forgotten through wrong human living.



Daya Mata (*seated in second row, wearing garland*) with Yogoda Satsanga Society members and friends who attended an informal *satsang* (religious meeting) in Taj Mahal Hotel, Bombay, October 12, 1963



YSS members and friends listening to a talk by Sri Daya Mata at Jai Hind College Hall, Bombay, October 16, 1963. A documentary film about the work of YSS-SRF was shown.

The Teachings of Islam

Prayer carries us half-way to Allah (God); control of the senses takes us to the door of His palace; charity gains us admission.

Wrong not and ye shall not be wronged.

Do not follow up one look at a woman with another; for verily the first look is excusable but the next is unrighteous.

The world and all things in it are valuable; but most valuable of all is a virtuous woman.

He needs no other rosary whose thread of life strongly holds beads of love, service, charity, and renunciation [of ego].

Righteousness is not ritualism, turning your faces toward the east or the west. A righteous man is one who believes in God, the last day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets; who gives alms and is steadfast in prayer.

To Allah belong the heavens and the earth. He giveth life and he causeth death. Apart from Allah ye have neither friend nor helper.

Forgive thy servant seventy times a day.

God is the first and the last, the seen and the hidden. He knoweth all things. It is He who in six days created the heavens and the earth, then ascended His throne. Wherever you are, He is with you; He sees all your actions.

Your God is one God, there is no God but Him, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

God it is who has made for you the night to repose in and the day to work in. Verily God is the Lord of Grace to men, but most give no thanks.

God loveth those who do good.

Verily we are gods and verily to Him do we return.

The Teachings of Zoroastrianism

Thou art Light, Ahura Mazda! Where Thou art is Light. Void of Thee all is darkness. Unseen by all Thou perceivest all. Nothing is hidden from Thee.

Supreme is the Lord, the never changing, the immutable, while all else waxes to wane, grows then decays, takes birth but to die.

The Great One is not merely a remote spectator of the world

He has created. He is immanent and man can enter into close relation with Him.

Changeless art Thou, Ahura Mazda, the same now and forever! Transcendent Being art Thou, unmoved amidst moving things, unaffected in the midst of manifold changes.

He is the one same God, but men give Him many names.

Do not become presumptuous through great connections, family, and race. For in the end you can depend only on the merit of your own deeds.

The first perfection is good thoughts. The second is good words and the third is good deeds. To live in falsehood is worse than death.

Hold your heart, your mind, your hands, and your feet ever in readiness for the performance of righteous deeds.

Let all men practice these fivefold good works: liberality, truth-



Sri Daya Mata (*between windows*), Uma Mata (*left*), and Ananda Mata in ashram of Sri Champaklal (*left, holding musical instruments*). This *bhajan* (meeting for devotional singing) was held in Bombay on October 15, 1963. Daya Mata spoke briefly and chanted two songs. Sri Champaklal and his devotees meditate together for three to six hours five days a week. He is a devotee of *bhakti*, the devotional path to God.

OM-- Sanskrit Word-Symbol for God

Paramahansa Yogananda always ended periods of meditation or chanting by intoning *OM* (*Aum*) in the manner shown by the musical arrangement below.

The chanting of *Aum*, from which the word *Amen* derives, is similar to the practice in Western churches of intoning *Amen* one or more times at the conclusion of a hymn. In *Cosmic Chants* Paramahansa Yogananda has written the following explanation:

Aum is the basis of all sounds. The *Aum* of the *Vedas* became the sacred word *Hum* of the Tibetans; *Amin* of the Moslems; and *Amen* of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians. *Amen* in Hebrew means *sure, faithful*. *Aum* is the all-pervading sound emanating from the Holy Ghost (Invisible Cosmic Vibration; God in His aspect of Creator); the "Word" of the Bible; the voice of creation, testifying to the Divine Presence in every atom. *Aum* may be heard through practice of Self-Realization Fellowship methods of meditation.

"These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." — *Revelation 3:14*.

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." — *Romans 10:17*.

The great Hindu sage Patanjali said: "He who knows *Om* knows God." Chant *Om* while meditating on the threefold nature of creation: its causal aspect, or vibratory manifestation as an idea of God; its astral aspect, or vibratory manifestation as light and energy; and its physical aspect, the objective manifestation of the vibrations of thought and of light.

Repeat the chant again and again with deep attention and devotion. Always try to listen inwardly for the real *Om* sound, which is an astral vibration and is only symbolized in the chanted sound of *Om*.

Free *ff* *mf* *p* *pp* FINAL ENDING

Om, Om, Om, Om,

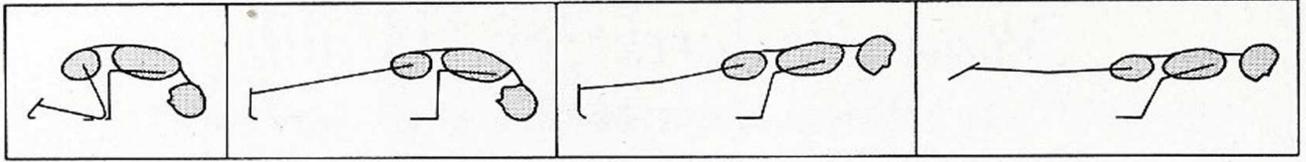


FIG. 3 — An easy method for performing *Mayurasana*, The Peacock Pose, through the accomplishment of an intermediate posture, *Hamsasana*, the Swan Pose (third from left).

TECHNIQUE

The easiest procedure is as follows (*Fig. 3*):

- (1) Kneel down. Place the hands flat on the floor between the knees, with the fingers pointed backward and the edges of the palms close together. Then bend forward, bringing the elbows together and resting the head on the ground.
- (2) Straighten the legs; the body weight is now supported by the toes and the head. Gently transfer the weight onto the joined elbows.
- (3) Raise head and upper trunk. This is *Hamsasana*, the Swan Pose (*Fig. 4*). Note how the forearms stand nearly upright.
- (4) Now incline the forearms slightly more forward. The whole body is thus shifted forward and the feet are automatically raised off the ground.

Another way of assuming the pose, more difficult but more graceful, is illustrated in *Fig. 5*.

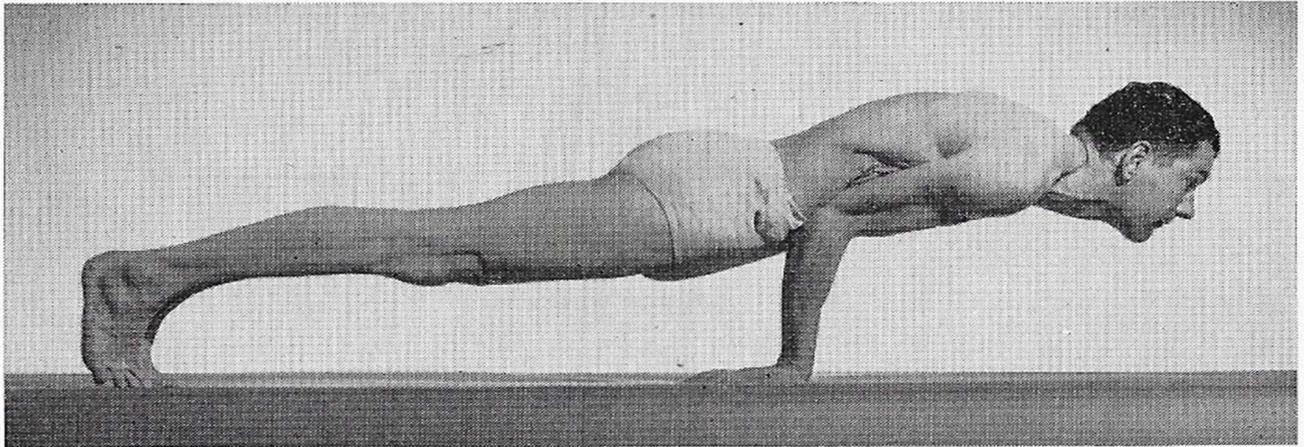


FIG. 4 — *HAMSASANA*, THE SWAN POSE

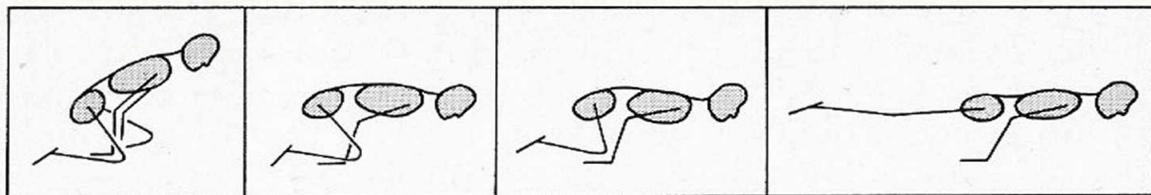


FIG. 5 — An advanced method for performing *Mayurasana*. The legs are extended directly from a kneeling position while the body is balanced on the forearms. At no time do the feet and head touch the ground. This manner of assuming *Mayurasana* is mastered gradually after continued practice of the method shown in Fig. 3.

DIRECTIONS FOR CORRECT PRACTICE

Timing: Master *Hamsasana* first, holding the pose for five seconds in the beginning, then increasing the time gradually to one minute. Then relax in *Savasana*, the Relaxation Pose, for an equal length of time. Next master *Mayurasana*, following the same procedure.

Breathing: At first, when the pose is held for only a few seconds, exhale slightly and hold the breath for the duration of the pose. Later on, breathe normally throughout the pose.

Concentration: Keep the attention on the solar plexus.

Keypoints: Keep head, trunk, and legs straight "like a stick." If you feel you are going to lose balance, always manage to fall on the side.

Difficulties: These may be due to weak wrists and stiff arms. Strengthen the wrists and render the shoulders supple by the practice of *Hamsasana*.

BENEFITS OF MAYURASANA

Mayurasana strengthens the abdominal wall, inasmuch as it requires for its execution the tension of the rectus and oblique muscles of the abdomen. It helps reduce abdominal fat. It increases the intra-abdominal pressure and stimulates the functioning of the abdominal organs (stomach, intestines, liver, pancreas, spleen) as well as the heart and lungs.

To a certain extent the Peacock Pose checks the flow of blood in the abdominal aorta and in the inferior vena cava, and directs the blood mass upward in the chest, neck, and head in an even quicker

and more powerful way than does the Headstand. Because of this circulatory change and also because of the compression of the region of the solar plexus and adrenal glands, the pose has a remarkable bracing-up effect, which has been compared to that of a hypodermic injection of adrenaline (Sivananda of Rishikesh).

REFERENCES

The pose is briefly described in *Yoga Yajnavalkya* (3:16,17), which Prahlad C. Divanji (1885-1961) traces to a period between the second century B.C. and the fourth century A.D. (see *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1954, 29, 105).

The pose is also described in the *Yoga Upanishads*, which are generally thought to have been written more recently: *Sandilya Upanishad* (3:12), *Darsana Upanishad* (3:10-12), and *Trisikhi Brahmana Upanishad* (47). The references to the Sanskrit text and English translation of these *Upanishads* appear in *Self-Realization Magazine*, January 1963, p.39.

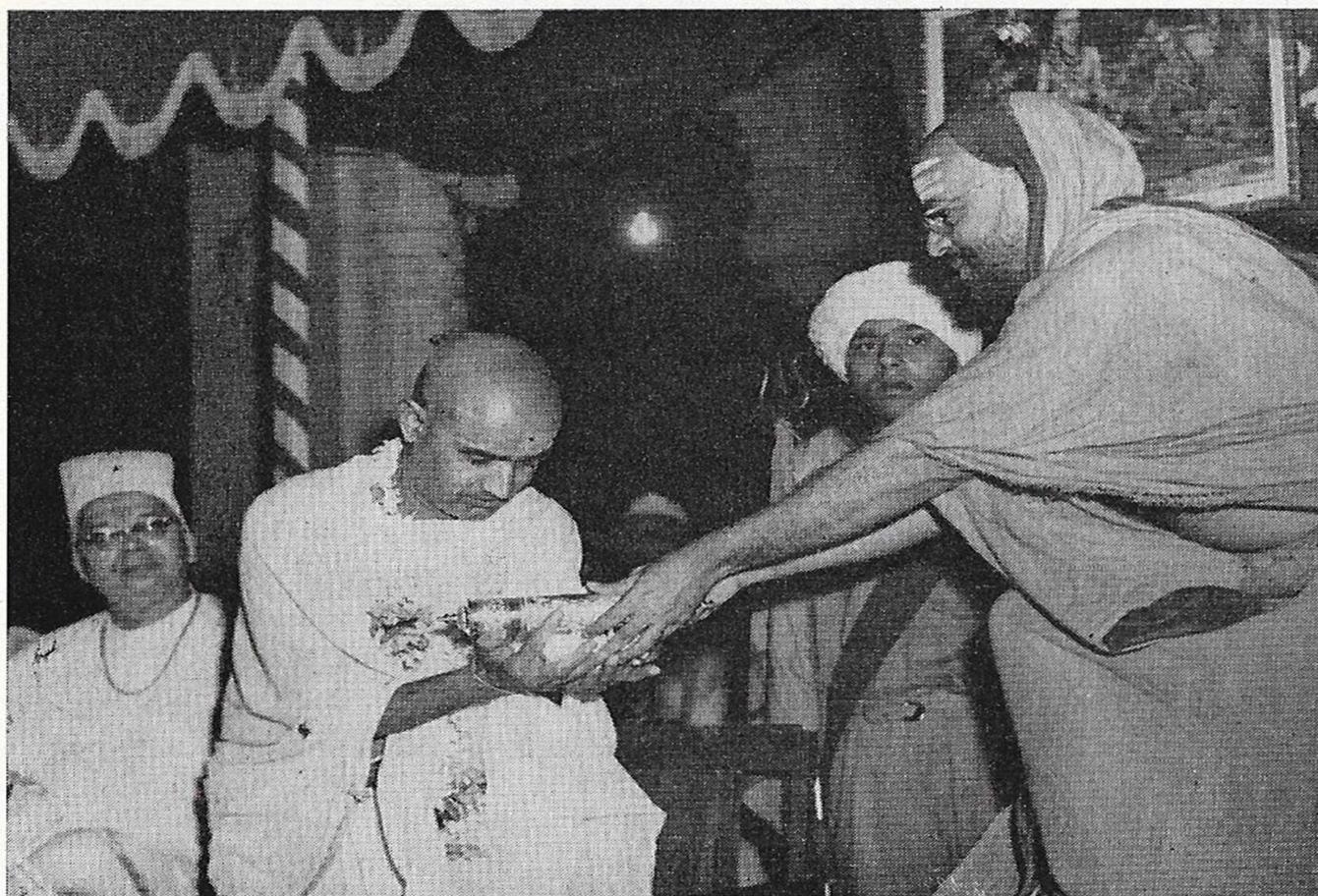
More recently, the Peacock Pose has been described by Swami Svatmarama in his *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* (1:30,31, or 1:31,32, according to the editions), by Yogi Gheranda in the *Gheranda Samhita* (2:29,30), and by Narayana Tirtha in his *Yoga Siddhanta Chandrika* (2:46). For further reference to these books, see *Self-Realization Magazine*, January 1963, p.39. The *Yoga Siddhanta Chandrika* has been edited by Ratnagopala Bhatta in *Yoga Darsanam*, Benares, 1911, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, work 35, nos. 154 and 159.

The variations of the pose — *Hamsasana*, *Lolasana*, and *Karkatasana* (the one-hand Peacock Pose) — are mentioned mainly in the modern literature on yoga postures.

Apparently there has been no physiological study of the pose. The determination of the center of gravity in the upright body (it lies in front of the second sacral vertebra) helps one to understand why the forearms are inclined in the Peacock Pose: in such a position, the gravity center is just above the supporting area of the hands.

The *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* assigns to the Peacock Pose a great healing value. Modern exponents of the yoga asanas assert more specifically that the pose is helpful in dyspepsia, ptosis of the abdominal organs (Kuvalyananda, *Yoga-Mimamsa*, 1933, 4, 329-330), hemorrhoids, constipation, chronic gastritis, and diabetes (Muzumdar, *Yogic Exercises*, 1954 edition, p.72). There are as yet no clinical reports substantiating these assertions in the Western scientific tradition. However, as the asanas in general begin to attract more interest in the West, no doubt an effort will be made to investigate and report on their benefits.

Studies on the treatment of diabetes with yoga methods and a scientific assessment of the results are under way in India at the Yogic Treatment and Research Center, Bapunagar, Jaipur, Rajasthan. A theory has been advanced that muscular exercise favors the production of an X-factor possessing an insulin-like action (P. White, The treatment of diabetes mellitus, *Medical Clinics of North America*, September 1962, vol. 46, p. 1179).



SHANKARACHARYA OF GOWARDHAN MATH, PURI,
TO BE INSTALLED IN JUNE 1964

His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Sachidananda Tirthji (*right*), the Shankaracharya of Sharada Math, Dwarka, India, presents religious articles to Sri Chandrashekhar Shastri, the Principal of Government Sanskrit College, Jaipur, in a ritual of blessing conducted in September 1963 in Jamnagar.

In June Sri Shastri will be ceremoniously installed as the Shankaracharya of the historic Gowardhan Math in Puri: one of the four *maths* or monasteries founded by Adi ("the first") Shankaracharya in the ninth century. The last head of Gowardhan Math was Shankaracharya Jagadguru Sri Bharati Krishna Tirthji, who visited America in 1958 under the auspices of Self-Realization Fellowship. He entered *mahasamadhi* in 1960; in his Will he nominated Sri Shastri as his successor.

Sri Daya Mata had the honor of meeting in Calcutta the revered Shankaracharya of Sharada Math in February 1964. The secretary of His Holiness has graciously sent this picture for publication in *Self-Realization Magazine*.

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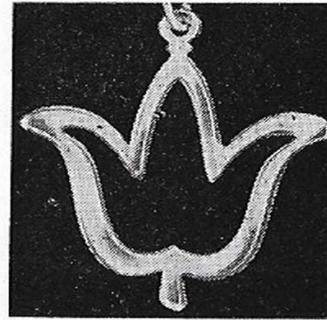


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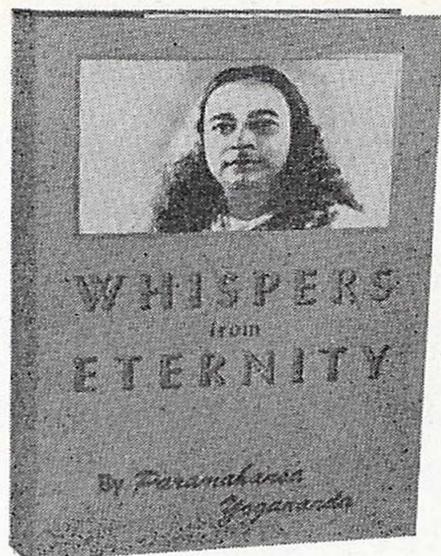
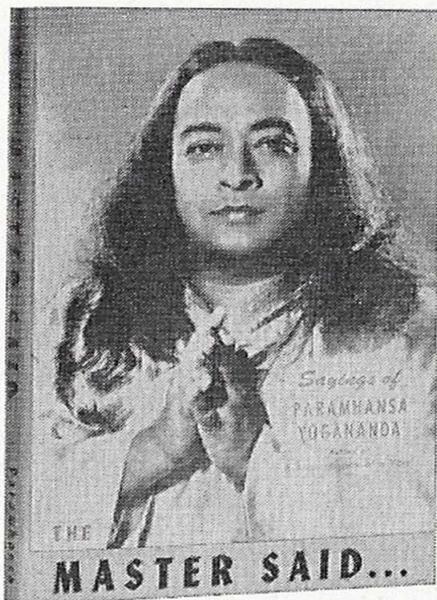


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Daya Mata in meditation at a *satsang* (religious meeting) of Yogoda Satsanga Society students, at Taj Mahal Hotel, Bombay, Oct. 12, 1963

Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine, Pacific Palisades, California, founded in 1950 by Paramahansa Yogananda

