

EUREKA! *A Newsletter of the Paraphysical Sciences*

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PART I

India 2005

The ancient spiritual sciences on the fast track



occupancy. A stewardess assured me the seating plan had been the same for 25 years. On arrival finally in India two of my teachers pointed out to me they had been traveling around the world in economy seats as often as monthly for decades.

Except now a Lufthansa flight to India represents in its cabin a cross section of the world. So perhaps I now felt a little of that experience. Therefore, when, a few days later, I watched 150,000

This past spring I traveled to India for the first time in fifteen years and was unprepared for the psychological and physical changes that have taken place. After eight or so hours, when they announced only three more to Frankfurt where we would immediately transfer to the next leg of the flight to New Delhi, I thought the airline seats were steadily being crowded together for increased

people sit patiently cross legged flat on the ground one against the other for food or words I was in awe.

If Bisake was in part about spring renewal and rebirth, just as Easter is, I would literally have to be born again to find that relief, or so I thought. Though the female monks seemed to embody most dynamic humorous loving energy, my

teacher said because this is the age of the female.

On the trip by mini bus from New Delhi to the foothills of the Himalayas where the Ganges hits the plains, for the festival, we stopped at a very small ashram where I saw Mr V. Sen, whom I hadn't seen for twenty years from the time Mahatma Satyanand had roused him out of bed even with a 104 degree temperature. Evidently his urgent task was to help me film Shri Satpal Ji's entrance at the head of two hundred thousand pilgrims assembled at the terminus of the route they had walked from the Tibetan border high up in the Himalayas, demanding social justice, end of corruption, and economic progress. All of which seems to be coming to India hundreds of years ahead of what I would have predicted.

The pollution is manageable because of changed emission standards that have improved New Delhi air to that of 1950s Los Angeles. Ten years ago, ten minutes of breathing could give you black lung. Satpal, a former government Minister of Rails, (which has one million employees) was influential in the amazing improvement of Indian transportation, which seems to have triggered the rush to the 21st century. There are still streets full of scooter cabs, cows, bicycles, motorcycles,

trucks, and the occasional elephant, but overhead is likely to be a new skyway or state of the art tram vastly relieving the congestion below.

Ken, whom I traveled with as a member of M.O.J.A and who has been in construction all of his life said other countries than the U.S. were building with techniques that he would have to be re-schooled in to understand.

All this has made a seemingly impossible shift in Indian confidence and consciousness. Maybe having the bomb helps! One of the trip's most encouraging facets was that those who came before, spreading the science of inner awareness are so honored and remembered. In fact it was remarkable to me how powerful the act of remembrance is. People seen for only a few days over 20 years ago would greet me as though it were yesterday. Do you remember such and such, and amazingly I would recall it as vividly as would a child not bound by a time line.

It's as though by merely attempting to be only in the present moment, no matter how unsuccessfully, actually charges the batteries of remembrance.

I was reminded that when Satpal's 200,000 walkers had arrived in the center of New Delhi we met Indra Gandhi's procession going the other way.



Largest freestanding building in Asia.



The modern is India bringing together ancient technologies such as almost instantaneous tenting for 150,000 people, to televised viewing in the outskirts of the crowd...

There were tense moments negotiating who would make way for whom. I personally remember the seeming thugs with knives stuck in their belts and socks so that we few cameramen even when out of tape circled Satpal closely.

When Satpal told the political march leaders that there were hundreds of thousands of simple people behind him who did not understand political negotiations and would simply be coming, Indra's procession parted and we walked through.

This trip though, it wasn't physical distress.

I barely survived multiple spiritual panic attacks. One was a panic attack at being in a human body. And I felt the passion of the disabled, like my friend Diane who had just had her last leg amputated. But when Mungra Ji apparently turned into the Bhodi Tree before my eyes, I was relieved of that attack.

However a short time later I had claustrophobia of the arc of my life failures



“You’ve gotten old, Sam.” then on hearing people who should know better conduct mundane business talk with someone who seems to me the incarnation of Shiva himself, my inner sight faded from my vision. I realized for hope to manifest in what’s left of my life, I would have to more constantly see light and presence within myself. I guess this was the right place to realize the futility of aspiration in a life.

But claustrophobia in its every form hovered over my shoulder from bodily to continental.

The heat and smog of the Indian subcontinent had me terrified my 10 year visa foretold me still there in beggar’s clothing. If you believe you’ve given your life to the teacher, as unworthy as the gift might be,

nonetheless, when your every effort fails, isn’t it in his hands to decide. Shouldn’t he then consider for you the third way of productive and energetic geezerhood? At least those were my thoughts. Isn’t motivation itself karmic or is it the gift of grace.

I became aware this trip how much sacrifice there is in the ordinary doings of the ethical and enlightened teacher. The constant travel, separated from family, often in third world conditions, or in unceasing jet lag. Or eating food simply because it was prepared with love. Or sitting without surcease in dust and heat to greet those increasing thousands who have surrendered their lives to the search for awareness of inner knowledge. And that in

many ways was the theme of this trip – for the newspapers in Hardwar wanted to hear that we Westerners had come to India as the source of the most ancient inner sciences.

But certainly part of this recognition was how catalytic the rush of Western knowledge was for these traditions. Or perhaps it was the reverse.

Either way, ancient traditions propagated by a society leaping past Western technological achievements, in many ways similar to China, but with free markets and democratic verve. They might, in fact most probably will, have truly effective national mass transit before ourselves.

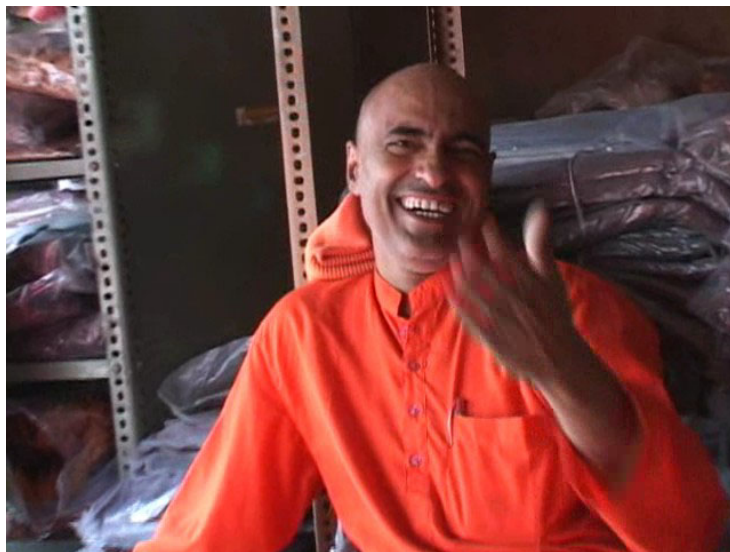
Nonetheless, it seemed on short notice that this huge—almost quantum—leap in the numbers of people supposedly seeking inner awareness and thus a “knowledge” of self had led to personality worship.

There seemed to be a large percentage of people who wanted merely to touch the hem of a spiritual superstar. My teacher replied to this by saying that to change entire nations you must start from where people actually are, and then give them the chance of self realization. On one hand when I witnessed 150,000 people sitting cross legged for four hours - the essential aspect of hatha yoga for health some people say - watching and attempting to endure this discipline, or exercise, without moving, one person against the other I had to remember the discourse we were hearing was sophisticated enough for Harvard Divinity School and perhaps more from the heart of the matter.

Though shortly after I found myself thinking, the way the huge crowds were being controlled was too often a little rough. So that afternoon, Satpal’s eldest son, in his early twenties, spoke to the few North Americans there: from Mexico, the U.S., and Canada.

He started right off, without prompting, stating that there was intrinsic energy connected to geographic location, and that affected people’s behavior. In Indian culture in general because of population density, people feel they have to push and shove to get what they need and in certain places that tendency was heightened. In some of these places, persons of authority would manifest self-fulfilling prophecy and shove back, first. Later I saw more of what I thought was worrisome neglect of compassionate crowd control techniques.

Satpal invited several of us to meet with himself and his two sons. I was, it’s true, witness to the compassion in every other area, the free meals provided several times a day to 150,000 people by the giant outdoor kitchen staffed by chefs from all over India, as well as free space to sleep not to mention the world’s largest toilet complex with 450 modern flush toilets! However it seemed to us outsiders that at the very



least there was not enough crowd control to give it the possibility of being well organized and thus by definition user friendly.

At this meeting, Sharday was instantly involved in a dialogue with his father, citing errors of planning that had created the situation not to mention the possibility of hierarchical thoughtlessness by those in charge. I myself had seen Kenny rescue elderly people from being trampled. He and I had traveled to this and similar gigantic public convocations happening in the modern India bringing together ancient technologies such as almost instantaneous tenting for 150,000 people, to televised viewing in the outskirts of the crowd. I had seen him catch elderly people before they were shunted into dangerous spaces in the

ashram grounds never intended to accommodate so many.

Immediately Satpal was on multiple phones calling to account those in charge. Perhaps we were stating the obvious, but it seems there is a role for that in this theater which is so suddenly achieving a national stage in the India which itself is taking a place on the world stage.

India is indeed taking a great leap in its modernity and doing it without very much state control. Just as the “movement” to which my teacher has dedicated his life, appears poised to spread to the world, so is India poised to be a world power. And to my amazement the outlook of so many people not to mention the economic power of the nation has evolved in thirty years an



Cooking for 150,000 people.



There are some 3,000 now in India, which in combination with other ashram systems, provide a powerful political affect in breaking down class barriers as well as a social net insuring protection from the abyss of the third world's economic black hole.

amount I would have said would take three centuries.

As I was leaving India my teacher was off to South Africa to honor Gandhi's first act of political assertion of human rights. And he has replicated Gandhi's walk from the ocean as he has walked back and forth across the country with hundreds of thousands for national reforms. Simultaneously he was in conversation with practitioners of these teachings in Mexico to begin the founding of ashrams in Central and South America.

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While we were there Satpal received an E-mail from Argentinian legislators inviting him to teach and offer his message of internal knowledge in that country. The amazing thing about being in proximity to this worldwide organizational engine is that there is no giant central beaurocracy.

Ashrams come from the creation of some size of community that seeks to share in a common vision of the world and by definition is immediately self-sustaining. And to we two gringos the even more

amazing fact for us was that there seemed to be a role for us in this grand plan.

Followers of teachers throughout the centuries have said one of the pleasures of the spiritual seeker is to watch great plans made decades before come to fruition. I can remember Satpal saying years ago that Americans were so culturally resistant to the science of knowledge of self that he would approach by the back door. First he would propagate to Indian immigrants in this country and a generation after that to their Westernized children. Only then would he take on the unadulterated Western mind.

Several male and female "mahatmas" now based in Los Angeles, who had also helped found the great original ashrams of India, are now helping take on the pure bred gringo challenge.

I guess I came away from the trip also feeling that if India could do this then perhaps the free falling consciousness of this country could hit bottom and start back up far sooner than I had believed.

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