


MYSTORY: SPIRITUAL MADVENTURES ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

Summary of the Journey – 2010 Vintage Release

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Vintage material from the 2010-2012 epoch of early unfolding. You are reading an *unedited artifact* from the old journal. Reader discretion is advised.

- Links to my old journals Vraja Journal (2004-2008) and Half-Satori (2008-2012) are live. Many outside links are dead by now. Let our ancient tracks not vanish. (Other preserved resources: Lake of Flowers Productions, Gaudiya.Com, Madhavananda Project Index, GeeVees Archive, Gaudiya Kutir Inc.,...)

I gather I've inadvertently turned into something of an enigma with my colorful and transdimensional history – for myself anyway, if not for the rest of you. I've delved

into



*Floating down the stream,
reaching for the roots...*

diverse aspects of my past adventures in the strange world of spirituality in earlier writings at some detail. Still, it may be hard to get an overall idea of what the heck exactly happened over the last 15 years.

This is an attempt to syndicate the gist of the journey into one place, for all of us to get a better idea of what's going on, and where all these idiosyncratic and cross-universal concepts emerge from. I have cross-linked this text to a number of older writings for more context for those with the time to spare. Good thing I didn't

dump my camera and old laptop into the river along the way!

School Finished: Monastic Studies on Higher Education

Since a very young age, I have intently sought to understand the nature and purpose of most things heaven and earth, contextualizing them into my evolving conceptual "master system" and subsequent applications. In the school years that followed, I held an avid fascination in diverse mythologies and ideologies, pursued mainly outside the actual curriculum. At the peak of my "school career" the grades were at an average 9.55/10, but my motivation for formal studies dwindled over the last year, bumping into several frustrations over amassing theoretical knowledge with no apparent or explained practicability. I have successfully kept away from "in the box" formal educational curriculum since, for better or worse.

At the age of fifteen, after finishing the compulsory nine years of primary school, I moved on to "higher education" in search of the connecting universal factors. Since 14, I had had a strong sense of a



Started about this age?

universal factor looming somewhere behind the corner,
only waiting to be discovered.

The
first



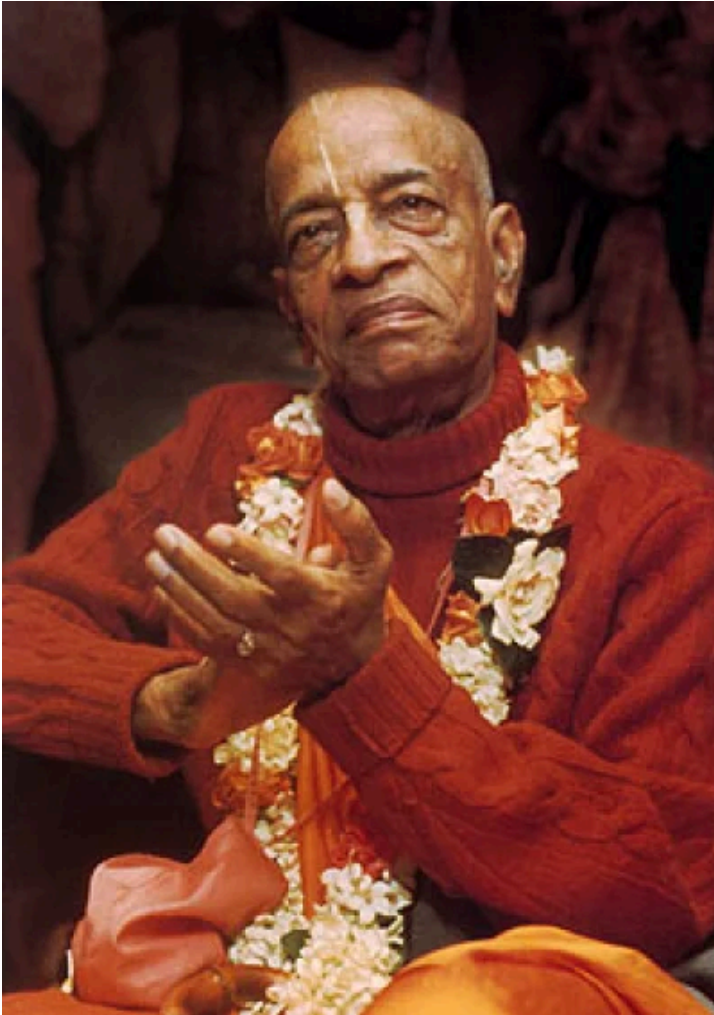
Age 15 and no idea what's ahead!

practicable and theoretically sound holistic system of thought I came across was the one taught in the Bhagavad-gita, then represented by the Hare Krishna movement (ISKCON) in Finland. I then opted to become a celibate monk, living in their Helsinki temple/ashram community, and doing more than my fair share of preaching and other missionary work over the five years that followed – "We are waging a war against materialism" was an ongoing motto, with a fierce allergy for the slightest deviation from "unadulterated truth".

During these years, I spent a great amount of time practicing mantra-chanting and meditation. Since the very beginning, I had grown very fond of the Sanskrit language, and the rhythmic incantations and mantra chants used in abundance in the ancient and medieval traditions of India. That's when mantras, or formulaic phrases to unravel the conditioned mind (*man-tra* = *mind-liberating*), became a part of my extended daily routine.

In particular, I would chant the Hare Krishna Maha-Mantra, which is essentially a bipolar 2x4x2 formula for connecting with the feminine/masculine divine. I will elaborate on the binary and formulaic patterns in mantras and the broad potential effects of sustained repetition in a separate new article. (More on early mantra-experiences)

My greatest interest however was in studying the ancient and medieval Indian texts on religion and philosophy, such as the Bhagavad-gita and the Srimad Bhagavata, with the elaborate commentaries of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the movement's founder. I must have read his entire literary production at least five times cover to cover. While his

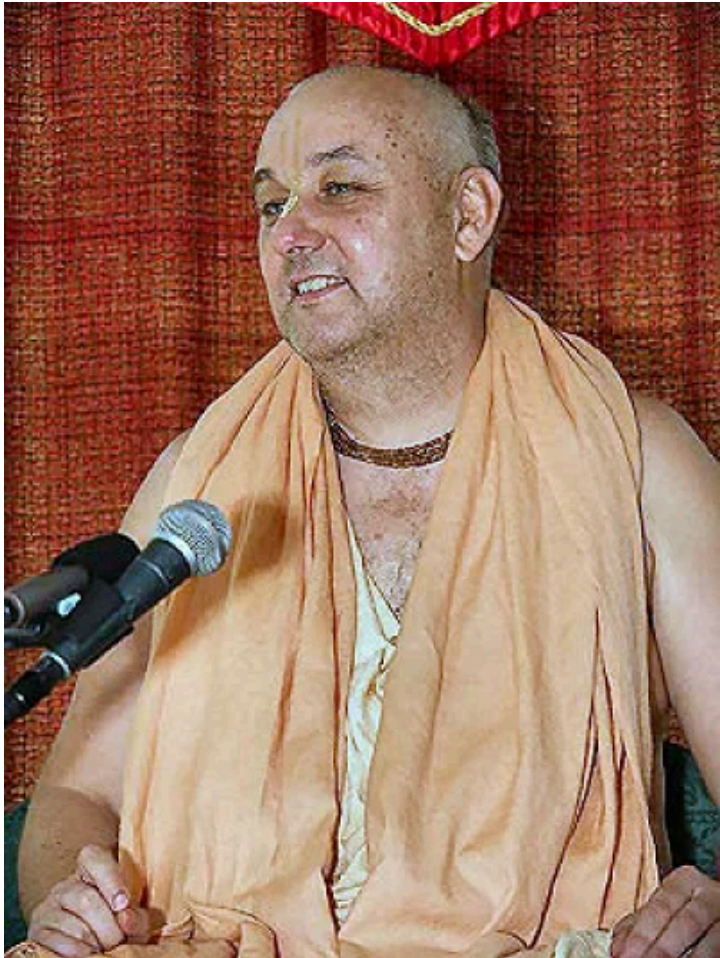


*"If you love me, then please
distribute my books."*

commentaries were heavily monotheistic – with heavy emphasis on personal devotion to Krishna, the Cause Of All Causes – they also covered a broad range of philosophy, theology, psychology and aesthetics, giving

me a great deal of exposure to classical Indian thought and the deepest questions of life.

The



First Guru: Suhotra Swami

literary interest was further fueled with my connection to Suhotra Swami (In Memoriam: Crowley Pi), an eccentric mastermind of comparative philosophies, religious traditions, myths and esoterics. Initiated as

Ekatma Das (Servant of the One Soul) with the standard set of extra mantras to practice, I continued to listen to literally thousands of his lectures to imbibe all the available wisdom and information.

Coupled with heavy duty missionary work with countless daily encounters, dialogues and debates, it definitely wired my mind well in preparation for the actual journey for unraveling my deepest questions. It doesn't really matter what the answers you're given are, as long as they provoke you to ask the right questions. As an added bonus, his answers were logical and systematic – a trait I wish more teachers had mastered.

These answers were not found with the Hare Krishnas in a final and satisfactory form; I also grew dissatisfied with the leadership and ongoing cultish policies of the movement. Before my eventual exit, I was married with Malati, also a long-time resident in the ashram, with whom we traveled to India and back a number of times, spending a total of some six years there – primarily in the Vrindavan area and occasionally in Bengal.

Looking for a continuation for the "basic" (but very systematic and elaborate) philosophy of the Hare Krishnas, I found the tutelage of Bhaktivedanta

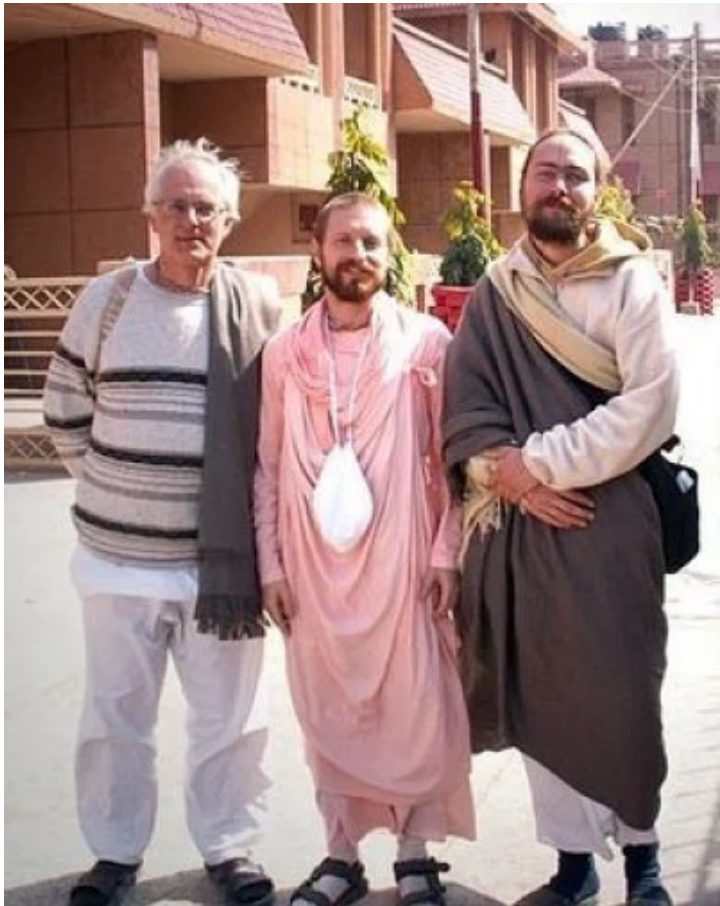


B.V. Narayana Maharaja

Narayana Maharaja, a reputed and learned elderly holy man from India with some connections to Prabhupada, who was now doing his world tours. We met in Moscow, and I received initiation under the name Atul Krishna Das – "Servant of Unparalleled God". Over the next two odd years, I co-founded and

organized his Finnish congregation, translated and distributed literature, studied the tradition at more esoteric depth, and routinely gave lectures, wrote essays, orchestrated events for preaching and congregation, provided consultation to others my level best, and so on.

I
also
spent
quite
some
time
with



Prof. Jagat / B.V. Aranya / Me

Swami B.V. Aranya, a young champion preacher and

scholar sannyasi, who has since come to terms with the material world and found something more engaging than the good old ascetic's staff for company. We organized preaching events, drafted position papers for inter-sect propaganda purposes, toured the places of pilgrimage in Vraja, and overall had a good time for as long as it lasted. Talk was in the air for me to also join the saffron renunciate ranks, which never came to happen – and better that way for everyone!

Regrettably Gaudiya Vedanta Samiti featured a fair degree of upper echelon corruption and ego-tripping, no doubt drawing more strength from the group's rather messianic perspective of its leader, and the leader's escalating endorsement of the same. Same old candy I'd grown so weary of in ISKCON, just a brand new wrapper. As I also came to discover that the leader himself was a bit of a copy-cat with his higher teachings, it was time to move on – followed by a 80-page examination of the doctrinal and logical fallacies in what I came to realize as essentially black-paint propaganda and warped doctrines to obfuscate the sources of the mission's cutting edge esoteric knowledge. He was undoubtedly a holy man of a very

high order, but our perspectives and worlds just wouldn't blend at the end.

Pure Devotion and Esoteric Dimensions



Ananta Das Babaji Maharaja

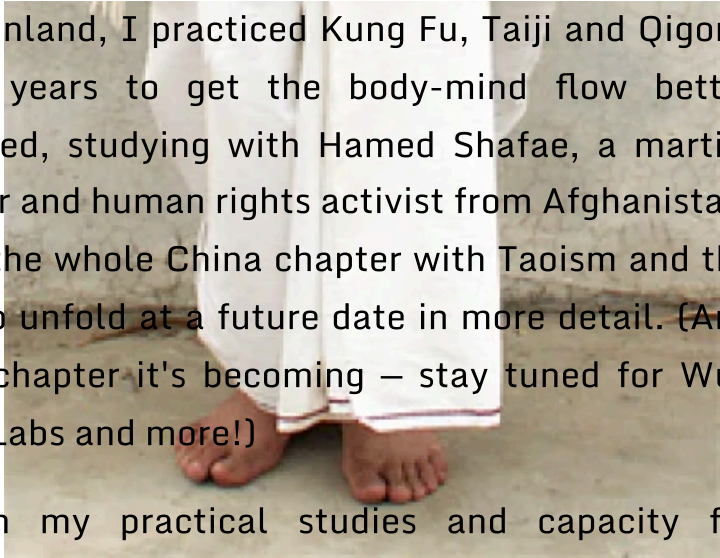
Continuing on the trajectory in motion, the natural next was towards India, in search of the roots and the real deal. Pandit Ananta Das Babaji (see Vraja Journal), the elderly scholar saint and pontiff of the Radhakund

village (a place held by the tradition as supremely sacred and divine), initiated me into the esoteric meditational traditions of the original medieval lineages with the name Madhavananda Das, or "Servant of Vernal Bliss" – in reference to an epithet of Krishna's. I also received a whole new broad array of additional mantras to chant and contemplate on, along with the benefit of his voluminous works and frequent kind consultations. While in the area, I was a keen participant in the local events and festivities, recording and publishing the bulk of the annual cycle of happenings.

Over the years that followed until 2007, I provided a massive amount of facilitation and consultation to a growing foreign congregation (local and global), culminating with the syncretic Gaudiya Kutir organization. I kept an online journal of this entire phase, as I'm a firm believer in the free and global availability of all information, both theoretical and practical/experiential. Regrettably a great deal of my efforts never received the enthusiastic reception and support one might have expected, and people were also quite fond of scooping up theoretical information while neglecting the practical application.



While in Finland, I practiced Kung Fu, Taiji and Qigong for some years to get the body-mind flow better synchronized, studying with Hamed Shafae, a martial arts master and human rights activist from Afghanistan. However, the whole China chapter with Taoism and the rest was to unfold at a future date in more detail. (And quite the chapter it's becoming – stay tuned for Wuji Causality Labs and more!)



To deepen my practical studies and capacity for

Professor 2005

meditation, I explored the esoterics of the tradition in intimate detail with Sanatana Das Babaji, an accomplished practitioner with a flair for experimenting with rules to verify they work, and inventing new where the old wouldn't work or were unclear. On his inspiration, I worked on an extensive and systematized manual of practice, aggregating the essence of all available Bengali and Sanskrit manuals, translating relevant segments to English and contextualizing them to provide general orientation. From there onward, whenever in India, I went barefoot to connect with the holy terrain of Vraja – which is something I still dig



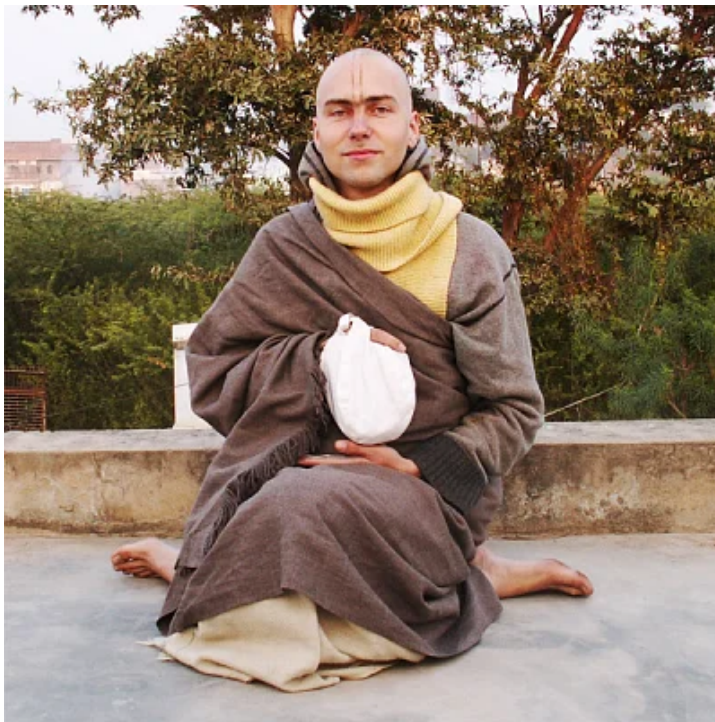
doing
a
great
deal,

Sanatana Das Babaji

especially as I have now come to view all ground as equally sacred.

We observed a strict waterless fast on every 11th day of waxing and waning moon to purify and purge the body and the mind, otherwise following a hard-core yogic

diet
(well



Radhakund 2005 – Neat and clean!

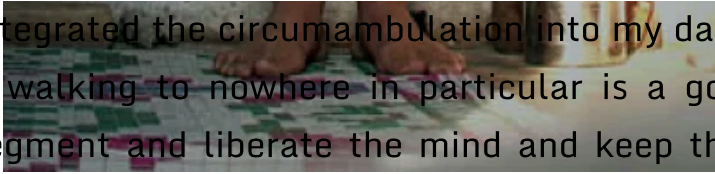
beyond mere vegetarianism) – including eating only food cooked by ourselves from raw ingredients, whatever the circumstances! I also frequently observed a full *mauna* (complete vow of silence) on these days, only rotating the mantra in my mind whilst seated in yogic postures or wandering in the beautiful forests of Finland. In 2006, I and my now ex-wife moved on a permanent basis to the Radhakund village to dedicate ourselves in attaining the summit of the path.

The actual practice and cultivation focused intently on Radha (feminine divinity or the power of Ananda in the *sat-cit-ananda* or *truth-knowledge-bliss* absolute whole), conceived of as an intrinsic energy of Krishna's (masculine divinity and base of existence), and visualized and served in a number of ways, both in meditation and by diverse rituals. In this line of practice and mental cultivation, I had recurring experiences of a substantial "universal" connection, and gleaned some visions and blessings from these two archetypal divinities. Soon after the construction of our house (or hut), I had some unfortunately scuffles and disagreements with the guru, becoming the guilty party for my sin of observation. This also led to our divorce; and the story rolls on.

Wandering around the 22 km circuit around the holy Govardhan mountain nearby, I met with Balarama Dasji, one of the ascetic holy men who had taken a vow to daily circumambulate the mountain. His *modus operandi* was a practical but rather stoic "blood, sweat and tears", until God chooses to show himself, and then some more. All in all, a good deal of Jain ascetic spirit in the air there.



integrated the circumambulation into my daily practice – walking to nowhere in particular is a good way to segment and liberate the mind and keep the body fit.



*Beggar Baba 2007,
bowl and bag on the side.*

When the roads became too hot and the feet began to burn and crack, we'd collect old socks rejected by pilgrims from the sides of the roads, wearing them to protect our soles – and sharing any extras with others, if their old pair looked too worn-out by the roads for their own good. (Shoes are an absolute no-go for this line of practice.) Lonely moonlit walks in solitude, alone with the holy mountain, were no doubt the highlight of this undertaking.

With the increasing levels of asceticism, I also took up the practice of *madhukari* ("occupation of honeybee"), or begging alms-food from locals in the surrounding villages. They were extremely fond of the new foreign holy man, and each insisted on dropping a bit of stew or soup and some flat wheat breads into my bowl. I would sit by the roadside and have my meal, often in the courteous company of stray dogs who also received their share of the alms. The basic unstated idea was for

us to do our austerity whilst generating massive amounts of good karma, giving the busy householders a pious trade avenue for sharing in it without undergoing such hardships themselves. Aware of this, we would consciously commit segments of our accumulating pious merit to everyone of them. A piece of bread for a chunk of good karma is obviously a very fair bargain there!

As I picked up the pace, I switched to two daily circumambulation, following the example of the cutting edge sadhus who did two or three circuits a day, and literally spent their entire day doing it, while muttering their mantra along the way. I had my daily count somewhere in the range of 128-196 sets of 108 mantras at that time, at around 2-3 minutes per cycle – talk about tackling the mind with a bazooka, we're talking about a 28.80 Hz clock frequency at 1 syllable = 1 bit. At one point, the compulsory physical strain became entirely counterproductive to my mental practice, so I dropped off the routine and walked only when it was a natural and obvious time to walk.

There are two remarkable aspects in the religious side of the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition that were imprinted

quite
deep:
1)



Fire of Meditation

Suddha-bhakti or pure devotion, a complete abandonment and elimination of self-interest – whether material or mental, including liberation – in favor of selfless service to the ultimate good, and 2) *Smarana* or practice of meditative visualization, where



Streetside Sadhu

creates a systemic virtual heaven-world in one's mind, seeking to interact and serve there.

In practice, the latter also necessitated a level of superimposition and reconciliation to connect the two

parallel realities I sought to simultaneously live in – further, in bipolar identities, a male here and a cosmic female being there. (Along with a third lesser male identity in a parallel heaven-world rotating synchronously with the other one.)

While I no longer hold an interest in the theological and religious context I learned from these two methods, they are undeniably useful and virtuous assets. In reference to above – 1) Intense purging of diluted motivation and analysis of imperatives before action, and 2) Mental projection and operation in environments limited by imagination alone. My departure from Gaudiya Vaishnavism became formal and public in March 2008: Dharma Reloaded was the theme of the day. For more on this segment and the the GV tradition in general, see GeeVees: Roots.

Between Paths and Conflicting Dimensions

During this time, I began to dig deeper into the works of the Himalayan Swami Sivananda of Hrishikesh, an extremely prolific author and a remarkable saint with deep syncretic insights in both philosophy and spiritual practice. With less doctrines weighing on my shoulders

and
an

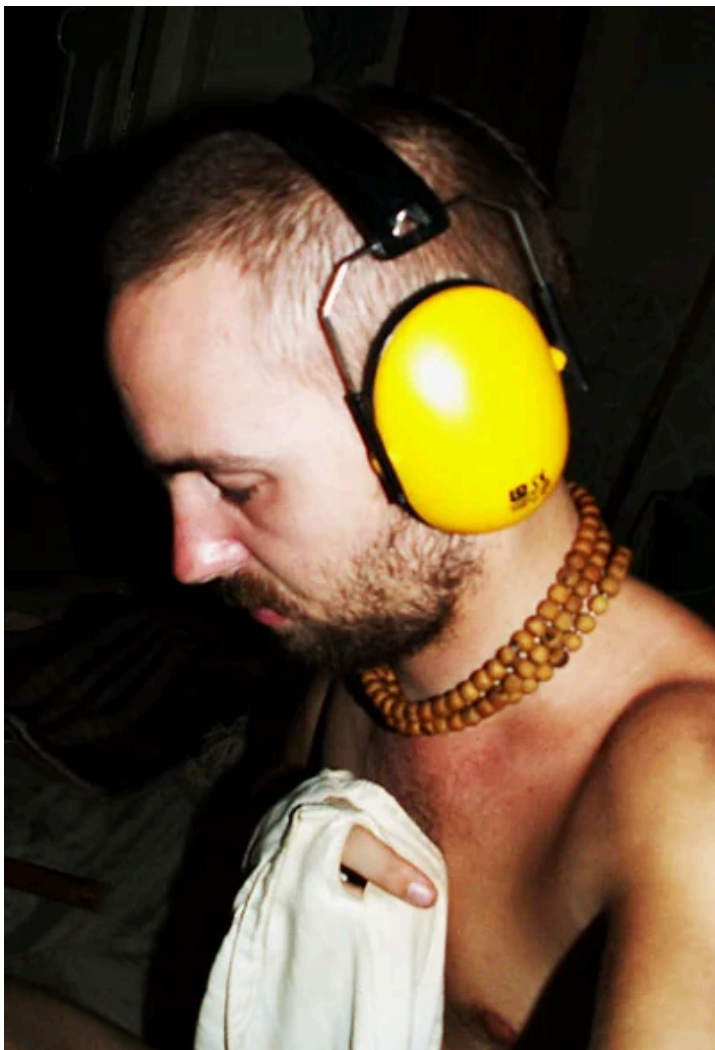


The Marvelous Swami Sivananda

increased expanse of mind, my mantras were soon complemented and later replaced with the good old universal monosyllable *Om*. Studying Sivananda's works, I also got deeper into mixed yogic practice,

synthesizing *karma* = action, *bhakti* = devotion, *jnana* = wisdom and *hatha-yoga* = physical yoga, per Sivananda's concept of Yoga of Synthesis, and along with broader study of Indic philosophy and practices. Sivananda's insights into *pranayama* (yogic breath control), *kundalini* (chakras and energetic body) and Advaita-vedanta (nondual philosophy) had a strong influence on me.

The deeper I had integrated into the supposedly virtuous local religious community, learned the local languages and so forth, the clearer it became that a once esoteric tradition of saints and ascetics had evolved over the centuries into a rather narrow-minded religious community, with its political struggles and circles of materialism on too many levels. With the climate in the area of Uttar Pradesh quite harsh and consuming, with constant noise pollution from "religion" and emerging industry into a world of mystics, and with a marriage chapter closed, I gathered it would be better if I were to just vanish into silence to an unknown location, for as long as it took me to unearth the depth of my being and attain true clarity.



Too much noise!!

Having hosted two groups for a tour of pilgrimage across the surrounding areas, I made arrangements for a departure on foot towards the Himalayan foothills with a cloth bag of essentials (extra cloth, begging bowl and something more) – and my precious quilt (not guilt

however). The departure coincided with the start of the holy month of Kartika, for which I had already announced myself as being off the grid for 40 days, fasting in silence at an unknown location on the outskirts of the Vraja area.



Regular oil access wars next door.

Revisiting my estimate for reasonable material necessities, I found the idea of carrying a bag of materials for a spiritual quest unreasonable, and decided to rather distribute them to the poor on the way. Reaching the upper streams of Ganga, my intention was to pile my current set of two rags and the hair tuft I sported into a pyre, and do an *antyesthi* (lit. "establishment of end") cremation rite for a symbolic

new beginning; and from thereonwards, to carry or wear whatever I might find or be given, or not. I intended to roam silent across the Himalayas, ensuring I'd stay aloof and independent of the entire human kind. The mere thought was extremely liberating, leaving me with a lasting impression of the primacy of spirit and the marginality of the world of matter.

Destiny wouldn't have me depart however. On the day prior to my scheduled vanishment, a local sadhu by the name of Bhakti Charan Das Babaji found his way quite literally to my doorstep. Unsolicited, he presented me with the option of staying as his only apprentice in a nearby ashram to learn every last detail of the theistic tradition. As he also introduced himself as having been sent on divine inspiration, I opted to let the nondual rest and give the personal god one more shot; since he's supposed to provide what his devotees lack, I figured this'd be it if anything. While I did learn a great deal over the the two months I stayed under his extremely strict tutelage, certain events that were unveiled were rather on the unsavory side. For some quirk of destiny, I have learned a great deal from many gurus, and none of it in vein, but it's often been a lesson quite apart from the intended one.

In
the

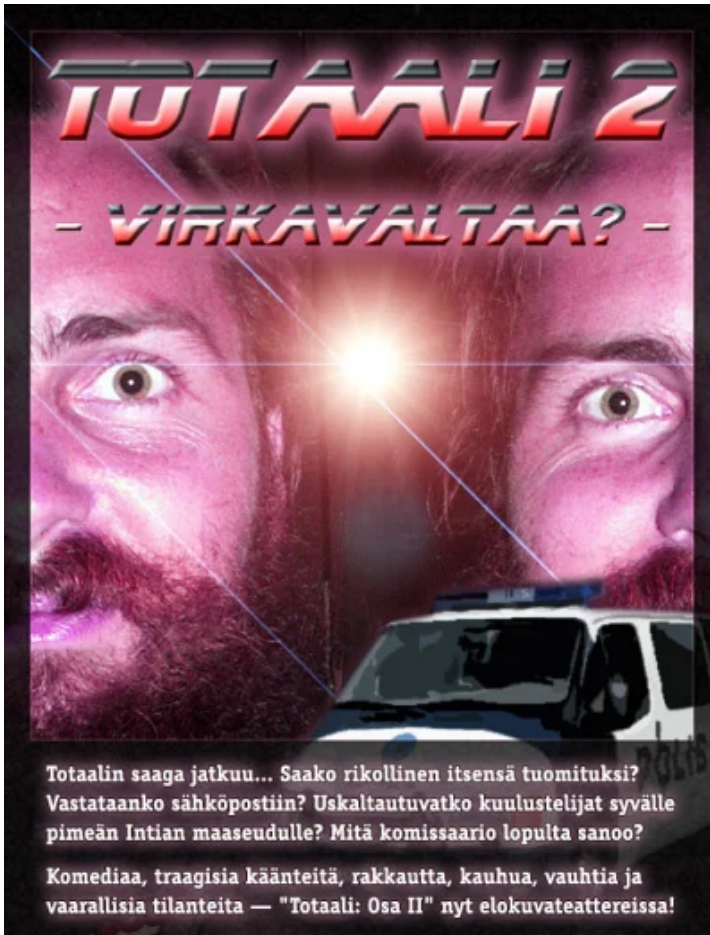


Bhakticharan Das Babaji

course of these extended ventures, along with the transits from one track to the next, I had the privilege of being the object of a fair amount of harsh critique from the more fundamentalist among the many zealous devotees. The concept of *aparadha* or offence is something this tradition particularly abhors, but the

practical application of "not offending anyone" is regrettably selective, and a liberal expression of "holy indignation" is in reality more of a rule than an exception.

The



I tried to solicit a response.

Finnish government had also sought to draft me for the army for some time by now – apparently they are still

up for a winter war with their old skis – an obvious impracticability. The government there insists on a system of 100% draft by the age of 28, providing me with the generous options of 6 or 9 months of military, 13 months of virtually unpaid civil service, or 6 months in jail.

I naturally opted for becoming a conscientious objector, with the basic options of either returning and doing my time, or staying underground in India for two more years to wait for the charge for my "crime" to expire. I ended up never even receiving as much as a subpoena to show up for a trial, I gather they understood I'm a lost cause to their systems.

Freedom: Enter Nondual Reality

Needless to say, at this point – having walked through a long 12 years, which is the traditional length for completion of a vow – I was quite done with the personal god whom I had held in charge of my destiny. I simply saw it more fit for me to start figuring out my own business, and for him to mind his, whatever it may be. His agenda was getting extremely unclear to me, and I don't like to wander off the grid for far too long in



A blank slate is always good.

matters of faith. If he truly were the absolute truth personified, he would have to be more than the essentially naivistic picture of an anthropomorphic god prevailing in common beliefs. I had read as much in the ancient texts — but alas, the commentaries I had studied and absorbed came with a heavy monotheistic overlay and bias, quite obvious in hindsight.

It was back to the drawing board again. While reflecting again on my earlier scheduled departure into the wilderness, I decided to gain further exposure to the

wider



*Ruminations in the room,
all 5 squares 300 Rs/month.*

landscape of Hinduism. I had followed a fixed trajectory all these years without really checking the basics of the calculations, and as such a deeper comparative study was in order: back to the drawing board, every available teacher and system of knowledge analyzed. God thank I had electricity and a very slow

wireless modem in my five square-meter hut atop the old Manipuri temple – comes in handy for an existential crisis!



My
first
door
to
the
world
of

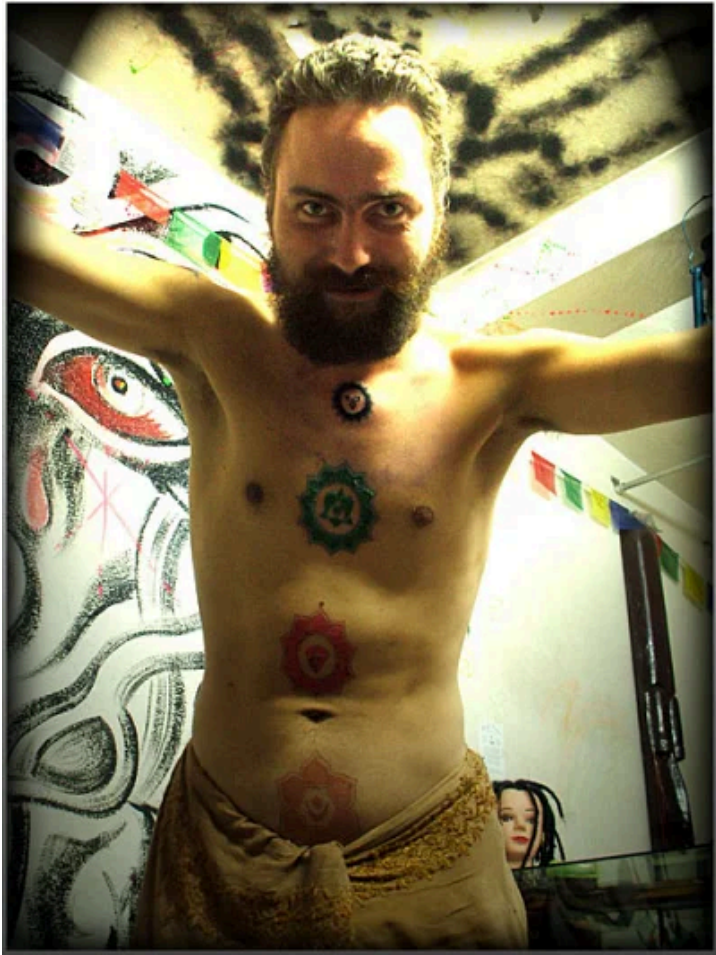
Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi
- so simple and beautiful.

intense nonduality was with the teachings of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi on Advaita-vedanta, presented from an extremely simple and pragmatic angle of self-inquiry. In practice, self-inquiry is nothing but the

returning of outgoing mind back into the cavity of the heart and the nondual self – and understanding the ultimate teaching of silence goes a long way towards this.

As I began to burrow further into Advaita Vedanta, an exquisite tradition of existential knowledge, and further embracing the nondual orientation, I remember a period lasting several weeks, where I both saw and experienced the entire manifest world as a subjective reality contained as a projection within my nondual sphere of being. During this period of study and absorption, I wrote some poems on nonduality under the anonymous pen-name Cinmuttirai (Tamil for *cinmudram*, "silent gesture of ultimate wisdom").

With the stiffness of religious formulae and concerns over gods or lack thereof cleaned away, I found a seamless path towards the many traditions of Buddhism, and specifically the old Theravada tradition of Southern Buddhism with its detailed philosophical systems and refined meditation methodologies, and a fondness for finding out and testing the truth for yourself – not by mere adherence to doctrines and



*Hacking in some chakras
leads to a direct experience.*

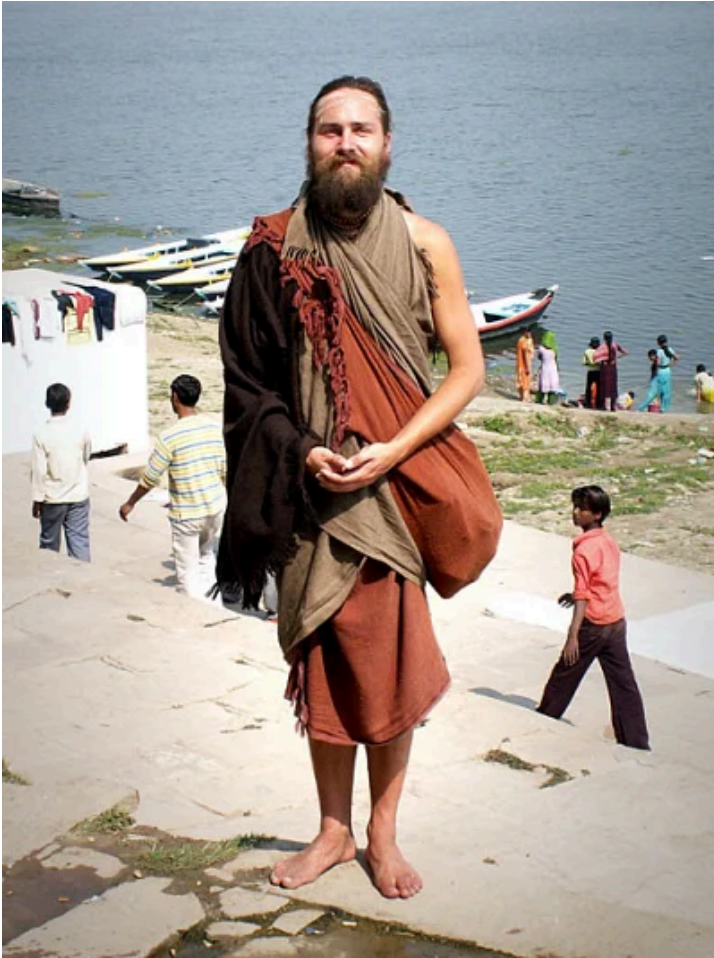
teachers, which can be quite a taboo to even mention aloud in many spiritual circles.

As I had already seen quite enough of the obstacles brought about by fixating oneself on a single frame of

reference, the idea of *dhammam ehipassikam* or "the truth that is directly perceived" – in favor of faith and future hopes was an appealing one. Incidentally the Bhagavad-gita also notes: *raja-vidyam pratyaksavagamam dharmyam*, or "The king of knowledge on *dharma* is understood by direct experience" – so we're all covered in our search for a direct encounter with reality. As a cherry on the top, the greater part of the Buddhist model had a good deal of parallels with the cosmos I had already come to know.

Journey into the Multiverse

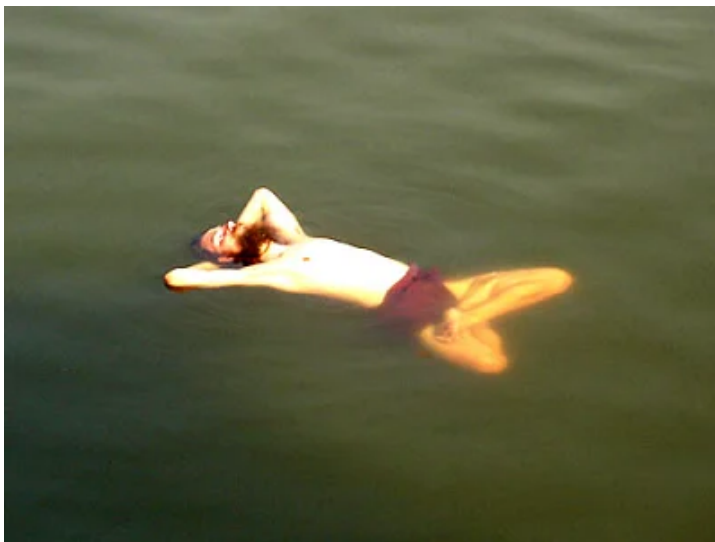
In February 2007, I left from Radhakund to journey onward, first to the ancient holy city of Varanasi in wake of the approaching Shiva Ratri festival. Aside a vibrant atmosphere with holy men and ascetics across the traditions, Varanasi – the capital of Shiva – is rich in the grimmer side of life. I spent a great deal of my time at the burning ghats, closely watching and contemplating on the endless funeral pyres and the surviving families on the banks of the Ganges. While there, I enjoyed daily baths in the Ganges, walking up and down the ghats (riverbank platforms) and watching people move about. This is an ongoing hobby – I like to



Standard gear on the road.

observe and ruminate on the flow of human beings with their diverse natures and imperatives.

While in Sarnath, the Buddhist headquarters nearby, I met Bhante Dhammasaro, an Irish monk who is an accomplished meditator trained in the forest monasteries of Thailand, along with Mae Chee



Floating down the other stream...

Cristiyana Victoriya, a Romanian-Texan-Cosmic Buddhist nun of Bodh Gaya and Thailand fame, who dwells in a refreshingly unpredictable perpetual state of flowing eclectic universal dimensions, with apparent good connectivity across the cosmic web and the akashic records, and with accompanying levels of energy and fundamental insight. We all took an in-depth two-week intensive on Falun Gong with Chris, a German lady living in Sarnath who kindly hosted us. Got the Chi flowing good, beyond a shadow of doubt.

While I was already about as homeless as it gets, I decided to shave up and assume a more formal role in the company, if only to to blend in better and help as a



*A crew of three colorful pilgrims
at the ancient Sarnath stupa.*

neutral middle-man in the formal monk-nun dynamics on the road. Dropping the monotheistic prefix from a first name that was longish anyway, the result was Ananda "Anagarika" – or "Happy Homeless", which was quite on the mark. The name Ananda refers to both Vedantic existential bliss and the devoted attendant of Buddha's who memorized his complete teachings by heart, reciting them onward for the next generation.

I and Dhammasaro left for a pilgrimage to South India, visiting Tiruvannamalai and Puttaparthi, two centres of

pilgrimage. Puttaparthi was the headquarters of Sathya Sai Baba, a famous Hindu teacher, miracle man and reputed avatar. The prime miracle of the Baba I witnessed was an extremely well-organized hub of pilgrimage, hardly seen elsewhere in India. The mountains were magic, as they always are – so I wandered up and down the hills around Puttaparthi, enjoying the serenity and pristinity amidst the root forces of nature. I love mountains, and I love the energetic presence at the peaks.

It
was
in the



With Dhammasaro at Arunachala

context of Ramana Maharshi and his Arunachala Mountain that I had a vivid experience of material dissolution and integration. I had traveled to the south

with Bhante Dhammasaro for an extended pilgrimage. We decided to spend the night at the mountain in meditation. He found his peaceful spot of choice, and I opted for a barefoot climb to the peak, reasonably expecting to find the *sahasrara* (thousand-petaled crown *chakra*) of the energetic body of the sacred mountain. It was, after all, an ancient embodiment of the fiery Shiva himself.



The
night

*Sacred Arunachalam, the mountain
Ramana considered his guru.*

brought on a fierce thunderstorm, changing my formal meditation to conscious observance while cuddled inside the blanket. With the flashes of lightning, I experienced a vivid union of the elements of my being

and the environment, leaving me to wonder and digest the remaining plateau of simultaneous fullness and emptiness, like a vast dimension where the echo of the material world is barely audible.

I might have sought for a deeper experience of self, but came to instead meet with cosmic fields of nothingness where no concrete self was to be found. It was all integral. This left me with a rather lasting impression to digest, and a reference point for contrasting the world against whenever the weave and flux get too rapid and threaten to suck you in.

Returning to Varanasi from the south, we visited the ruins of an ancient Buddhist center in Sanchi on the way, and then met again with Cristiyana and two Buddhist monks who had flown in for a pilgrimage from Thailand. As pilgrimage was in the air, I opted to go along for the long journey on foot from Varanasi through Kushinagar to Lumbini, a fair thousand kilometers away, to see where the path leads. The many miles at 40 kilometers daily gave us all abundance of time for Vipassana.

Vipassana a classic Buddhist method of wisdom meditation, where one seeks to observe the currents

and



Pilgrims at Kushinagar

patterns of one's mind, the rising and falling of all internal and external phenomena, to understand the temporary nature of all composite forms. It was nice to

walk with no walker, and only the plain act of walking in motion. Until the conquest of all inner chaos and neurosis, reality can hardly be experienced au naturel.

Peak of the World and Beyond



*If you meet Buddha over
the pond, say half-satori.*

Reaching Nepal and the village of Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautama Buddha and a major cross-tradition Buddhist center, I had further opportunities for encounters with the diverse world of Buddhist insight. While sleeping by a pond (with a beautiful Buddha amidst on a pedestal) near a Nepalese monastery under the full moon, I had the strangest lucid dream and experience.

It had little to do with Buddhism, but rather featured an ancient shaman woman, who suddenly imploded all of existence including me into her being, like unto a black hole or the very ground of being. I navigated in the darkness, only to discover myself again in the world of matter, with clues for the next action hovering in the air, which I followed until the dream suddenly broke. A few years down the line, the role of the old shaman woman is quite precisely how I picture myself in the grand scheme of things, in Taoist terms as Wuji or the paradoxical void singularity underlying Yin and Yang, the basic polarities of the above and below of the universe.

Continuing to Kathmandu – and further into the peak of the world, as the Nepalese love to call their land – we



Boudhanath at Kathmandu

visited the Kopan monastery on the mountains, and then headed onward to stay at the Nagi Gumba monastery on the slopes of the Shivapuri mountain. I lived at the peak amidst ancient virgin forests for some weeks, with the pleasure of the company of Todke Baba, a veritable guardian spirit of the mountain, who

earned his name by living for six years in the hollow of a tree.

While there, I encountered Mitra, a very sober Mexican gentleman who had lived in both Theravadan and Zen monasteries at quite some length, following extremely colorful decades of journey across the world, as well as Sushil Mahatma, a tantric Hatha-yogi who lived in a cave nearby and worked his kundalini upward. Some of the time up there I lived in a mountain cave, and the rest of it in an abandoned Buddhist shrine next to Todke Baba's hut. He was kind enough to also let me share of his cooking.

Along the journey, I further familiarized myself with the practicalities of diverse Buddhist methods of meditation with the kind assistance of Bhante Dhammasaro, from basic *samatha* to *vipassana* and back, and onward to *metta-bhavana* (universal goodwill contemplation) and the rest, and also studied some texts I had grabbed along for the journey to keep my informative needs satisfied.

I experimented at some length with a number of Buddhist mantras and studied Atisha's manual on the sadhana of White Tara – with generous help and



*White Tara painted on
the monastery wall.*

pointers from Cristiyana the cosmic nun, who knew her way around. The Tibetan sadhana, or "Deity Yoga" as they call it, coupled well with my past visualization practice, and I grew quite fond of White Tara and the role/function she had in the tantric pantheon. Overall,

my exposure to Vajrayana or Tibetan Buddhism helped me tie a number of loose ends together. A major thank-you to late Chögyam Trungpa for his excellent and most perceptive writings – another major influence down the road.

The Bodhisattva Mode: Buddhas in Process



*Todke Baba of Shivapuri &
Universal Peace Foundation*

While on the mountain, I encountered a mixed crew of people under the banner of Universal Peace Foundation; this colorful lot could have seriously walked off the cover of a Beatles album! They were scouting the nature and the mountains for new tree-planting and other environmental initiatives, and invited me to pop in for a visit when I returned from the mountain. Back from strange places to the world of men, I hopped onboard to see what I could do to advance their cause and the world-healing spirit I felt was being kindled. I was also eager to help people out on some of the practicalities of meditation and mental conquest.

The whole bodhisattva idea of holding back with the ultimate emptiness in favor of helping all sentient beings had always struck a strong chord in me, all the way from the Hare Krishna days and the mission to spread universal divine love to every town and village. God knows I learned the culture of abundant sharing far far ahead of actually having something of real substance to share, but I suppose it's all for the best at

the end of the day. Best wishes to everyone affected by edgy sermons!



Amrit and the old village Shaman

While enjoying their loop of activities, I connected with Amrit, a most kind-spirited and true man who had founded an orphanage in the heart of Kathmandu, gathering over a two dozen orphan and/or homeless children under his and his wife's loving care. In the months that followed, I spent a good deal of time helping the orphanage whichever way I could. Spending time caring for the children in a general spirit of generous goodwill was wonderful.

While visiting Amrit's village at Dhading valley, I also had the privilege of meeting an old and wonderful

shaman from the Tamang tribe. (Not Bön / Buddhist, a good old shaman.) He offered to teach me the essentials of his shamanic knowledge within six months; unfortunately I didn't get a practical opportunity to take up his offer.



I had
been

Future Buddhas doing maintenance.

reading and reflecting on the Jataka tales, featuring stories of the past births of the Buddha. One evening as I gazed at a large Buddha painting on the wall of the orphanage, it dawned to me that this is where the real Buddhas are baked – in the boom, bust and dust of the world. If you want to conquer reality, you have to first face the music and pay attention, learning and mastering the patterns of existence to know what

you're actually dealing with, or battling against – for as long as you register inherent negativity!

My time with the Universal Peace Foundation people opened up a world I had shelved since I was 15; with a stimulating environment, wonderful people and the Shiva magic of the mountains, my original creative side began to unravel again. Thanks for Kiran and Santosh for 24h open access for their office and a PC to use – doodle-coloring in internet cafes is a bit of a pricey hobby if you're used to a 10 euro monthly budget...

This is when we reconnected (long live Facebook) with my new better half of Nordic pagan fame, although we had in fact known each other from a bit of a distance for the better half of the last fifteen years. In September, she came over to India for two odd months for a shared journey covering Varanasi, Bengal and the idyllic Andaman Islands in the Indian ocean between Kolkata and Thailand.

Our time in Varanasi and at the Andamans was wonderful to say the least – plenty of thoughts exchanged and adventures shared. Andamans are "India light", a lot less noise and garbage for one! The ongoing journey led me back to Scandinavia with her –

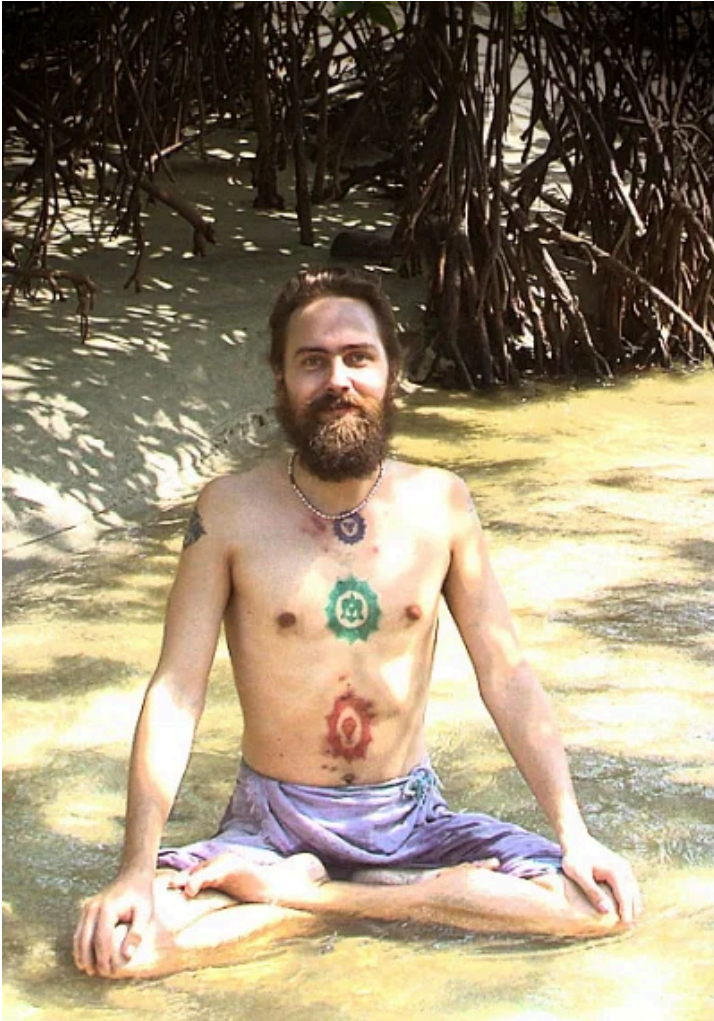
by far
the
most



Who's that girl?

appealing of the options, especially in light of the fact that my passport was expiring, and they wouldn't give me a new one before I put them army boots on....

Since then, I have lived with her and a family of wonderful animals in rural Denmark by a village pond in home sweet home, weighing and digesting the mysteries of life at quite some depth, and also coding way too many lines of code to keep the wheels rolling. In the process of buzzing through all of the above, I



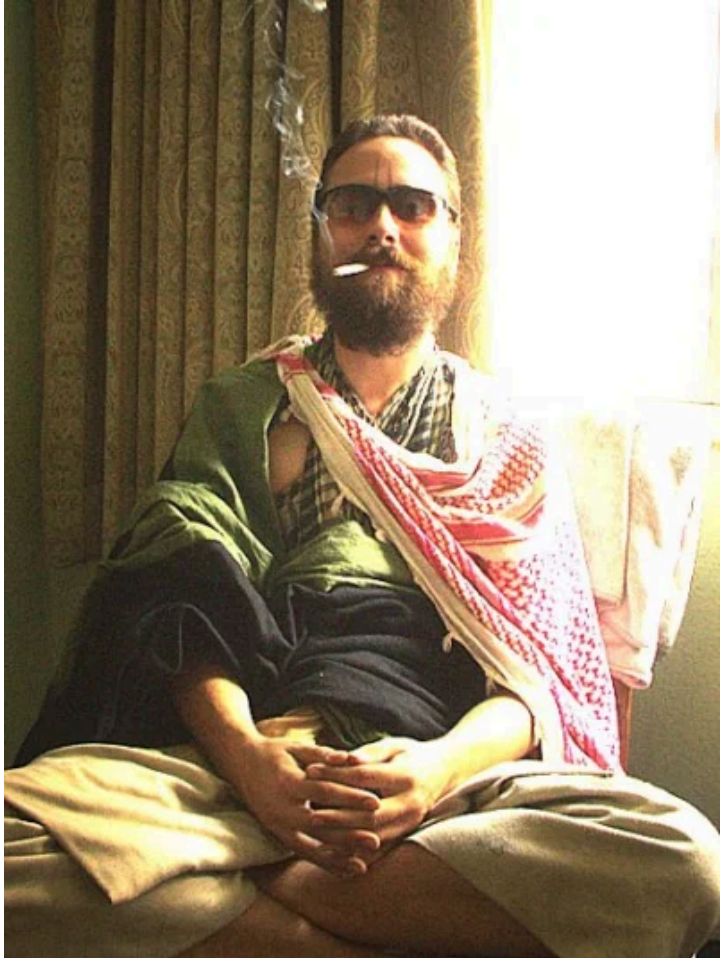
The Andaman Stream

somehow also amassed a wealth of useful know-how across the board, something that's come in quite handy in a professional context.

I haven't gotten into the exact details of my diverse philosophical and existential ventures here — please

browse this site if you're interested. You can start with Infrequentia Commedia and Celebration of Life for a doodled general picture of how the world looks on the way down the rabbit hole and back again.

I
hope




Just mix it all together!

you've enjoyed sharing the journey – it's certainly been worthwhile for me, every step of the way. I may have

omitted some relevant material from the above, but it should cover the essentials of the water flown under bridge since early 1990's. My misplaced older notes under the working title *The Twelve Years of Vishnu* may yet see the light of day and emerge as a more detailed chronological story.

A big thank you to everyone who met me along the way and chipped into my pool of experiences and insights. Apologies for keeping in touch at random, all of this has been a mouthful to digest, and I am only now arriving at a more synthesized and integral picture of the whole long journey. Unveil your wisdom and be at peace, or otherwise not.

 <https://ananda.icu/texts/vintage/mystory-spiritual-madventures-across-the-universe>