

JAI SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI !!

With deepest thanks to Shri Mataji for our chance to assist in this wonderful effort, and for her infinite loving attention given to all Her children who have found their way home.

I feel I can safely say that, after hearing of the experiences we all shared this week, there is going to be quite a queue of volunteers for next year's MBS Festival, and I hope to be able to get a spot somewhere on the roster.

Despite all the noise, hustle, confusion and heaviness of the Festival participants (every group imaginable) Shri Mataji provided hundreds of seekers with a very strong and unmistakable experience of self-realisation. Most felt genuinely grateful for the experience (some unable to even express it entirely) and were happy to know they weren't alone in this new stage of their lives. Some were a bit bewildered but relaxed and happy, and some knew exactly what this was.

thought wasn't possible. realisation, to being filled with the wonder and joy of finding what they gradually from that, to hopeful and optimistic, and then, after their self-whole experience was watching these people's expressions transform elusive "answer" to their deepest desire. The most wonderful part of the many were seekers who had nearly given up hope of ever finding that basically curious. From their questions and personal comments I saw that scene closed, cautious and openly skeptical of the Sahaja path. Others were The attitudes and faces of several of the people who came arrived on the

There was joy and lightness in abundance! them. "Such a friendly crowd," these Sahaja Yogis! a yogi paraphrased. commented in another language something like this yogi was waving to was then holding his hand over a man's head, and the passing couple were only passing through, squeezed past a yogi in the passageway that associate with past solemn sessions of self-realisation. One couple, who scene from a crowded deli, and I must admit, one which we wouldn't usually but with a rare empty chair, a yogi called to the crowd, "Next!" It was a move into and out of it. At one stage, being cornered without space to move all the while a tangible feeling of peace pervaded the small crowded area. There were usually so many in the stall at one time that it was difficult to and receiving vibrations - hands and candles whirling and waving - and closely packed, ever-changing group sitting in front of the altar giving The question of the day seemed to be, "What are they doing?" indicating the

business, and how could they sell anything when we were giving it away? stall were blocking their stalls and so they weren't able to do much. on the first day that the great numbers of people around the Sahaja Yoga exhilarating. The people situated in stalls opposite us actually complained people waiting to jump into a chair as soon as one became available, was complete yet whirlwind vibrations in order to accommodate the crowd of self-realisation in only a couple of short minutes, and having to give instantaneous adjustments to the situation. Describing the basic process of intensely gratifying experiences I can remember. We all had fun making few sessions, I felt compelled to say firstly, that it was one of the most Having been fortunate to assist at the Sahaja Yoga stall at the Festival for a

MIND-BODY-SPIRIT FESTIVAL, SYDNEY 18-22 NOV '92

Sahaja Newsletter3

PERTH 27 November 1992

GIDGEGANNUP GRAND SPORTING AND HOLIDAY CAMP

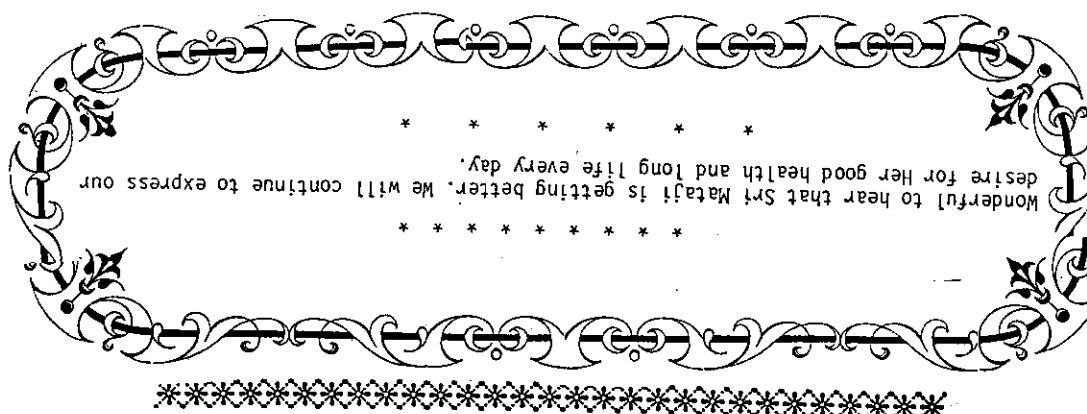
Kevin Fitzgerald has issued an open invitation to all-Australian Sahaja Yogis, especially skilled tradesmen, to attend the Ashram site at Gidgegannup during December and January for a fun-filled, exciting West Coast holiday. ENTIRELY FREE accommodation, FREE gourmet food, FREE unlimited sunscreen, swimming facilities, sailing, trout and Murray Cod sports fishing (catch 'em, chuck 'em back style). Includes one night in Fremantle with all the pizza you can eat and unlimited cappuccina PLUS at no extra cost - UNLIMITED WORK EXPERIENCE BYO hat.

This is your opportunity to hone your skills and gain countless Punyas. Don't miss out. Places filling fast. Airline, boat, train and bus schedules available from your local travel agent. Free on-site parking for Eastern States number plates. Ph (09) 370 4108. Ask for Kevin. N.B. Locals also welcome.

Gidgegannup update:

First floor: going up
Stairs: going up
Walls: going up
Windows: going in.
Weekend workers: going up?

THINKING COLLECTIVELY is about others. Not about ourselves. And if the recipe is right, others will do the thinking about you. That's what it's all about - we have to learn to care for others as if they are ourselves - and then it all works out. Because if everyone is thinking about everyone else, then we can all be objective and compassionate at the same time, knowing that we can lose nothing by doing so. From one of the early Sahaja Yoga magazines, which also says "Take Shri Mataji as your guide."



A quilting bee is to be held on Sunday 6th December - 10.00 am at Northmead. Would those who have participated, please hand all the squares in then whether finished or not. Thankyou.

QUILTING BEE

A Very big thankyou to everyone who participated - by either buying or selling tickets. 1st Prize - Sheila Marson of MSN 2nd Prize - Frank Giannasi of WA 3rd Prize - Paul Nicoli of Q'ld *****

VIDEO RAFFLE

Uncle Stephan also said that Sri Mataji preferred Centrepoint as a location for Her public programmes and Bundilla for Shivratri Puja. * * *

Shri Mataji is feeling much, much better now and sent Her thanks for the flowers the Australian Collective sent. Shri Mataji sends Her blessings to us all. Sahaja Yogis held the 1st Public Programme in Delhi, due to Shri Mataji's ill health last week. A large screen, like the movies, was used to screen a taped talk. 6000 people attended the programme and all got their realisation. Shri Mataji was very pleased with the Programme outcome. All the Yogis are enjoying the stay in Delhi at the camp. Everyone is well. A message has come from India that all Sahaja Yogis should work on clearing the left side. When Uncle Stephan rang Auntie Sue the other day from Delhi, he remarked how good the food was - when Uncle Stephan phoned Auntie Sue!

NEWS FROM INDIA:

Sahaja Newsletter

Contributions:

Sue Raggatt: (02) 746 9144
Ariane Kaub: (02) 798 6779
Carole McNeill: (02) 560 6921
Fax: (02) 745 4562

DECEMBER 4th '92

SAHAJA YOGA CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

11.00 am - 2.00 pm
Saturday, 19th December
Woodstock Park
(located in Church Street
directly behind Burwood Ashram)

Please bring:-

- * Plate of food
- * One present for your child/children
(With your child's name on it),
- * \$5.00 per child, \$2.00 per additional child
(To cover drinks & extras)

All Welcome

R. S. V. P. by Wednesday 16th Dec.
Please give numbers coming and money to
Charles Tiralongo (747 2820) or Joe Docherty (415 1484)

The advent of the God within

Modern science, based on a mechanistic view of how nature works, now poses a grave danger to both the natural environment and the future of humanity, argues **JOHN COBB**. It is time, he says, for a fundamental change.

IN THE 16th and 17th centuries, scientists were conscious of beliefs that motivated their work. These were religious beliefs, but they were not for that reason irrational. Indeed, they seemed to most people self-evidently true. They made sense of human life and motivated the intensive investigation of nature.

Today most branches of science proceed as if this were still the case. They treat the world as if it were mechanistic, ruled by externally imposed laws, even after a century of cumulative evidence that this is untrue.

This too, shows dependence on faith, but this faith is now an irrational one, retained chiefly by appeals to authority and the refusal to allow questions to be raised with regard to assumptions. This move from grounding science in rational faith to sustaining it by irrational faith does enormous cultural and existential harm.

Is there an alternative? Within both the scientific and the religious communities, there have been minorities seeking a new rationality. Despite their failure to gain a major hearing in either community, I believe a new rational faith is now emerging, that is, a plausible view of reality that makes sense of life and provides fruitful direction for scientific investigation.

This emerging 20th-century world-view proposes to replace the mechanistic model of nature with an ecological-organismic vision. The units of this model are events rather than substances.

Relations between events are internal, that is, one event is constituted in large part by its inclusion of previous events within it. To understand what such inclusion is like, one must reflect, not on the visual data that played such a large role in shaping the mechanistic world-view, but on the way what is seen participates in shaping the experience of seeing. Even better, one can attend to the way one's experience in one moment flows into the next, constituting, in large part, the successor experience.

When relations are viewed in this way, generalised from human experience, there is no reason to deny all action at a distance. Instead of the units of nature being regarded as passive objects moved by external forces alone, they are all seen as acts, in other words, as having a principle of motion within themselves. In these ways, the contemporary evidence calls for a view more like the alchemical one that was defeated in the 17th century than the mechanistic view that triumphed over it.

The rise of natural science was supported by a view that the regularities underlying the surface irregularities were exact. The faith that justified this was in a God who imposed laws on the world. This God was an external, omnipotent, intelligent will. The research programs ultimately derived from this faith have proved immensely fruitful.

Yet as these programs are pursued further and further, the results do not support the assumptions. Laws must be understood as statistical generalisations about individual behaviour that is not exactly predictable. Scientists find self-organising systems where they expected machines.

This view of nature is a threat to the supernaturalism that pictures God as a sovereign, all-determining will acting on the world from without. It is not for that reason less religious or spiritual. Indeed, after centuries in which the totally profane sphere of mechanistically governed matter has grown and has delegitimated, or at least restricted, religious belief, a return to something like the alchemical vision breathes fresh life into the spiritual quest.

The divine Reality is now to be found, not outside the cosmos, but within every creature, enlivening, empowering, and directing. God is not controlling in an external and deterministic way, but God is calling, liberating, and comforting. If we read the Jewish and Christian scriptures from this point of view, much becomes real and credible that has been uncomfortably foreign during the past three centuries.

The religious community is in a state of confusion. Some cling to the deistic and supernaturalist ways of thinking that seemed the only alternatives for adapting belief in God to the mechanistic world-view. Many find these images of God incredible and oppressive, and some are searching for other images.

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SEPT 10, 1992

Most scientists are convinced that as long as the mathematics based on these (traditional mechanistic) models makes fruitful predictions there is no reason to be concerned about the incoherence at a conceptual level. Each science, and each subdivision within each science can develop its own models and mathematics according to its needs without reference to how other sciences are developing. All that is needed is abandonment of the philosophical question as to how the results relate to some objective reality.

Nevertheless, this is not the whole story within science. Most scientists in fact do believe that they are learning about the real world. Most of them now are convinced that the real universe really originated in a "Big Bang" something like 18 billion years ago. There is a strong drive towards a coherent view of how this happened and of the relation of the basic forces one to another.

Thus far, the materialistic and mechanistic models continue to function, even if not consistently or helpfully, in dominant scientific descriptions of reality.

For these reasons the primary impact of science on the dominant cultural mindset is to continue to support a materialistic and mechanistic view of nature. This is taken for granted, for example, in economics, both in theory and in practice, with disastrous results for the natural environment and for the human future. It is just beginning to be challenged in ethics and theology.

The secondary impact is the support of a more thoroughgoing irrationalism. Although in principle this second impact counters the first, in practice it does not do so. People cannot live without working ideas of what it is they are encountering in their worlds. They have been taught for centuries that what they encounter is mechanistic matter. This view could be countered only by offering another and better one. The rejection of realism discourages any effort to find or explain an improved world-view.

The third impact continues. Many people by now have read that recent developments in science point to new ways of thinking about the natural world. These tend to merge in an ecological-organismic direction. A few members of the scientific and religious communities work seriously to bring this new vision to fruition for the benefit of both and for the sake of humanity as a whole. Outside the university and the professions they have gained a considerable hearing.

If science is going through a major change, if it is prepared to exchange the irrational faith that has guided it in the 19th and 20th centuries for a rational one, then the question of "God and Cosmos" can be raised again at the centre of the discussion rather than at the extreme periphery to which it has been dismissed.

A number of scientists have been impressed by the way in which something like a "decision" operated in the origins of this universe to generate a cosmos in which life and even human life could later appear. There seems to be no prior necessity that just this selection among abstractly available options be made, and many think that something more than random chance was at work. Something like the early modern view of an external, intelligent will, imposing a particular order on the world in its origins seems to be gaining new currency.

However, if the major change through which we are passing opens the door to new models and frees us from bondage to materialistic and mechanistic ones, then a much more interactionist way of thinking becomes possible. Instead of supposing that there was one decision in the beginning and that all else that has happened follows deterministic laws therein established, we can think of all the creatures as making their own decisions as well. It is the combined result of these decisions,

interacting with the primordial one, that decides what actually happens in the world. The primordial decision makes these creaturely decisions possible. It does not determine just what world they will actualise.

The divine reality, God, does not then exist in some external sphere unaffected by the world. God interacts with the cosmos. God participates in forming the being and life of each creature.

The life of each creature then participates in forming the divine Reality as well. By weakening the life system on this planet, human creatures are impoverishing the life of God. But is this of any use to science? I think so. It can bring clarity and the possibility of more coherence to scientific work. It can show the place of imposed law in the physical world while reconciling this with the many cases in which "laws" are no more than statistical generalisations about the choices of particular types of creatures.

It can encourage scientific investigations that take into account the internal life of the creatures that are studied and show how the results can enrich the knowledge gained by focusing on what is objectively visible. It can encourage the development of new models based on the primacy of events and their interrelations. These are more likely to

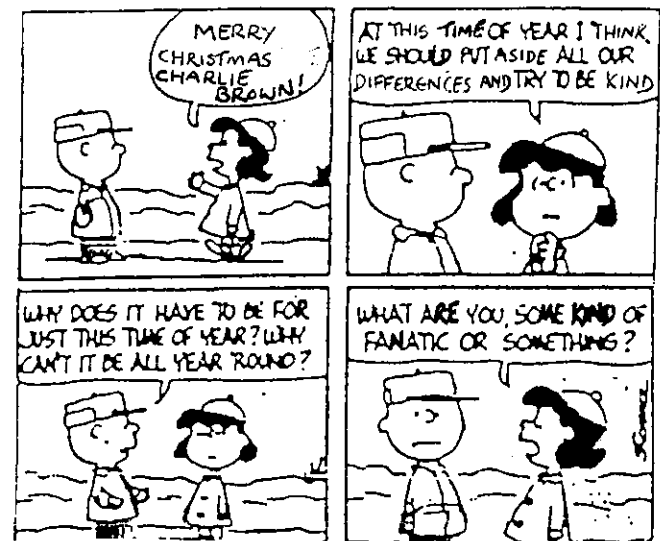
6 The divine Reality is now to be found, not outside the cosmos, but within every creature, enlivening, empowering, and directing.

mirror the actual world and thus to facilitate moves towards co-operation among the sciences and unification of results.

Adopting a more appropriate view of God and the cosmos can also change the role of science in society for the better. It can end the tension between the supposed determinism of science and the freedom of scientists, making sense of the informed moral passion of many scientists. It can remove science from a cause of fragmentation to a support for the holistic thinking needed to respond to our global problems. It can place science unequivocally on the side of those who seek to be sensitive to the suffering of creatures rather than to treat them as mere machines. And above all it can end the current scientific support for irrationalism and anti-rationalism.

It is time for science to free itself from the victorious model of the 17th century while renewing the intellectual creativity and daring that characterised its life in that period.

John Cobb is Emeritus Professor at the School of Theology at Claremont College, California. This is an edited extract of his 1992 Templeton Lecture to be delivered tonight as a free public lecture at the Stephen Roberts Theatre, Sydney University, at 8 pm.



SAINTS IN THE SOUTH

Picture if you can, Cool Ocean breezes, the beach within 10 minutes from anywhere in the district, white sands and pleasant footsoaks. The district is ready for more saints to come to the St George Area to set up an Ashram.

People at the Body Mind & Soul Exhibition found that there were many people who were Seekers in the Southern Districts of Sydney, yet there is not an Ashram south of Strathfield in the Metropolitan Area. We are very close to the Airport - ten minutes! There are many suitable homes to rent, plus good transport. Burwood is 20 minutes away. There are many major shopping centres from Rockdale to Miranda. Seekers have been in contact from as far down as the Royal National Park and Cronulla. There are advanced Hospitals (should you need them) and many, many more features.

WORDS CANNOT CONVINCE PEOPLE - Maybe if we put our attention on this area of possibilities we will end up with hordes of people setting up SAHAJA YOGA ashrams in the South.

(Programmes are held Monday evenings at Monterey - but an Ashram or two would help establish Sahaja Yoga in the South.)



BIRDWATCHING and PLANT SPOTTING

Ever thought about taking up these activities for your next new hobby? Learning about the fabulous diversity of life on this planet really helps establish our love for nature and respect for Mother Earth. Here are the things you will need:

1. Binoculars - compact ones are usually more expensive but much more convenient. For a family we suggest more than one set. Look for secondhand sets in the camera stores. Factors to consider are light intensity and clarity of image.
2. Bird Field Guide - the best ones are Pizzey's "A Field Guide to the Birds of Australia" and Simpson and Day Field Guide. About \$30 each. We prefer Pizzey but since getting Simpson and Day as a gift we use both as they have different approaches to field identification.
3. Plant Field Guide - A good one to start off with is "Native Plants of the Sydney Region" by Baker Corringham and Dark. Your local environment centre can probably recommend the best guide for your area. Big books are not easy to carry around so avoid these if you can.

Hints

- Join a local birdwatching club or environment group. Here you will meet like-minded nature-lovers and learn a lot from others. Not all birdwatchers are eccentric (!!!) - but it helps!
- Plant lots of flowering native plants in your garden and watch the birds flock in. Birdfeeding trays are not recommended, however if you are going to do it, make sure fruit and a good mixture of greens as well as seed are provided. Don't give bread and honey!
- Enjoy yourself out in nature. Birdwatching and plant knowledge increase enjoyment of bushwalking. Soon you will find yourself staying quiet and still more often as you notice more around you. You kundalini will let you know how much you are enjoying yourself.
- Start writing a birdlist for your local area or each walk. This will help improve your observation skills, and you'll get used to the names of birds more easily. Don't worry if you can't identify every LBJ (Little Brown Job). Lists also help you learn about the environments the birds live in e.g. water and wetlands, open woodland, rainforest, coastal heathland.

Have fun!

from Helena and Graeme

