

OM³POINT

INTERNATIONAL CIRCULAR • ISSUE 7 • SPRING 2012



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OM 360 POINT

INTERNATIONAL CIRCULAR • ISSUE 7 • SPRING 2012

contents

issue #7

- 3 • Meher Baba on ABC-TV show "Jeopardy" November 2011
- 4 • "Don Stevens Eulogy" by Cynthia and Richard Griffin
- 6 • What religion should you follow? - a Chart To Live By
- 7 • "A String Of Pearls" - fiction by Sarah McNeill
- 8 • "Disneyland and Meherabad" by Kennet Stermer
- 9 • "Can We Say: Let's Not Change Baba's Words?" by Deborah Pearl Tyler
- 11 • "On Spreading Baba's Message of Love and Truth" by Eruch Jessawalla
- 12 • "Robert Dreyfuss Returns to Meher Baba" by Laurent Weichberger and Rick Chapman
- 16 • Five Poems For Meher Baba by Rahul Atrishi
- 18 • "Meher Baba" - a poem by Aspen Weichberger
- 19 • "An Open Letter from the BEADS Steering Committee"
- 21 • Four Poems by Robert Oberg
- 23 • "Meher Baba and Astrology" by Marlena Applebaum
- 26 • "The Doorbell of Forgiveness" - a Book Review by Marc Flayton
- 27 • "Mehera" - a poem by Irma Sheppard
- 28 • "Occupy Wall Street and the Secret of Hacktivism" by Carolyn van der Linde
- 31 • "Three Jars" - a Meherabad painting by Joe DeSabatino
- 32 • "The Ballad of John, Yoko, and the Baba Card" by Kendra Crossen
- 35 • "Daddy God and Baby Elephant" - painting by Wodin
- 36 • "Dancing With Sufis" - Laurent Weichberger
- 37 • Don Stevens photos, 1979 by Hasan Selisik, 2012 by Dhiresha Chapman
- 38 • "Scattering Don Stevens' Ashes On Seclusion Hill" by Jan Baker
- 39 • "Big Crayon-Colored Mountain" - poem by Stephen Paul Miller
- 41 • "A Year With Hafiz, Daily Contemplations, by Daniel Ladinsky" - review by Laurent Weichberger
- 41 • "Pilgrimage To Mevlana Rumi" by Laurent Weichberger
- 49 • Credits and acknowledgements

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Cover photo, "Mosaic of Jesus at the Ayasofya (detail)" by Laurent Weichberger. Istanbul, Turkey (November 21, 2011).

Wikipedia has this to say about the mosaic (from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hagia_Sophia#Mosaics):

"The Deësis ('Δέησις' in Greek, meaning Entreaty) mosaic probably dates from 1261. It was commissioned to mark the end of 57 years of Roman Catholic use and the return to the Orthodox faith. It is the third panel situated in the imperial enclosure of the upper galleries. It is widely considered the finest in Hagia Sophia, because of the softness of the features, the humane expressions and the tones of the mosaic. The style is close to that of the Italian painters of the late 13th or early 14th century, such as Duccio. In this panel the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist (Ioannes Prodromos), both shown in three-quarters profile, are imploring the intercession of Christ Pantocrator for humanity on Judgment Day. The bottom part of this mosaic is badly deteriorated. This mosaic is considered as the beginning of the Renaissance in Byzantine pictorial art."



DON STEVENS

BY CYNTHIA AND RICHARD GRIFFIN
SALEM, MA (MAY 2011)

Don, I am pleased and honored to report on your work in the United States, but, I am afraid that it is truly an impossible task. You once remarked to me that you thought Meher Baba's disciple, Kitty Davy, was the closest example there was of perpetual motion, but, I might easily say this of you as well.

The one theme that serves as an umbrella over your work in the U.S., is, of course, your work with groups. A central theme in this work emerged from your love of the Meher Baba's New Life Phase. In it there was great emphasis on spiritual companionship, and you energetically explored the importance of that companionship to our spiritual ongoing. This group work may also have been foreshadowed by the landmark Meher Baba meetings led by Standard Oil executive, Don Stevens, and the young 1960s burgeoning hippie population in San Francisco; but the template for your work with groups would be developed with the various London and French groups with whom you established consistent and productive working relationships during the 1970s and 80s. The work of those years also sowed the seeds for an energetic foray to establish more effective group activity in the US.

My wife, Cynthia, and I were fortunate enough to be swept up in the tide of your group work in the early 1990s. You were then in the process of publishing the book, *The Inner Path* in the New Life with your companions in the London Sunday morning group. The impact of this work started something of a revolution in the style and substance of our relationship with Meher Baba, as we were drawn into a deeper level of exploring Meher Baba's presence in all of the facets of daily life. Don made a fairly lengthy tour of the US where a number of groups, fashioned after the principles outlined in this new book, were put into motion. These groups would typically meet on a bi-weekly basis and feature a sharing of lessons learned from daily life experiences in light of Meher Baba's words.

Not soon after the ink dried on *The Inner Path*, Don was continuing his active involvement with one of its principal offspring, "Intuition". Don now set his sights on further exploring a statement that Meher Baba had made to him years ago in India that Baba's Gift to humanity in this advent was the Gift of Intuition.

Don gathered a group in Atlanta to fashion a book on the topic - assignments were made to the participants, and eventually to others to write chapters for the new book; then another long series of meetings, this time in Myrtle Beach. Within the next year, the book, co-authored by, Don Stevens and His Companions, *Meher Baba's Gift of Intuition* was prepared for publication. This book gave rise to more interesting group activity in the Western hemisphere, and more visits by Don to help us



tackle the very confounding problem of attempting to use intuition in our own lives.

Meanwhile, with the pages on Intuition still not quite printed and bound, Don's own Intuitive nature continued to take further leaps forward. There were now at least two more major projects on his burner. A crowning intuition on the importance of Meher Baba's words propelled a multi-city world tour and the book, *Meher Baba's Word and His Three Bridges*. This project may also have had as its basis another key meeting with Meher Baba in India. Baba had explained directly to Don that Baba's special words contained the spiritual equivalent of something like an atom bomb; and that working with these words, whether or not they were understood by the aspirant, would be of tremendous benefit to the aspirant's spiritual ongoing. Don had promised Meher Baba that he would convey this important exchange to his devotees, and the Three Bridges tour comprised perhaps, the final punctuation to Don's carrying out this sacred duty entrusted to him by the Avatar.

The second project, and more specific to the US, started with Laurent Weischburger in 2003, was the formation of a group of younger people to meet at various places throughout the country. Don wanted to use these meetings as an intimate vehicle to "pass the torch" of his years of experience with Meher Baba to a younger generation. Younger, in this case, included an age range between 21 and about 70. The group became known as the Young

People's Group, or the YPG, and would gather about once a year either on the East Coast or the West Coast of the United States. It was in the night following a YPG seminar that Don suffered a major heart attack. This, Don, you creatively turned into an opportunity to show us how a true disciple behaves in a dramatic life threatening situation. In the midst of open heart surgery in an unfamiliar hospital at the age of 88, Don established a delightfully interactive relationship with his team of surgeons and health care providers, his determination to get back on his feet as soon as possible led him to set post surgery rehabilitation records at the hospital, and, though he was careful as always to listen to the demands of his body, we never once heard anything approaching a complaint. The whole experience gave us literally the great 'Ah ha' moment, and the lesson that this is how such a process could be best lived through.

Simultaneous to the YPG activities were the major Beads on One String tours that Don was developing in India and Europe to which the YPG also played and continues to play a supportive role. One of the YPG seminars was focused about the theme of forgiveness, and, yet another book, titled, "The Doorbell of Forgiveness" that will be going to press in the beginning of June. (Ed: 'Doorbell' is available now.) This publication is a simple reminder to all of us, Don, that devotion to the Eternal Beloved knows no boundary of lifetimes. And, judging by the emails, plans, and other communications that continue to be exchanged among your many dear companions, it is easy to glimpse your long reach into our futures. May your inspired and tireless life of Love and Service continue always to live in our hearts and help guide us onward.

As you would often say in your warm personal greeting,

Don, Salutations.



Cynthia Griffin with Don Stevens (Salem, MA ~ December 2005).
Photo by Richard Griffin.



A Flowchart to Determine What Religion You Should Follow



Borrowed from the Internet and modified slightly... LW/KM



A STRING OF PEARLS

Imagine coming face to face with God. Just imagine that!

"In your dreams, storyteller," I hear you say. Well, that is exactly what happened. Not just once either. In the tale I have to tell, it happened to a number of persons, all at the same time, even though their separate lives were distanced by deserts, oceans and mountain ranges and none of them had ever met. Yet they all had the same dream, and in the dream, each one of them saw all the others.

They all dreamt they had died and gone to Heaven, or Nirvana or Shambala or The Spirit World or The Afterlife or Paradise or whatever it might be called, and they were assembled there in the presence of the Lord of All. Through the clear light, the harp music, the sense of infinity and the translucent colours of an atmosphere described by one of the poets as laden with the souls of jasmine and lily, they were borne into the presence of the One.

They sat there before Him and He sat there with them, all in perfect harmony in the spacious audience chamber of an astoundingly beautiful palace. In the dream, the number of those sitting there was not noted although each dreamer seemed to see all the others quite clearly. One of the dreamers was in fact a Buddhist in deep meditation so she was not technically asleep. Likewise, the one who was a dervish had gone into a trance while in a dance of ecstasy. Another, a devout Christian nun, was seeing a vision while at prayer; a wise old rabbi was dreaming of his Elohim whilst taking a short nap; and the sadhu from the Himalayas was also asleep even though he appeared to be at prayer. Others included a shaman from the Mongolian steppes, an African bishop, a Zoroastrian priest, a Rastafarian brother, a Chinese sage, a Sikh, a Jain, an ancient native American and others. Altogether a very diverse group of people, seated on silken cushions in the shimmering marble palace with fountains and fruits and birds and everything, and

all in the presence of the Lord of the Universe. Unimaginable! But this was a dream they all experienced at the same time. And so....what happened was this: In the dream, each one of them saw that a small, very precious gift had been placed in their hands in the shape of an exquisite, beautifully fashioned, gold-rimmed container. Upon unfastening the clasp of the little casket and raising the lid, each one found inside, set on a soft velvet lining, a fabulous pearl! In the dream they were asked to take the pearl from its casket and offer it to God whose hands were extended towards them cupped together. Trembling slightly by now, each of the dreamers reached out thumb and forefinger and carefully picked up their own lovely, glistening pearl and gave it to Him. Each dreamer watched in the dream as God poured the iridescent pearls from His hands into a pure crystal bowl where they nestled together emanating a soft halo of light.

Entranced, the dreamers wanted to stay in the dream forever and ever. But, alas, no. Because at that

point, God spoke to them and said that each one of them must now take his or her pearl out of the crystal bowl, return it to its tiny casket and then go back down to earth, carrying it with them as a token of their attainment.

There was a moment of hesitation and then a flurry of eager hands stretching out towards the bowl, and then a further moment of hesitation accompanied by an unseemly disturbance of consternation, muffled exclamations, pushings, whisperings and finally an outburst of voices.

"That one's mine!"

"No it's not, it's mine!"

"How can you possibly tell?"

"This doesn't make sense..."

"How can we know which is which?"

"We can't!"

"It's not fair!"

"They're all the same!"

The final, loud, echoing wail of complaint arose from them all simultaneously and of course, that was when the dream ended.

Sarah McNeill



PILGRIMAGE

One day a very old Muslim man dressed in long coat and cap came to Guruprasad in Poona for Meher Baba's darshan. He was so feeble that he had to be helped by two others who had accompanied him. Baba looked at him and said, "You have become old. Now you must not worry and think of Allah."

Addressing Baba as 'Hazrat', the old man lamented, "Hazrat, I am worried. I have become old but have not visited Mecca to circumambulate the Kaaba. It has been a longing which I fear will remain unfulfilled."

At this, Baba requested the assistants to support the old man whom he then asked to walk around His chair seven times. And the old man did that.

"Now, there is no need for you to go to Mecca," Baba told him. "Your Hajj (pilgrimage) is complete." After saying this, Baba lovingly embraced the old man.



DISNEYLAND and MEHERABAD

Having spent the day at Euro Disney yesterday this comparison came to mind.

Baba lovers with out a sense of humour please abstain.

- Tourists come from all over the world to play/pray.
- We wait in long lines for a moment of bliss.
- The food is the same year after year.
- No one knows where the money really goes.
- There's a big castle in the middle.
- There's a train.
- They're both in the middle of nowhere.
- We worship a group of flamboyant characters.
- There's happy music all the time.
- The flamboyant characters are silent.

Kenneth Miles Stermer



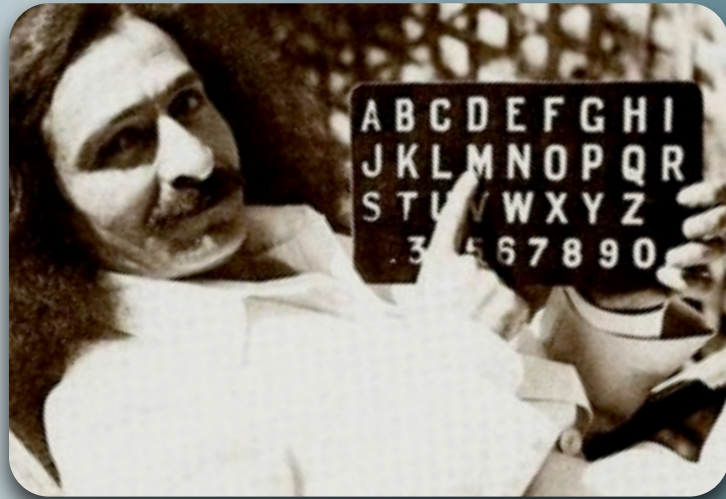
CAN WE SAY : LET'S NOT CHANGE BABA'S WORDS?

It was like a miniaturized atom bomb exploding in my brain, in my consciousness, in my awareness of self. Tightly shut doors to meaning swung open with fury and sweetness all at once. The light wafted over me while seeming to be coming from me.

"That's it!" I heard myself say. "That is the most perfect sentence ever written! Every word is placed exactly in the order it should be placed - it cannot be switched around. It cannot be any other way." The syntax sang out with abandon the way the glorious timbre of a gifted singer pours out of his completely relaxed and unobstructed throat.

Sometime, in 1970, I think, I was sitting in my dreary little apartment on the upper West Side of Manhattan. I shared the apartment with a young college man who had very orderly habits. He eschewed the drugs, the easy hook ups, the mandatory cultural insouciance toward making something of oneself, and the 'hatred of the Establishment' that were the pass keys to acceptance in the 'counter culture.

I needed a place to live, being in between mostly aimless dead-ends, so characteristic of many of us in the sixties and early post sixties era. My own peregrination to this fateful spot was launched by a "chance" meeting with a young Baba Lover working alongside me on the graveyard shift as



a mail sorter in the gloomy Wall Street Station Post Office in Lower Manhattan. A few years before my parents split up suddenly and traumatically, without the apparent signs to me, of discord that children might refer to, in their attempts to explain the devastating loss of stability an abrupt separation brings to their developing sense of self.

My brother and I were discarded (or so it felt) like too much weight on a ship suddenly going under. Trying to feign equanimity in the face of this disaster, I floated into the Counter Culture, as it is now referred to, more the way a drowning person grabs a piece of driftwood to stay afloat. Some of the "ideals" of that day e.g. freedom from confining morality, guiltless sexual escapades that the ubiquitous music of the time reinforced, sweeping changes in outlook about family, politics, and

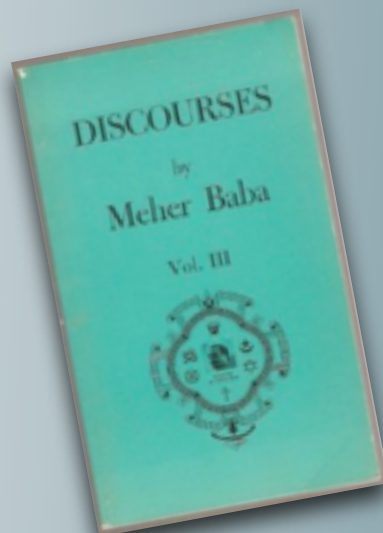
identity, held up by a scaffold of a burgeoning social understanding, that we were tethering ourselves to the a New Order, to the Real Way things should be. We were audacious, on the one hand, naive and very immature on the other.

This dissolute behavior (as I see it now) conflated with a combination of the introjection of my liberal, intellectual college professor father's repressed wishes to bust free of his Calvinistic upbringing and my Jewish mother's bubbling froth of alienation.

My mother forged ahead after the separation while suffering colossal pain (not "owned" by her) as we say in today's psychological parlance. She modeled "Holding On" to her own Damaan of Determination through horrific medical catastrophe which came after the separation and ongoing personal loss. Her gargantuan agony allowed for the sub-conscious hope in me, that there must be something "more." My father's brilliance made me tolerant of possibilities.

Ironically, the self-control and inherent dignity of the Calvinist religious principles that informed my father prevented him from really being the anarchist he thought he wanted to be - though his thwarted efforts to rebel devastated me, and ended our family unit. My parents' actions resulted in my being set adrift in my late teens and early twenties. My parent's simultaneous suffering and rejection pushed me out to find myself sitting in that pauper's living room in Manhattan.

It was easy, then to ask my cubicle neighbor in the post office - who was the person in the picture with the beckoning



smile, large nose and glittering eyes, on the little card she had taped to her shelf at her work station - eyes that seemed to glisten and follow you after you had already turned your own eyes away. "Meher Baba", she replied. "He is the Avatar". Being freed from the conventions of surprise as an "officially lost soul" of my generation, I said something back like, "Oh, what is that?" She gave a truncated reply which fully satisfied me at the time. I didn't doubt it or not doubt it. I wasn't fully interested.

I recall feeling that this Face would play a role in my life. We became cubicle buddies after a few months. She was planning to stay in some place called Myrtle Beach and needed someone to sublet her apartment in Manhattan for a few months. And that is how I finally arrived at that dreary living room sitting in the living room with my roommate, who had previously been her roommate. On that day he handed me a book to read. I opened it and read:

"The Lover and the Beloved". *"God is Love. And Love must love. And to love there must be a Beloved. But since God is Existence infinite and eternal there is no one for Him to love but Himself. And in order to love Himself He must imagine Himself as the Beloved whom He as the Lover imagines He loves. Beloved and Lover implies separation. And separation creates longing; and longing causes search and the wider and the more intense the search the greater the separation and the more terrible the longing. When longing is most intense separation is complete, and the purpose of separation, which was that Love might experience itself as Lover and Beloved, is fulfilled; and union follows. And when union is attained, the Lover knows that he himself was all along the Beloved whom he loved and desired union with; and that all the impossible situations that he overcame were obstacles which he himself had placed in the Path to himself. To attain union is so impossibly difficult because it is impossible to become what you already are! Union is nothing other than knowledge of oneself as the Only One."* This discourse is from the "Everything and the Nothing by Meher Baba".

I remember that I called my brother who lived in another state and exclaimed something to the effect of: "listen to this - it is the most perfect grammar ever written" I read the discourse to him over the phone.

In the intervening years I became a Baba Lover and traveled many times to India. My Karma led me to becoming a Sufi, initiated by Murshida Duce, for a very short time. I was fortunate to spend a good amount of time in the early seventies with the mandali. I finally settled down.

Several years ago I heard a talk by Don Stevens in which he referred to Baba's words as "atom bombs of truth." The linguistic atomic explosion I experienced over forty years ago came back to me with the full force of an after-shock. I learned shortly thereafter that my second favorite offering of Meher Baba, The Discourses, 6th Edition, had been earlier reprinted in a new edition, the 7th Edition. My brother who later combed through the 7th edition with incomparable erudition to reveal the transformation that "editing" had wrought. See essays on this subject at www.beachwalla.net

Editing the 'atom bombs' of Baba's words, that explode like a supernova to awaken one's consciousness, relegates them to a repeatable experiment, that assumes the components of the experiment can be assembled and reordered and still retain their inviolable uniqueness. If the precise phrasing and punctuation of "The Lover and the Beloved" Discourse were changed, I do not think I would

have had the awakening to Baba that day that occurred.

Baba WAS/IS the words and He ordered them in that way. That unique collocation of words had the precision of the Table of Elements in Chemistry or the bonding of molecules that form living things. Change the valence, drop an atom and you have something completely different.

As a Baba Lover I do not wish to see the custodians of Baba's words involved in editing any of Baba's works that we know had His stamp of approval or authorship. Isn't there plenty to be done in simply reprinting and researching the contexts for how Baba's words came to be without changing one iota of their content?

Isn't there an infinite use for hearing about how Baba's words have affected one and what Baba Lovers feel they might mean? By the same token, toward the protecting and cataloging of Eruch and other mandali's narratives, the same Edict should apply.

For example, in the jazz world, it used to be said, one could not even fully notate one of the solos of Charlie Parker until technology was developed that could really slow down a recording. Each rendering, was an improvisational offering of a felt truth of that tragic but incomparable musician.

Likewise, each version of a story that Eruch told, had improvisational and mood inspired variations. As Eruch would himself say, he kept to the message and the theme of the story with the fidelity of discipleship that I think anyone who ever





sat and listened to Eruch can unequivocally trust.

Trying to order or select the best version of an Eruch story would be as disastrous as trying to throw out some of Charlie Parker or John Coltrane's takes. That story telling is the flow of creativity and that is in many ways the message - Truth shimmering through the vagaries of Eruch's divine creativity.

In this advent, the only one in our known history that we know the words the Avatar actually uttered, why should we nourish the atavistic urge to edit?

Did not that urge become the domain in so many past Avataric Advents of a priest class, an elite clergy, an intellectual societal overcoat of privilege, of those presumed to be "in the

know." They presented egalitarian motives to only help those perceived to be of inferior insight and aptitude to embrace a divine message but inevitably became the germs of a spiritual abscess. From the abscess the putrescence of religious hypocrisy ineluctably emerges. That process, as inevitable as the process of growing from infant to adult, is the catalyst Baba explains, for the chaos that invites the coming again of the Avatar.

Baba says we are all part of the divine drama. Perhaps we fortunate ones who came to know about Baba so early in His Advent should remember that in this performance we all have the same script and there is no need to fill in, emendate or update the author's writing. Rather, we have the exceptional luxury in this Avataric Advent to each one perfect in his own way the script Baba gave for spiritual obedience and advancement.

Deborah Pearl Tyler



On Spreading Baba's Message of Love and Truth

By Eruch Jessawala, Satara India, September 28, 1955

Baba wants all His lovers to remember one thing: He does not want the Prachar (propaganda) of His name or His message of Love and Truth. Baba is always displeased with the propaganda value attached to anything connected with spirituality. What He wants is Prasar (propagation) of His Love and the Truth of Reality. His Love, which is for all alike, should spread and envelop all without discrimination and the Prasar of His Love can only be achieved by exemplary lives of love and humility led by His lovers. Unless and until a lover of Baba lives such a life, it is impossible for any lover of Baba to do much in the field of Baba work.

Baba has repeatedly stressed that the greatest work one can do for Baba is for one to live the life of love, humility, sincerity, and selfless service. Live such a life without the least trace of hypocrisy or show — and Baba's work is done. The rest automatically follows without exertion or propaganda. Let the lover's own life be the poster for propaganda and let the lover's life itself spread Baba's message of Love and Truth. Such a love and such a life are vital; they carry the weight of the highest responsibility and have a vital force behind their thoughts, words, and deeds.

Of course, in the beginning, such an attitude towards life demands the highest type of discipline. This may seem as dry as dust, but it will automatically be transmuted into the very life of the lover — the kind of life and living which Baba desires all His lovers to have and spread among all other lovers of God.

To cultivate discipline for one's self, or to inculcate it into others, is not the responsibility of a teacher, guide, or guru; it requires self-determination and an honest effort from every lover of God. To begin with, it is best to remember Baba as often as possible without neglecting the responsibilities we have shouldered ourselves — family responsibilities, our own commitments, our jobs, and such other things that do count in this world, even though they have no foundation of their own in the domain of Reality.

LETTERS FROM THE MANDALI, Vol 2, pp. 3-4, ed. Jim Mistry



Robert Dreyfuss Returns To His Divine Beloved Meher Baba

by Laurent Weichberger Flagstaff, Arizona

The following narrative is compiled from Lord Meher, by V.S. Bhau Kalchuri about Robert Dreyfuss' connection with Avatar Meher Baba:

In Boston, Massachusetts, in the spring of 1965, a college senior at Boston University named Robert Neal Dreyfuss, age twenty-two, visited his friend Allan Cohen at Harvard, who was studying in the Psychology and Social Relations departments in an advanced graduate program. On the door of Allan Cohen's office was a card with this quote from Baba:

To penetrate into the essence of all being and significance, and to release the fragrance of that inner attainment for the guidance and benefit of others, by expressing, in the world of forms, truth, love, purity and beauty – this is the sole game which has any intrinsic and absolute worth. All other happenings, incidents and attainments can, in themselves, have no lasting importance. [From Discourses by Meher Baba].

Robert Dreyfuss was immediately drawn to this quote and later recollected: "I read it and reread it, astounded that the purpose of life could be summed up so concisely and yet so eloquently." He had seen a picture of Meher Baba two weeks before, and when he entered Allan Cohen's office and saw the same photograph, he remarked, "Him again! Who is he?" Cohen told him about Baba and recommended he go to a library or to a bookstore and buy a few books to read.

Dreyfuss had been planning a trip to India for some years and now knew why – to see Meher Baba! He learned of the sahasas to be held in December 1965, but having neither the money nor the inclination to join Harry Kenmore's group charter flight, on September 1st, Dreyfuss flew to London on a one-way ticket. He spent the next two and a half months hitchhiking across Europe, Turkey and Iran toward India. He was forced to take a boat and ride deck class from Kuwait for eight days, because the border between Pakistan and India was closed due to the war.

Dreyfuss arrived in Bombay on November 14th. After spending one night in Bombay, sleeping on the floor in a Sikh temple, Dreyfuss hitchhiked to Poona. He was given a ride on a truck carrying furniture, on top of which was a big overstuffed armchair, on which he sat all the way to Poona. At the Meher Baba Poona Center, Ramakrishnan (the caretaker of the Center), asked who he was and why he had come. When he learned Dreyfuss had come for the sahasas, Ramakrishnan was silent and then asked, "Surely you must be joking! Don't you know that Meher Baba has canceled the sahasas?" [1]

[After meeting Baba's brother Jal, in Pune, and Adi K. Irani in Ahmednagar on November 16th it was determined that Robert would be allowed by Baba to visit Meherazad, to share with Baba's men mandali. After discussing LSD and other topics with the men, we pick up the narrative from Lord Meher...]

Eruch left and returned a few moments later and asked, "Would you like to see Baba now?" At about 3:00 P.M. he led Dreyfuss to Baba's room. The following is Robert Dreyfuss' description of his first meeting with the Lord of Love:

Suddenly, there he was! Sitting on his bed, unclothed from the waist up, beaming – the Emperor of emperors. What occurred then I shall never forget – a great loosening, a shaking from within. I am not given to visions, or 'seeing things,' or hallucinations, but on beholding his form, what I saw was his resplendent face at the center of an effulgence so brilliant, of a light so complete in its all-encompassing radiance, that tears blurred my vision in rivers of delight. There was no way I could stop it. The light was so brilliant, it was like looking into the sun, and so tears naturally had to flow. Here he was, the One who in his compassion had granted this speck of his imagination a glimpse of the Sun!

Baba gestured, "I am happy to see you. You look tired and dusty. Take a hot bath and before sundown I want you to read a certain section of God Speaks (regarding Fana and Baqa). It must be before the sun sets. Have a good dinner and get a good night's sleep. I will see you in the morning."

Dreyfuss nodded, as he was in fact "speechless before his silence." Eruch led him back to the men's side, where he did as Baba instructed and spent the night on Baba's cot in the Blue Bus. Later that afternoon, Mani came and said, "Baba would like to see the route you took to come here," and she had Dreyfuss draw it on a map. She took it to Baba and later brought it back, saying, "Baba says to tell you that he was with you all the way; that he drew you to him." [2]



She came again a little later with a handkerchief. It was still wet. Eruch had just wiped the perspiration off Baba's face with it. Mani said, "Baba wants you to have this." Francis Brabazon remarked, "Robert's sojourn is reminiscent of the story [by Aesop] of the tortoise and the hare: while the hundreds who planned to come for the sahas by jet were halted before they started, this lucky 'tortoise' unaware that the race had been called off, plodded home to his goal." Brabazon later commented to Robert, "You are the 1965 sahas."

Robert Dreyfuss was present in the hall with the mandali the following morning, November 17th, when Baba entered. He stood and Baba smiled at him and waved him to be seated. Slowly, Baba walked the length of the hall three times, his hand resting lightly on Francis Brabazon's arm. Baba then sat in his blue armchair in the corner. Dreyfuss was seated directly opposite him on the floor, the other men mandali in their usual places against the wall.

Baba gestured for Dreyfuss to take darshan. He knelt down and kissed Baba's feet, and then embraced him and kissed him on each cheek, as Baba kissed his cheeks.

Baba then began: "I am in very strict seclusion. I see no visitors, and no one is allowed to come here. I have not gone outside this hall, but when I complete my seclusion I shall do so. This seclusion is necessary for my work. Just before I drop my physical body I will break my silence, and then what remains of the world will come to know who I am. "Have you read Stay with God?"

"No, Baba," Dreyfuss answered.

Baba gestured for Francis to bring a copy of the book, which Francis autographed and gave to Dreyfuss. "Do you have any questions?" Baba asked. "Is there anything you want to know?" Dreyfuss replied no. Baba smiled and asked, "Is there anything you want?"

"Yes, Baba. I want to love you as you should be loved. I want to see and love you in everyone and everything, always, for the sake of others." [3]



In reply, Baba stated: "If you want this prem (love) that you desire, for the service of others, you must obey me, and do exactly what I tell you to do. Will you be able to do this? It takes great daring to obey me. Be brave, do not be afraid. I am with you. I am God in human form. Bear with humiliation; whether humiliation or reward (praise), dedicate all to my feet. Whatever thoughts, good or bad, come into your head, offer them at my feet. Do not worry about them.

I want you to remember that the world and its affairs are a big zero – a nothing into nothing. God alone is real, and undoubtedly God exists. I am God. I am God in human form and God the Beyond. I experience my being infinite continuously, without a break. I suffer infinitely; I have the burden of the whole universe on my head. I am the Highest, and yet I come down to the lowest, and I see to minute details.

Spread out your legs; do not feel uncomfortable. Be free. I am everywhere, in all directions. I am your breath that you breathe. Make your home in me.

It is better to deny God than to defy God. What I mean by this is that the one who does not believe in God and performs his duties honestly is far better than those hypocrite saints who pose as teachers, who profess outside what they are not within."

Baba advised Dreyfuss, "Go back (to America), because what you are

looking for you will not find wandering around India or sitting in a monastery in the Himalayas. (The exact two ideas Dreyfuss was harboring, but which he had not voiced.) But you will find it in society with people, by trying to be of service to them and loving them."

Baba then asked if many young people in America were taking drugs, such as LSD. Dreyfuss said yes, and Baba stated, "Tell those that are, that if drugs could make one realize God, then God is not worthy of being God." [4]

[Baba and Robert shared more, and then we pick up the narrative from Lord Meher again...]

Baba asked Dreyfuss, "What work were you doing before you came to India?"

Dreyfuss said that he had been working in a mental hospital. Baba smiled and continued:

"Very good. When you go back to the United States I want you to go back to the hospital, to that ward, and I will work through you with the patients. I want you to return to the hospital to serve the patients and give them my love; I will help you bring my love to them. I will work through you with them. And remember to dedicate all situations, good or bad, at my feet.

You are to bring my message to those ensnared in the drug-net of illusion that they should abstain, that the drugs will bring more harm than good. I send my love to them.

I am happy that you have come. I have drawn you to me. You are blessed. Now that I have given you so much of my time and of my love, I expect you to be worthy of my love. Remain determined to do what I say. If you do all the things I have told you one hundred percent, then perhaps you will bring to me one day the whole group of your contacts. Do not pay visits to yogis or saints, or go to tombs or shrines, because there is no more need for this. I am God; my word is Truth." [5]

[The entire darshan with Baba lasted about half an hour, and then Robert made his way back to America.]

About his time with Meher Baba, Robert Dreyfuss later wrote:

"I always find it difficult to translate into words the essentially nonverbal experience of being with Baba, but ... Emanating from him was an aura of total peace, surely what is spoken of in the New Testament as 'the peace that passeth

all understanding.' This is not something I understood when being with him, but rather felt in the core of my being. There was no room for games or pretensions or masks; it was simply being alone with my Self, and being totally accepted – for what I am and am not.

There was a love radiating from Baba that I can only call dynamic, a love that was not confined to that time and place, but is with me now and that grows more vivid with time. This extraordinary dynamic love emanated from Baba effortlessly, just as the light does from the sun. There is no one else he could be, except who he says he is!"[6]

This message was sent out on October 31, 2011 to the Meher Baba community worldwide:

Dear Community,

Our dearest Robert passed into the arms of His Beloved on Oct 31st around 1am Asheville time. He had slipped into a coma and was in his bed with no pain or discomfort when he slipped away. His main caregiver Veronica was with him and his beloved nurse Lisa. Veronica was the main caregiver that Robert was very fond of. She had accompanied him to the Southeast Gathering this past year. She informed me that she was by his bedside reading him Baba's words from the Everything and the Nothing.

He is free at last. Baba was with him till the end!

Jai Beloved Meher Baba to our beloved brother and friend. He was a mighty soul indeed!

Alisa

A memorial service is scheduled for Sunday, December 18, 2011 in Berkeley, California.

In closing we share Robert's foreword from A Mirage Will Never Quench Your Thirst[7]:

In 1965, I had the great good fortune of meeting Meher Baba in India. I had just hitchhiked across the world with the intention of confirming

whether he could indeed be the One whom he asserted he was, The Avatar, God in human form. Being with him convinced me totally that he could be no one else.

At that time, Baba had not yet made any statements regarding drug use. I had experimented with LSD and other substances as a way of sorting through the maze in an attempt to apprehend the Real. I was struck by the futility of this approach, as it did not last and was not complete. During my meeting with him, he clarified that drug use was "delusion within illusion," and that "if God can be found in a pill, then God is not worthy of being God." He asserted, "no drugs." From this meeting flowed much information re: drug use and abuse, with great clarity. He emphasized that spreading his message about drugs was the most important spiritual work of the time.

His messages point to the futility of trying to escape from the very conditions generated through circumstances pertinent to each individual, created specifically to help one wake up from the addiction to illusion. He helps one to, however hesitantly, begin to take the path of sanity by awakening deeper values based in Reality. He helps each individual to mirror a growing state of maturity so that the focus gradually shifts from oneself to the service of others.

Putting away the playthings of illusion is a necessary prelude to becoming who one truly is. The wisdom of no escape is integral to this process. May those who read this open their heart to Meher Baba's unbounded love -- This will lead to true healing of mind, body and spirit.

Notes:

1. From Lord Meher p. 6398 available at <http://www.lordmeher.org/index.jsp?pageBase=page.jsp&nextPage=6398>
2. Ibid, p. 6400 at <http://www.lordmeher.org/index.jsp?pageBase=page.jsp&nextPage=6400>
3. Ibid, p. 6401 at <http://www.lordmeher.org/index.jsp?pageBase=page.jsp&nextPage=6401>
4. Ibid, p. 6402 at <http://www.lordmeher.org/index.jsp?pageBase=page.jsp&nextPage=6402>
5. Ibid, p. 6403 at <http://www.lordmeher.org/index.jsp?pageBase=page.jsp&nextPage=6403>
6. Ibid, p. 6404 at <http://www.lordmeher.org/index.jsp?pageBase=page.jsp&nextPage=6404>
7. A Mirage Will Never Quench Your Thirst, A Source of Wisdom about Drugs, by L. Weichberger (Myrtle Beach: Sheriar Foundation, 2003).



Robert, from "Stoned to Rock." - Allan Cohen

Rick Chapman on Robert Dreyfuss

What the excerpt from LORD MEHER (about Robert coming to Baba) does not capture is the unbelievable thrill and sense of adventure that came from discovering the Avatar of the Age. Robert and I had encountered the information at Allan's office together, and when, less than an hour later, we were in Harvard's Widener Library checking out THE GOD-MAN, we felt sure that we were on the trail of something amazing. A few hours later, the first pages of that biography revealed what it was: we had found God; or more accurately, we had found God in human form, alive on earth!

In the months that followed, we came to Baba together, we planned to attend the December, 1965, Sahavas, and eventually, upon his return to Boston at year's end, we reveled in tears and ecstasy in Robert's most remarkable and



Sebastian Baker, Rick Chapman, Robert Dreyfuss

unexpected meeting with Baba. Baba had sent messages through Robert to both Allan and myself, and before long, really before we knew it, we were the "Boston Baba boys," dubbed so by Beloved Baba Himself as He directed us to spread His Message about drugs to the youth of America.

Those times were so heady that there is no capturing the feeling: us aware of the Avatar of the Age, and Him aware of us, sending messages to us! What followed, of course, is not just a book but a library of books: Robert eventually returned to Pakistan with Mik and Uschi Hamilton in a quixotic and ultimately vain attempt to be the first persons to see Baba again once His seclusion ended; Allan afire with Baba's charge to tell others about His drug message, landing article after article in major magazines and newspapers, talking to audiences about Baba everywhere throughout America and England; and I having the opportunity to go to India, courtesy of a Fulbright Grant, and shortly thereafter having the most precious chance to meet Baba in seclusion myself in August, 1966. And within a little more than a year, all of us back together again, this time in Berkeley, once more attending to work as directed by Beloved Baba.

Those were the days, yes, indeed! And as Cole Porter wrote so poignantly in "Begin the Beguine," "to live it again is past all endeavor." Through the years to follow, Robert and Allan and I went separate ways—sometimes dramatically separate ways—but to the end we have remained united in a special relationship like no other: we were and will ever remain "Guru-bhais," brothers in the love of our Master, and our Master just happened to be the Master of all Masters!

A fond loving farewell to our very dear Robert, my Guru-bhai and fellow "Boston Baba boy"—we shall meet again no doubt, by His Grace at His Lotus Feet!

AVATAR MEHER BABA KI JAI!!!

Rick Chapman



Search for it and you shall never discover
 Call out loud and you won't hear a 'hi',
 Close your eyes and let the world slip by,
 Amongst the cacophony, you shall listen to its
 whisper,

And you shall find it within you, as a part of you.

Fall for love and burn in pain,
 Break into pieces over and over again
 In every void you will find it,
 In the darkest of the dark, you will see it lit.

Be deceived by the simplest of all,
 Be patronized by one and all,
 In every clap and every laughter,
 You would feel its presence harbor.

Be kissed by failure,
 Be felicitated by triumph.
 In every moment, you will find it sear.
 In every wish you would find it persevere.

The time you were born,
 The time you would leave the body,
 It has been with you and will be for long,
 Accept it or Deny it, it is the sole truth to be.

IS That You?

Is that You running through my veins?
 Is it You, I love calling by different names?
 Is it You that beats in my heart?
 Is it You that keeps me up, doesn't let me fall
 apart?

Where are You? Where should I find You?
 I seek for You in heights of sky and the depths of
 blue...
 Like a mad man, I look around for You
 I know nothing, for all I wish is You.

They say, You are in the stillness of meditation
 And they say, You are beyond the realms of
 temptation.
 They say, You are in the scriptures of religion
 They say, You are in the pains of mortification.

I see glimpses of You whirling in the skies,
 Your dance is ethereal, You are absolutely free.
 You move in circles tossing and turning life in me,
 You are the eternal beloved, maker of destinies.

I stand mesmerized and I gaze at You for long,
 I stand there still, let the time slip by.
 I care for nothing, and I am unafraid to die.
 All I wish to be with You, for that's where I belong.

I try to reach out for You but in vain,
 All I get is nothing, the distances remain.
 And I do not falter to try again and many a times more...
 For, that is what I wish to do, I know for sure.

It's been quite a while and You haven't let me in,
 I have been waiting for You since the time, time has been.
 And I know now only the chosen one will be let in,
 Yet, I stand beyond the gates, begging You to let me in.

They laugh at me and scoff at me,
 They say, my wish will never come true.
 For, there are many and your chances are few,
 I care not for what the future holds, for You are all I wish
 to see.

Whom should I believe, Why should I believe?
 Whom should I ask, Where should I seek?
 For, there is no one who can say or who has seen
 You are LOVE that can be felt, only by the Keen!

I care not for seeing You like the ways the rest do
 I care not for letting others know that I know You
 All I care for is just a glimpse of You,
 All I care for is to be with You!

POEMS FOR
 MEHER BABA
 BY RAHUL ATRISHI

YOU are in

YOU are in the humming of busy bees,
YOU are the wind in the trees.
YOU are the flight of birds to distance overseas,
YOU are the comforts of nature and bloodshed catastrophes.

YOU are the rhythm of a musician,
YOU are the thoughts of a physician.
YOU are in comforts, YOU are in anguish,
YOU are the One I seek for; YOU are all I wish.

YOU are the drops of madness,
YOU are the clasp of sanity.
YOU are the rich and the homeless,
YOU are the saint and YOU are the heartless.

YOU are the greed for virtue,
YOU are the jealousy in faith.
YOU are the temper of values,
YOU are the desire for nothingness.

YOU are in the whims and fancies,
And YOU are in the imagination and realities,
YOU are in the light of knowledge and shadows of ignorance,
For YOU were, YOU are, YOU always will be..





MEHER BABA

I can only describe him in what my eyes and heart see
In fact I can't describe him in words.
But I will do the best I can
He is infinite and loving
Actually infinitely loving

He is the Avatar, and in his short human life span
helped so many souls
And still does even though he is not in a body
He is wonderful, graceful, and God the Beloved
He is the ultimate father of all creation
He is the animals of the air, water and land

God said that when he came as god in human form he
also came as an bird for all birds an ant for all ants
A flower for all flowers
A stone for all stones
Every thing for every thing
He is God infinitely God
And he is within all of our hearts
All we have to do
is look hard enough
He is so peaceful and loving
He is infinite

I can't describe him with words for if I could I would
be writing for 10,000 lifetimes and more
I am sitting here writing, thinking, listening
And cannot possibly imagine how loving God is.

~ Aspen Weichberger

Meher Mount
Ojai CA
May 2005



AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE BEADS STEERING COMMITTEE

Dear Meher Baba Community,

On April 26, 2011 Don Stevens passed into the arms of his beloved master Meher Baba. Through his writing, study groups and companionship, Don touched the lives of many who feel the loss of him personally yet rejoice in his reunion with his Beloved. Don's love and devotion to Meher Baba as expressed in his tireless work for Baba up until the very end of his life are an inspiration which lives on.

A whirlwind of ideas, Don created and supported many endeavours to help spiritual seekers. One of these was Companion Books established in the 1990's under the aegis of Companion Enterprises. The original purpose of Companion Books was to publish works that Avatar Meher Baba had personally asked Don to translate into the four principal European languages. These books are *God Speaks*, *The Discourses*, and *Listen Humanity*, and this responsibility was fulfilled within Don's lifetime. Before Don's death, he began the dissolution of Companion Enterprises with the intention that the Beads-on-One-String Trust would eventually take over the responsibilities and activities for both Companion Enterprises and Companion Books.

In 1932 Meher Baba gave this address to the West in London, England. He said:

My coming to the West is not with the object of establishing new creeds and spiritual societies and organizations, but it is intended to make people understand religion in its true sense. True religion consists in developing that attitude of mind, which would ultimately result in seeing one Infinite Existence prevailing throughout the universe; when one could live in the world and yet be not of it, and at the same time, be in harmony with everyone and everything; when one could attend to all worldly duties and affairs, and yet feel completely detached from all their results; when one could see the same divinity in art and science, and experience the highest consciousness and indivisible bliss in everyday life. ...

I intend bringing together all religions and cults like beads on one string and revitalize them for individual and collective needs. This is my mission to the West. The peace and harmony that I shall talk of and that will settle on the face of this worried world is not far off.

Meher Baba

This idea of the *One in the Many* as conveyed by his beloved Master, Avatar Meher Baba, inspired Don throughout his life. In the 1950's and 1960's beloved Baba told Don to visit and film specific holy sites in India. They represented many different religions including

Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Islamic Sufism. Just before his death in 2001, Eruch Jessawalla viewed these films and told Don that these were places visited by Baba many times, but always incognito and with the purpose of Avataric work known only to Meher Baba.

Upon reflection on this conversation, Don came to believe that the idea of finding the *One Behind the Many* was an extremely important legacy of the Avatar's Advent. To facilitate this search for unity Don organized pilgrimages to the Indian sites visited incognito by Baba and filmed by Don at beloved Baba's direction. There have been four such pilgrimages - 2004, 2007, 2009, and 2010.

Don's understanding was that the sacred energy at spiritual sites is not limited to those places visited by Meher Baba, the most recent incarnation of the Ancient One, but is at sites related to other incarnations of the Truth and represented today by various religions and wisdom traditions. **Don believed that these storehouses of avataric energy are tools Meher Baba uses** "to make people understand religion in its true sense ... developing that attitude of mind, which would ultimately result in seeing one Infinite Existence prevailing throughout the universe."

Don recognized in Meher Baba's words that individuals of different and diverse creeds and traditions exhibit a profound understanding of and faith in this underlying unity. In turn, Don expanded the Beads endeavours and sponsored the 2011 German

Seminar and the film of the 2009 Beads pilgrimage. He expressed his intent to develop many more projects to engage persons of all faiths, traditions, arts, and sciences in this thrilling romance between the individual soul and God.

In 2008 Don formed a steering committee called Beads-on-One-String or Beads for short which included most of the directors of Companion Enterprises. This committee has been entrusted with the immediate work of fulfilling Don's vision. Although the future will be determined by Beloved Baba, we, the Steering Committee of Beads-on-One-String hope that by sharing with you our sense of responsibility and inspiration, you too will feel inspired to participate in its unfolding.

In September, 2011 two focus groups were held among Baba lovers who had strong connections with Don and Beads activities. One session was in Marseilles, France and the other was at the English sahas in Beaconsfield, England.

In the light of these meetings and with Companion Enterprises, Companion Books, and Meher Baba's message to the West as its foundation, the Steering Committee of Beads-on-One-String met in England in late September, 2011 to determine how to proceed with Don's vision.

Per Don's instructions, Companion Enterprises will be dissolved sometime in 2012 and a non-profit, charitable corporation with an international focus will be headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, USA., known as Beads-on-One-String

Charitable Trust. Companion Books will fold into the Beads Trust and continue its publishing work.

The most important resolution of the September meeting is the revised vision statement which follows:

Beads-on-One-String is a non-profit-corporation dedicated to the exploration of the unity of all life and whose abiding interest is in humanity's common endeavour to understand, experience, and creatively express the Oneness that lies at the heart of all.*

This search is independent of existing traditions yet actively appreciates and connects people from all religions, backgrounds and cultures, sacred and secular.

We intend through education, pilgrimage, film and media, arts, sciences, and companionship to invite opportunities to explore and experience this unity.

**Beads-on-One-String is the term used by Avatar Meher Baba on a visit to England in 1932 and recorded by Pathe News. A version of this message also appears as a forward to His seminal book God Speaks, (New York, 1955 Dodd Mead, 1973, Sufism Reoriented.)*

The Steering Committee believes that this vision allows the Beads to create, facilitate, and support activities inspired by persons searching for "the Oneness at the heart of all" whether they be lovers of Meher Baba or on a completely different path.

The Steering Committee believes that the Beads are

moving into unknown territory which has yet to be fully revealed. It is hoped that future projects will include those within the Meher Baba community as well as people without any external links to Avatar Meher Baba, as has always been the case with both Beads pilgrimages and seminars. The Beads is open to all who search for the One behind the many.

We send this letter to our Baba community with love and look forward to engaging with you in this remarkable journey. If you have questions or suggestions, please contact Marnie Frank via email at marniefrank1@me.com and she will respond as soon as possible.

In Beloved Meher Baba,

Beads-on-One-String Steering Committee:

Marnie Frank, Chair
Wayne Smith
Richard Griffin, Treasurer
Robert Hartford
Jane Hoskin, Clerk
Georgina Hartford
Cynthia Griffin
Renate Moritz
Sevn McAuley

For more information about Beads-on-One-String also check the website beadsononestring.org



The Choice for Life

After months of silence I hear a song
Many voices of precious souls
Speaking from their heart
Telling of their searching and choosing.

What is my choice?
Do I choose safety and comfort
The welcome assurance of the familiar?
Or do I take a chance
Open my heart and see what comes.

The road is not yet clear
But I know I will choose life
Thank you, my friends.

Poems by
Robert Oberg

The Book of Life

It is called the Book of Life
It is a deer in our yard in the morning
It is a picture created by a child with love
It is a new thought for me from an ancient sage
It is the laughter of my loved one
And the smile of a new friend
It is the good in everything
I am blessed beyond measure by this Book
May I read it again.

The Pathless Land

My soul had been darkened
As I sought the light.
All other doors had closed
I thought one was open
I wanted to enter in.
“Perhaps there is a path
I will try to follow it”
Although my higher truth said no.

Then the door closed
I felt not anger but a cold certainty
That this was not my way.
I felt relieved to know it
Yet warmth was missing.
Then from an unexpected source came joy
An opening to possibilities undreamed of
It was a benediction, an answer to a prayer.

The closed world is not for me
My light burns again
As I glimpse the pathless land
And feel free once more.

The Heart of Love

You have blessed me beyond measure
And I love you so
The heart of love
The heart of you
We are the same
You and me
And I love you so.



Meher Baba and Astrology

by Marlena Applebaum

**God, and God
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planets”
er Baba**

cerpt referencing
book, "How A
Ivy Duce (thanks to
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n's life in detail,  
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about the reading  
a's sister Mani.

following to be  
s reply to Ivy

and Charmy, who  
fortune of being  
and deeply connected  
a his care, and  
astrological pattern  
r worry you.

es not radically  
individual karma  
with him), he does  
it greatly when he  
bastens the working

*out of some karma whereby it is  
unwound in a much shorter time and  
gotten rid of.*

*"Whereas we think of time in the  
measure of years, he knows and sees to  
the untangling of the karmic maze of  
many lifetimes.*

*"You should therefore give no countenance  
to mantras and astrological indications  
which might apply to the general man  
who has not the good fortune of coming  
into the orbit of a Perfect Master's grace,  
and the much rarer opportunity of being  
within the circle of the Avatar.*

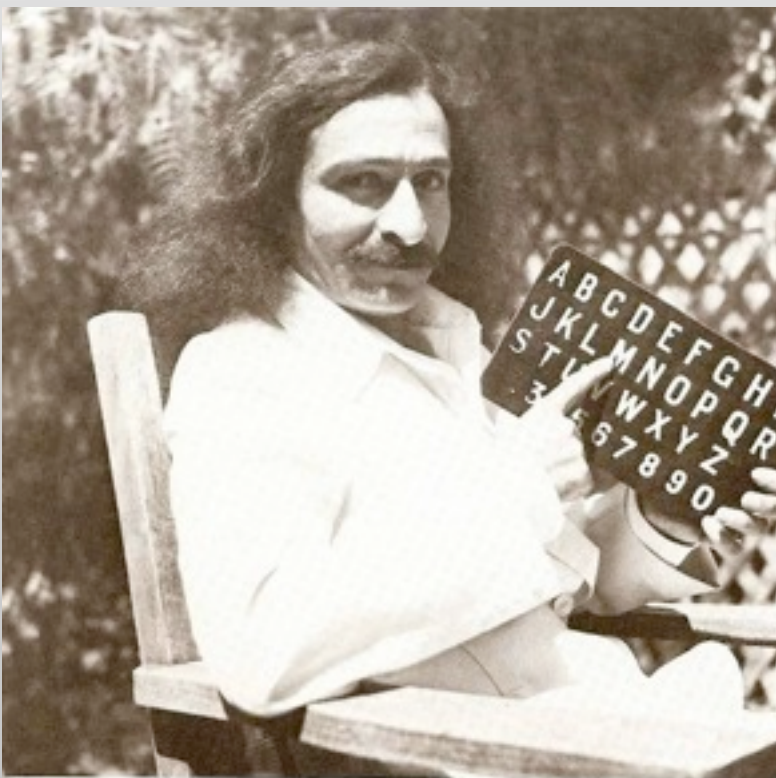
*"He does not mind your being interested  
in astrology as an interesting subject, but  
does not want you in the least to be  
swayed by or involved in it, for your own  
good.*

*"Baba says that when he breaks his  
silence, you will understand everything -*

*all your questions will be  
understanding which em*

~~~~~

I am intrigued by Meher Baba's words to Ivy Duce about astrology. What does it mean to be interested in astrology but not swayed by it? To me, if one is interested in astrology, one should take it lightly and not get involved, unlike other subjects like the world of Maya, or illusion. If one is swayed by it means, they fall into the trap of making presumptions or predictions about their own life, or others' lives, but rather to attempt to live in alignment with the inner truth. In my experience, astrology can help to gain understanding, self-awareness, and faith in the perfection of the picture. I don't use a



entire planets”
~Meher Baba

~~~~~

Ivy Duce wrote about the reading  
in a letter to Baba's sister Mani.

*"Baba says that you and Charmy, who have the rare good fortune of being among his close fold and deeply connected with him, are safe in his care, and should not let any astrological pattern affect you or rattle or worry you."*

*"For although he does not radically change the course of individual karma (of those connected with him), he does alleviate and modify it greatly when he thinks fit, and often hastens the working*

*"Whereas we think of time in the measure of years, he knows and sees to the untangling of the karmic maze of many lifetimes."*

*"He does not mind your being interested in astrology as an interesting subject, but does not want you in the least to be swayed by or involved in it, for your own good."*

*"Baba says that when he breaks his silence, you will understand everything -*

~~~~~

I am intrigued by Meher Baba's exact words to Ivy Duce about astrology. What does it mean to be interested in astrology but not swayed by or involved in it? To me this means that if one is interested in astrology, one should take it lightly in a sense (not unlike other subjects of study in the world of Maya, or illusion). To not be swayed by it means, for me, to not fall into the trap of making presumptions or predictions about myself, life, or others using astrology, but rather to attempt at all times to live in alignment with my highest inner truth. In my experience astrology can help to increase understanding, self-acceptance, and faith in the perfection of the big picture. I don't use astrology to tell



me what something means or to try to figure out what will happen in the future. Instead, I use astrology as a tool for self-discovery. It is an exploration and practice of finding meaning through observation of what is (and what is changes as consciousness changes).

In 1932, Meher Baba stayed at the home of Marc Edmond Jones in Hollywood, for one week. Marc Edmond Jones was the foremost astrologer in the US at that time. It was not long after, that Western astrology began to take a sharp turn towards a more psychological orientation (which makes me wonder about Baba's role in this redirection). Subsequently, Dane Rudhyar, the father of modern astrology (who also met Meher Baba), came into prominence. Rudhyar wrote, "As I see it, the first and immediate purpose of astrology is not to predict events in terms of statistical probability, but to bring to confused, eager, often distraught persons a message of order, of 'form,' of the meaning of individual life and individual struggles in the process of self-actualization" (Interestingly, in the *Awakener Magazine*, Filis Frederick wrote, "Dane had cast Baba's horoscope and seen Him as the great World Teacher of the Age.")

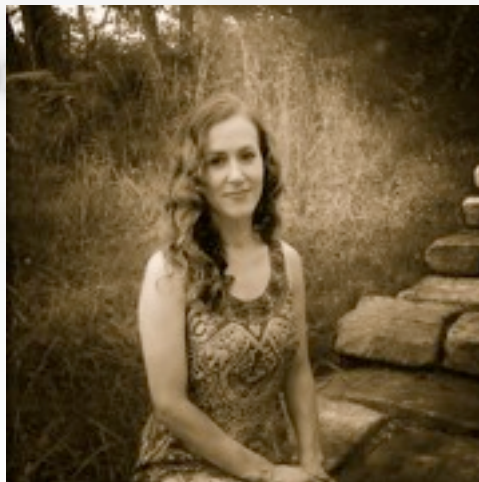
The way astrology was used in the past was more like fortune-telling and making predictions for the future. Modern astrology is quite

different. It is a psychological tool for understanding oneself and helping one to live more authentically, more at peace, and to find one's way towards fulfilling one's greater potentials. I never think of astrology in fatalistic terms. Each aspect shown in a chart can manifest in an unlimited number of ways, and in accordance with one's spiritual journey. Astrology is what we make of it. Perhaps the chart is an illustration of our sanskaras, but it does not determine our future. We affect our future by how we respond to our current circumstances.

I have heard a story, referenced at times, when the topic of astrology arises within the Baba world. It goes something like this: followers of Meher Baba, who were interested in astrology, found that their lives began to disagree with their charts after coming into "the orbit" of Meher Baba. This statement confuses me, because it is based on a premise that implies there is only one interpretation of a birth chart, and that it remains static over time. In my understanding of astrology that premise represents a misunderstanding of how astrology works. Astrology is a language of symbols, and by definition, the very nature of a symbol means that there are an infinite number of meanings and expressions of it. So when someone comes into "the orbit" of Meher Baba, or any path of spiritual truth, their lives and consciousness will of course

change and perhaps rapidly. But because an astrological chart cannot be limited to any one analysis, but rather only suggests influences which may be expressed in different ways at various levels of consciousness, the chart still encompasses these higher possibilities. I would go on to say that any perceived limitations of the accuracy of an astrological chart are more reflective of the person trying to understand or interpret it, but not the chart itself.

I have heard that Meher Baba said astrology is a perfect science, but he also said something along the lines of that it takes a Perfect One to interpret it perfectly (Similarly, the Talmud says, in reference to astrologers, "They gaze and know not at what they gaze at, they ponder and know not what they ponder."). I understand this and do not presume to know anything. Astrology can be thought of as a symbolic language. Having some fluency in this language, I do my best to articulate the symbols and express them in ways that might offer help to people — in a dialoguing process, and reflecting back what they already know within. Astrology can be immensely helpful in naming things, putting puzzle pieces together, and validating experiences. Exploring the multifarious possibilities suggested in a chart can provide clarity and meaning in relation to challenges, and offer glimpses of pathways towards healing and hope.



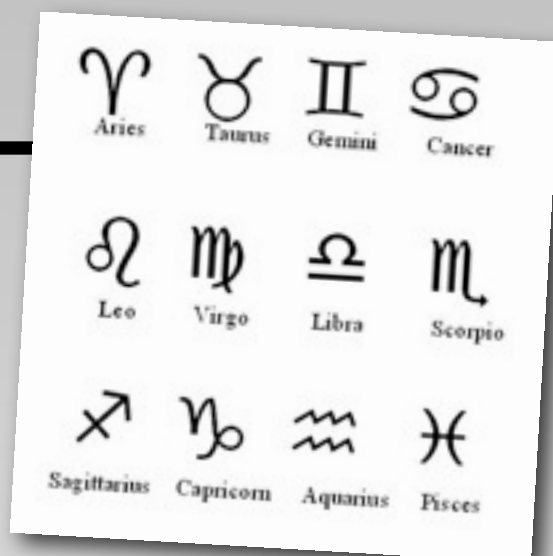
There are 7 Principles of Evolutionary Astrology (a term for psycho-spiritual astrology), by Steven Forrest, which resonate for me. These principles support the differentiation between the type of interpretation that might “sway” one vs. the type that hopefully enhances self-knowledge and a sense of well-being.

From “The Inner Sky”:

1. *Astrological symbols are neutral. There are no good ones, no bad ones.*
2. *Individuals are responsible for the way they embody their birthcharts.*
3. *No astrologer can determine a person’s level of response to his birth chart from that birthchart alone.*
4. *The birthchart is a blueprint for the happiest, most fulfilling, most spiritually creative path of growth available to the individual.*
5. *All deviations from the ideal growth pattern symbolized by the birthchart are unstable states, usually accompanied by a sense of aimlessness, emptiness, and anxiety.*
6. *Astrology recognizes only two absolutes: the irreducible mystery of life, and the uniqueness of each individual viewpoint on that mystery.*

Astrology suffers when wedded too closely to any philosophy or religion. Nothing in the system matters except the intensification of a person’s self-awareness.

In my experience, astrology is a useful psychological tool for some people, and it need not be used or seen as an “occult” practice. “Everything has something to do with spirituality. It depends on how it is worked out...” (Meher Baba). Yet, I readily acknowledge that Baba, or any God-realized being, is far beyond any subject of study or form of typology that may be used to classify or understand things of this world.



Books cited: 1. Dane Rudhyar, The Astrology of Personality (Doubleday, 1970), p. xv. And, Steven Forrest, The Inner Sky: The Dynamic New Astrology for Everyone. (Bantam Books, 1984), p.8., Lord Meher, p. 2515, Lord Meher p. 2908 and for the Talmud quote: Sotah 12b

The Doorbell of Forgiveness

by Don E. Stevens and his young people's group

London: Companion Books, 2011

Review by Marc Flayton

Queens, New York

Baba I ask for your forgiveness. I know this is the last cycle of your presence as Avatar. I know in the early nineteen thirties you told the west you have not come to create a new religion. I know you said you will flood all the streams that go to the ocean. I know you said you will bring together all religions like beads on a string. But being ignorant I thought you must have claimed this at each advent. I felt this is something the avatar always promises because religions are formed around his advents and all of them have proved to create a mess for the world. I was nervous for you because I figured each time you come as the freshness of your advent wears thin, people clutch to everything they could and a new sect or new religion gets formed to hold hope and despair to a minimum till you come again. I said to myself: Baba how will you stop a religion from being formed? Baba you know all religions have done was to try to convert other religions or fight with each other. Baba why did you make such a bold statement, that no new religion will be formed after you have gone?

Little did I know that there was a man named Don E. Stevens who believed every word you told him. This man who just passed on to you was going to make his last efforts in this world to prove that this great work of yours will not go unheeded. So you sent him on pilgrimages when you were alive to most of the major places of worship. You had him film them. You showed him that people were actually coming back to their native religions. You showed him that yes you were flooding the rivers with your love and bliss. You



were showing Don and others the reality of your words. Don started to take seekers with him to these great centers of religion: Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Zoroastrian, Jewish, he traveled at an old age to show people what was happening... How Baba's words were becoming a reality.

Don Stevens has always found he works better when he could bounce his ideas off of others. For years he started groups of fellow seekers to discuss issues that pertain to the new humanity that is the earmark of your advent. This new humanity, gifted with intuition and love, are the seeds germinated from eons of suffering. The book: The Doorbell of Forgiveness is a book about one such group don formed to kick around and hopefully work out some ideas.

The key for me and why I thought this book is seminal is because I believe Don and his "Young People's Group" were (and are) in the midst of assuring the

Avatar that his plans for humanity for the next 700 years won't fall apart. When you departed, Baba, you left many men and women who in your love have worked tirelessly for your mission. Don Stevens was one of them. Don combines sharp spiritual insight and much worldly knowledge, from a lifetime traveling the world while working for oil Companies. One might think: What new ideas and what new formulations can be put forward in a world in which there is nothing but wars, genocides, and vast displays of ethnocentric selfishness on a large scale, happening for the last five hundred years? The answers come out in these group discussions in this book. They are all fueled by a man who has spent his life in the company of God himself, who has edited Meher Baba's greatest written work: God Speaks, and who has never allowed hard questions to stop him. In The Doorbell of Forgiveness you will find a group of people who have taken god at his word.

I thank God that I found Doorbell, I truly didn't realize that there were people who wanted to carry on Meher Baba's work. I thought – Well we just might have to sit back and wait for him again.

Don left us a great parting gift in Doorbell. It covers the group's discussions over a two day period. Stevens shares with us many things Meher Baba told him that were profound, that I have not read elsewhere. The reader will come across the idea of forgiveness as an answer to many of the problems the world faces. The books editor and writer, Laurent Weichberger, goes through a personal experience of his own – on Pilgrimage – and from his life which involves a deep personal experience. It was exciting to read how Laurent's life goes through a pattern of personal forgiveness which is a template for the larger forgiveness Don prescribes for the world. It is a wonderful and quick read.

It sells on Amazon in paperback --

[CLICK HERE](#)



Mehera

Unwilling
blossoms drop
from her hands,
one and one and one—
what will I do without You
come back, she cries
as they fall at Your feet.
Words drop from her lips--
come back
how will I live without You
to mingle with the blossoms,
the tears dropped at Your feet.
Your form already laden
with prayer, garlands and tears,
it is her form,
hollowed by Your love,
she longs to drop,
to mingle her being
for eternity with Yours--
but now has only blossoms,
and the bloom of her heart,
to drop at Your feet.

--Irma Sheppard



OCCUPY WALL STREET AND THE SECRET OF HACKTIVISM

By Carolyn van der Linde

January 2012 ~ USA

All Occupy Boulder photos are copyright © 2012 by Laurent Weichberger.

The chat room was humming. A vote was called. The people of Anonymous, a root organization of then around two hundred listed (by handle only) members, put forth their voice. With 98% approval the vote was accepted. Thus began the most influential movement in the history of America perpetuated and coordinated by people primarily through use of the Internet. So who were they? Terrifying hackers with an evil agenda, hippies, con-artists? Absolutely not. They were people, often on the side of youth who simply knew how to use a computer – who were also keenly aware of the power that can be had by organizing and communicating at the speed of light and happened to know the Secret.

In the time it takes a person to read a computer screen, in the time it takes to click a mouse – www.whatis-theplan.org became a revolution that would span the entire world. They would not use weapons of mass destruction. They would not, it quickly became clear, use civility. Civility had, after all, been the bastion of the suppliant. They would not forgive. They would not sing songs. They would not pray as a group in the name of any religion. They would not forget. They wanted you to know, Big Brother had a new sibling and was no longer the only family member in the room.

Discussion followed the vote. Then something new happened, something novel for our age. The time for talking ended as it usually does, but afterward? Afterward came the time for action. This was new. It would change and challenge everything and everyone in their turn. It was youth, it was hope, it

was audacious, it was change and it had no other name –really. What Anonymous started was a small fire. Harmless looking really, a fire so small it would be vulgar to call it pyrotechnic- and yet explode it most certainly would. Yet no

and down chanting and crying themselves hoarse the activists and demonstrators had plenty to say and they were saying it loudly. They were at no loss for words. More join them and more and more, 1,000 by the end of the day. At the speed of light at the speed of type, the word you see -had already gotten out. The Secret was getting out. Immediately, Big Brother flexed his muscles. The effect would be unbelievable.

On September 20th, 2011 the police of New York began arresting the protesters who were wearing Guy Fawke's masks, a symbol of the group Anonymous. They would justify this 'flexing' by citing an antiquated law that forbade assembly in masks dated 1845. By the 28th of the same month worker unions began to join in. On October 5th 20,000 people march in the streets of New York. They are waving placards, they have created a small city in Zucotti Park with a library, a sanitation department and a form of true democracy. Where all are leaders and all may choose to follow or contribute. Stripped of megaphones they develop a method of

communication relay to reach the furthest fringe of the crowd. No one is turned away. Two days later the mayor of New York is calling the protesters irresponsible and reckless saying they have threatened the employment of people on Wall Street. This is a total fallacy. Wall Street continues as usual with minor traffic issues.

Media reported inaccurately the events of Occupy Wall Street from the very beginning. They never seemed to realize that the live feed set up via the Internet



mainstream source would spill the beans. No television channel in North America would be bold enough to say why. It was a Secret.

September 17, 2011 in New York City. There are around 200 demonstrators that are kicked out of the original location and move on a few blocks. They are small, but they are sincere – their voices lifting over the sounds of one of the largest cities on Earth. They are young and man, they are really angry! They stop at Zucotti Park. Determination pumping their arms up



was reporting the truth. The media would say hundreds. The live feed would show thousands. The media would portray the protesters as ‘dirty hippies.’ The live feed would show college students intelligent and articulate challenging the ethics of corporate personhood. One commentator said they ‘did nothing but bang their drums’ and ‘needed to get a job.’ The country split. Part followed the actual goings on in Zucotti Park and elsewhere through the Internet. Part of the world trusted media sources that continued to spin the movement as ineffective and disorganized. Those of us on the Internet quickly surmised the truth. Big Brother was scared. So scared, that he was doing his best to make it go away. Terrified really, that the Secret was out for good.

There have been so many articles on the web from mainstream media as well, such as MSNBC that claimed ‘nobody is there’ or worse, that the demonstrators were becoming violent. The Internet showed otherwise; women panned and pepper sprayed by police while posing no threat, college students lined up and pepper sprayed by police, young men beaten by police, tear gas canisters launched by police causing many to go to the hospital, property being confiscated by police, police officers taunting demonstrators and these are only a few examples. All this reinforced the reason why the demonstrations were happening in the first place. This discouraged no one. This attracted far more people than can

be imagined. People who had not heard it yet, began to suspect for themselves what the Secret might be. They came in droves and not only in New York, but every major city in the United States.

People began saying, ‘what do they want’ and ‘why are they doing this?’ Different spin doctors and news pundits all offered some dried out hash about political angles and politicians tried to imagine how they could USE this movement in the upcoming election. Upper middle class America became even more confused. They still had not managed to figure it out- as we stormed the ports, linked arms and resisted arrest that we knew the Secret. The Secret was out. What was the Secret?

THE SECRET- THAT NO ONE PERSON IS SUPERIOR TO ANY OTHER PERSON FOR ANY REASON AT ANY TIME OR IN ANY PLACE.

No really, I’m not kidding. Did you know that is actually true? Do you know that is how it started? What people were tired of, what the demonstrators marched for was that very principle. It’s a simple one. It isn’t complicated. It is



simply true. It is not an idea that subscribes to a particular religion. There is no God or Anti-God, no honest heart of man that could refute it. The idea is contained in our Constitution of the United States. What every sign said, what every mouth proclaimed was simply this, ‘We are in this together and if you can’t acknowledge that there will be consequences.’ The shocking thing is the last part of that statement. That word, do you see it?

CONSEQUENCES.

It is a powerful word. It is a word that reminds people that power is not only something to take, as in the case of the





few who govern, the few who hoard vast amounts of our countries' wealth, it is also something of a mutual conspiracy. Once you know the secret not merely hear it, or crave it, but KNOW it. Know you are equal to everyone you have ever met or will meet. Not better. Not worse. EQUAL. Then you must acknowledge that what they have, their grotesque advantage is something the rest of us GAVE to them and we CAN TAKE IT BACK.

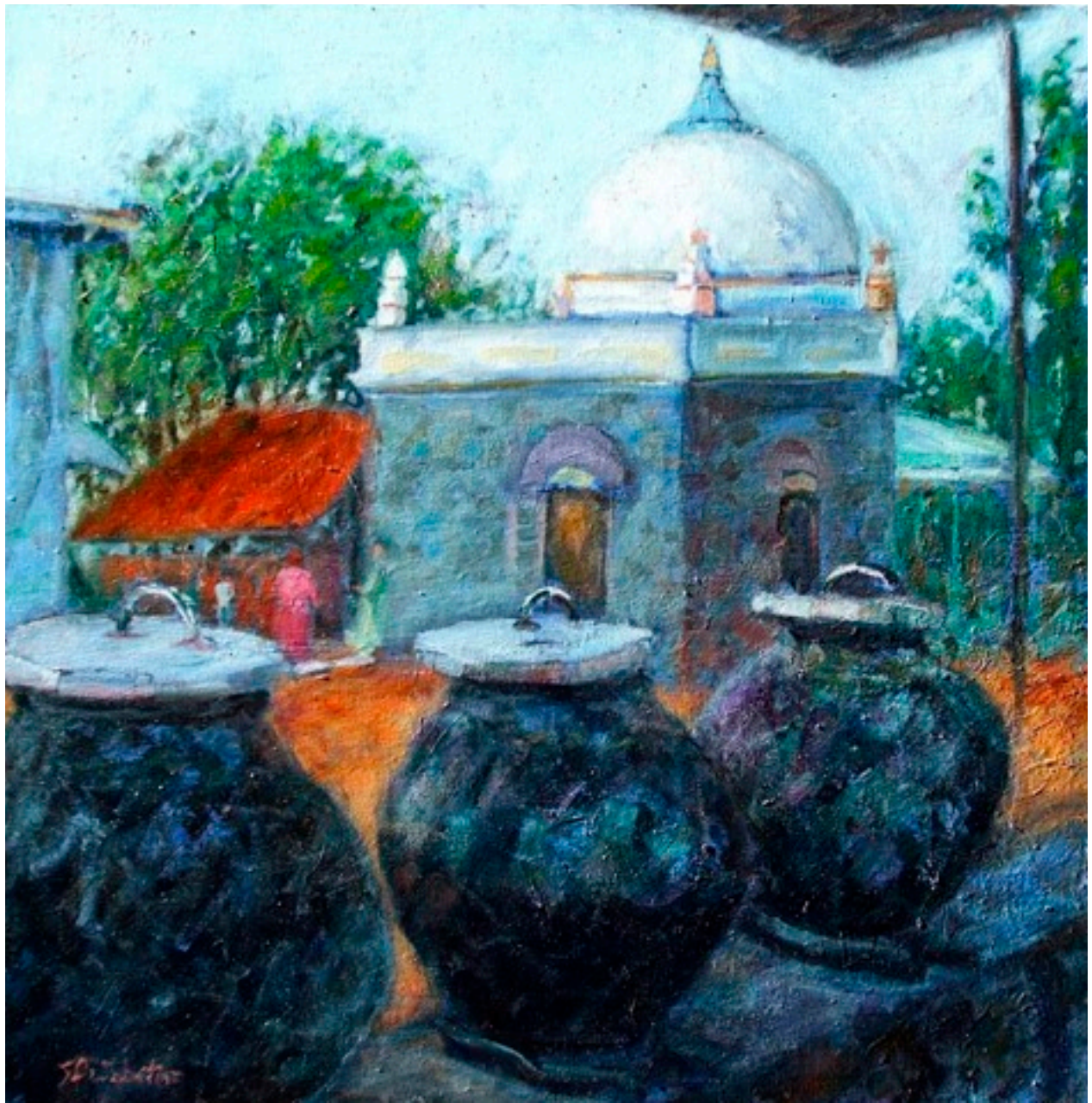
It has been said that we must be the change we want to see. So it is that the activists of today have chosen to do what activists of all ages have done. We have become accountable, to ourselves, to one another. We acknowledge that while compassion might be the doorway to change, martyrdom is selfish and does not effect change. We dare to be equal. We demand equality. So... when someone asks me what I think Anonymous or Occupy 'want,' it is simple. We want equality. We know the Secret. And we are telling EVERYONE.

I encourage each and every one of you to consider how occupying your own life, meeting your own accountability in the face of oppression might free you. Please know that you can be free. This was written by a mother, a professional, a lover, a sister, a daughter and if we meet, a friend.

Not...



a dirty hippy.



Three Jars
by Joe DiSabatino

The Ballad of John, Yoko, and the Baba Card

by Kendra Crossen

The following article describes several variants on an “urban legend.” In order to avoid confusion, the true version has been boldfaced.

Someone posted on Facebook this paragraph from a long interview with John Lennon by Jonathan Cott and published in Rolling Stone on December 8, 2011:

... Once, in 1971, I ran into John and Yoko in New York. A friend and I had gone to see the film *Carnal Knowledge*, and afterward we bumped into the Lennons in the lobby. Accompanied by the yippie activist Jerry Rubin and a friend of his, they invited us to drive down with them to Ratner’s restaurant on the Lower East Side for blintzes, whereupon a beatific, long-haired young man approached our table and wordlessly handed John a card inscribed with a pithy saying of the yogi Meher Baba. Rubin drew a swastika on the back of the card, got up, and gave it back to the man. When he returned, John admonished him gently, saying that that wasn’t the way to change someone’s consciousness. Acerbic and skeptical as he could often be, John Lennon never lost his sense of compassion.

What an amusing story. Except it didn’t jibe with the version I thought I had heard years ago, which didn’t even include Jerry Rubin, let alone a

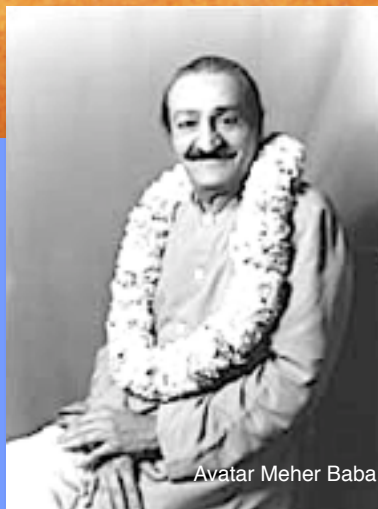
swastika. In the urban legend I admit having disseminated, Bobby Street was a waiter in a restaurant when John and Yoko came in and sat down, and before taking their order he handed them a “Don’t Worry Be Happy” card with the smiling photo of Meher Baba on it. In a Dadaist gesture perhaps intended to condemn gurus as dictators, Yoko takes a pen and turns Baba’s holy mustache into a Hitler mustache with a few scribbles, and hands the card back to the waiter, who as a Baba-lover is understandably taken aback.

What an amusing story. But actually, it didn’t happen that way. Certainly if the setting was Ratner’s—a kosher dairy restaurant where professional Jewish waiters were famous for their testy attitude—then it is not credible that a beatific non-kosher boy should be waiting tables there. But what really did happen? I was determined to uncover the truth.

Just as I was struggling to overcome my telephone phobia and call California to track down Bob Street, Baba came to my rescue in the form of Jerry Watson, who posted to Facebook on December 11, 2011: “As luck would have it, I was surprised to see Bob Street calmly eating breakfast at the Meher Pilgrim Retreat at Meherabad this morning. Apparently the lobbyman was misinformed when he told me that Bob had returned to the States. Anyway, I did get the details.” The following is a slightly edited version of what Jerry reported.

The year was 1971. The place, Ratner’s restaurant, a kosher eatery next to Fillmore East on Second Avenue in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Bob Street, a fellow diner, handed Yoko and John a Baba card — not the now-famous “Don’t Worry Be Happy” card, but one with a photograph from the 1956 series of Chase Studios (Washington, DC) poses with the words Avatar Meher Baba printed on the bottom. Yoko proceeded to draw a Hitler mustache over Baba’s mustache, and after inscribing a message on the back of the card, she quickly handed it back. Bob returned to his table with card in hand and read her words: “Every man is a potential Hitler. Every woman is a potential Hitler’s mother.”

Puzzled by this rather cryptic adage, Bob went back to their table and



Avatar Meher Baba

politely asked what it meant. Yoko offered an explanation that only confused matters, and so Bob responded by saying that Meher Baba was God. At that point John Lennon intervened and asked Bob, "What is God?" Bob replied, "God is Love." John quipped back, "Love is Love." Bob acknowledged the truism with a smile and returned to his table, still bewildered.

A few minutes later, Jerry Rubin, who had also been sitting at John and Yoko's table, got up and approached Bob and said, "John was wondering if it would be OK for them to keep the card." Bob complied, handing the card back to Jerry.

A couple of weeks later, Bob happened to come across that particular Rolling Stone article with a narrative of the incident: "... When he (Jerry) returned, John admonished him gently, saying that that wasn't the way to change someone's consciousness. Acerbic and skeptical as he could often be, John Lennon never lost his sense of compassion."

Bob Street could only surmise when reading that comment that John Lennon may have felt Yoko's reaction to be inappropriate and wanted to make amends.

And that's the inside scoop directly from the man who lived the tale.

Meanwhile, the Facebook discussion among Boomers struggling with their memories spawned several other variations, including one in which Yoko's handwritten message was "Where there is a Hitler there is a Meher Baba." I am chastened for circulating a false version—in which, however, Bob gets to keep the defaced card, now worth millions. The only thing that keeps me from preferring my own little fabrication is the realization that I could never tell any of these versions as an "amusing story" to Mehera.



According to the article below, Yoko Ono did not originate the idea of associating a saint or God with Hitler. It had been in John Lennon's mind since early 1967- KM

Hitler Did Not Make The Final Cut On The Beatles "Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band" Album Cover

The cover of The Beatles "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" features John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr in front of a collage of life-sized cardboard models of famous people and some of their hero's. Most of the suggestions came from Lennon, McCartney and Harrison. Harrison opted for a number of Indian gurus to reflect his spiritual leanings while Lennon's list, thought to be half-joking, included Jesus, Hitler, and Gandhi.



Sir Peter Blake, who designed the set said "Hitler and Jesus were the controversial ones, and after what John said about Jesus we decided not to go ahead with him – but we did make up the image of Hitler. If you look at photographs of the out-takes, you can see the Hitler image in the studio. With the crowd behind there was an element of chance about who you can and cannot see, and we weren't quite sure who would be covered in the final shot. Hitler was in fact covered up behind the band."

Check out the cut-out of Hitler set off to the side of the photo shoot.

<http://www.feelnumb.com/2010/01/24/adolf-hitler-did-not-make-the-cut-on-the-beatles-sgt-pepper-album>



Just Think of Baba

By Zo Newell ~ January 14, 2012
Nashville, TN

"We happened to be at Meherabad for Makar Sankranti one year. I remember Minoo Kaka telling us that on this day the perfect masters get together and decide how the year is going to go. (I assume he got that bit of esoterica from Upasni Maharaj, to whom he was close, but I don't know for sure.) I repeated this to Mehera[1] later that day at Meherazad; she was irritated and basically said -- Don't worry about what the perfect masters may be doing, just think of Baba. Still, happy Makar Sankranti!

"I should add, for those who don't remember him, that Minoo Kaka (Minoo Bharucha) was a very light-hearted man who loved to tell stories on spiritual themes and who loved to laugh. So when he told us about the perfect masters getting together on that day, I believe he meant it, and as I said he probably got that from Maharaj - who had some pretty outrageous stories of his own - but he was not making any big serious deal about it. It was kind of in the spirit of 'Far out, those perfect masters, what a great bunch of guys'. That's all."

1. Mehera above is Mehera J. Irani, Avatar Meher Baba's beloved. - LW

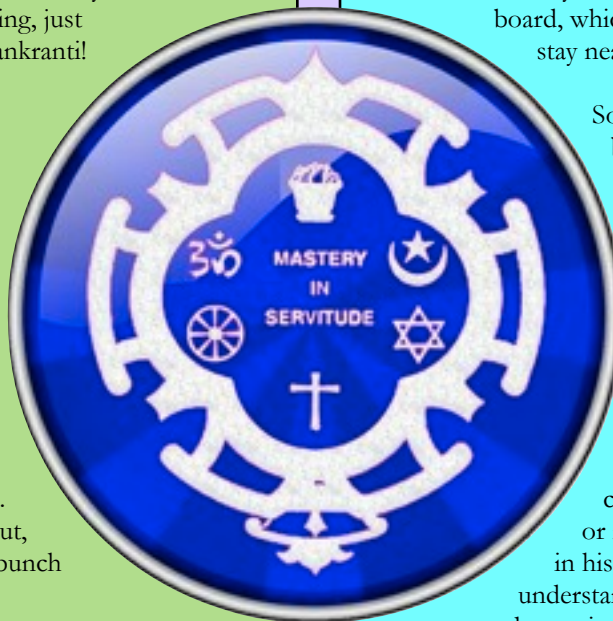
Well, I went upstairs into his little room, which resembled a monastic cell because its stone walls were very thick. Baba was seated on a cot, robed in white. I don't know what happened... All I know is that I found myself on my knees at Baba's feet, crying as I think I had never cried before. The tears were streaming down my face.

I don't think I was happy - I don't think I was unhappy. Perhaps the tears seemed to wash away all that happened to me in the past, all that I had regretted. I was empty, in a sense, yet filled with lightness and new dawn - fresh life. I felt clean and light. I don't know how long this weeping lasted, I couldn't tell you - it was timeless. Baba dictated on the board, which I heard Chanji interpret, "She is to stay near me."

Somebody picked me up. I was put to bed, and fell into a deep slumber. I can't explain what happened...

I always loved Jesus Christ, and it seemed to me that Baba was like the Jesus I had known as a child in the paintings depicting him. I felt this tremendous love, this tremendous compassion. Although there was a great deal to criticise in me, and even be stern about (I most certainly had not always been as good or nice a person as I should have been), in his eyes there was nothing but understanding and compassion, and no condemnation at all. I think it was that that won me over to him. However sensual one had been, however undutiful, ungrateful or careless, whatever one's faults were that he saw, it seemed as if he saw what one might become, and drew this out.

Kim Tolhurst, 14 September 1931, East Challacombe, England (From Lord Meher Volume 4, p. 1418).





WODIN - Daddy God and Baby Elephant



Artist Steve Jameson,
Wodin himself



Dancing with Sufis

by Laurent Weichberger

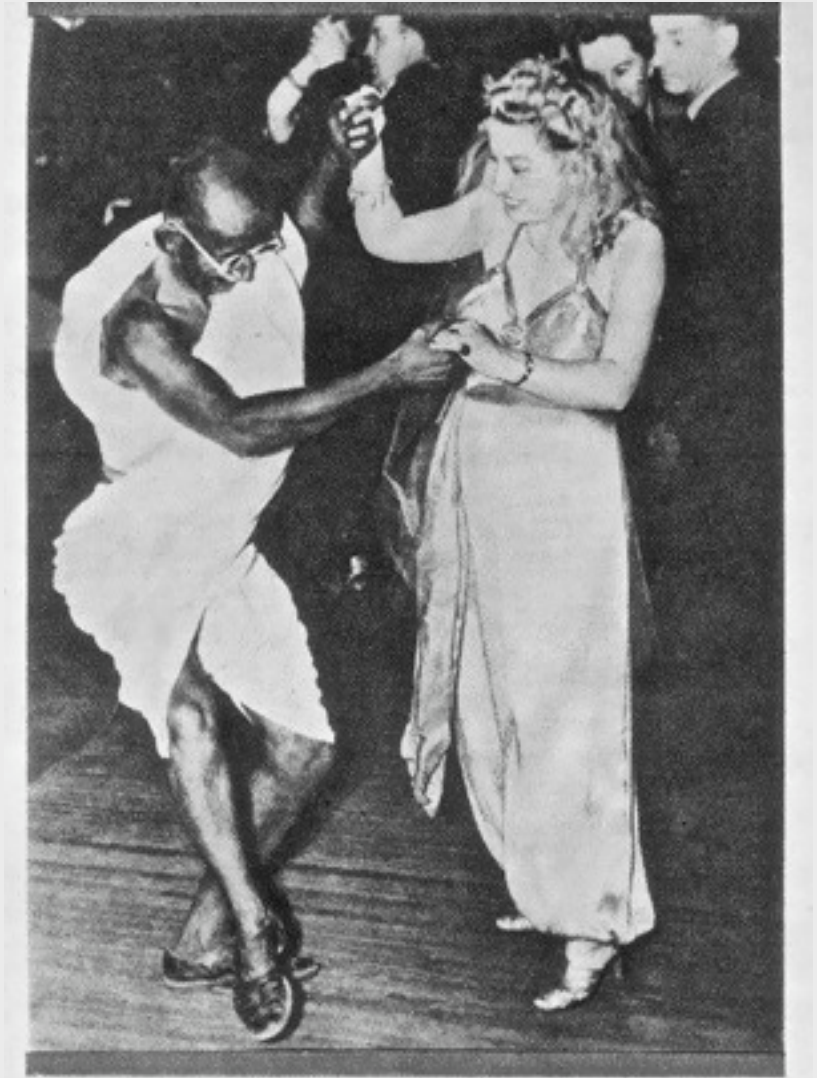
I chanted this line from Yeshua (Lord Jesus) at The Abode of the Message with "Saadi" in the late 1980s, while dancing in a circle with Sufis:

Original words of Yeshua spoken in Syric-Aramaic, "Tubwayhun l'meskenace b'rukh d'dilhounhie malkutha d'ashmaya/Alaha ruhow"

Translation from original text of Aramaic: "Tuned to the Source are those who live by breathing Unity; their -- I can! -- is included in God's"

"Aramaic translations by Neil Douglas-Klotz." Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz is an internationally known scholar in the fields connecting religious studies and psychology as well as a poet and musician. He is the author of:

Prayers of the Cosmos: Meditations on the Aramaic Words of Jesus (1990); Desert Wisdom: The Middle Eastern Tradition from the Goddess Through the Sufis (1995); The Hidden Gospel: Decoding the Spirituality of the Aramaic Jesus (1999); The Genesis Meditations: A Shared Practice of Peace for Christians, Jews and Muslims (2003); The Sufi Book of Life: 99 Pathways of the Heart for the Modern Dervish (2005) Blessings of the Cosmos: Wisdom of the Heart from the Aramaic Words of Jesus (2006) The Tent of Abraham: Stories of Hope and Peace for Jews, Christians and Muslims (2006, with Rabbi Arthur Waskow and Sr. Joan Chittister)



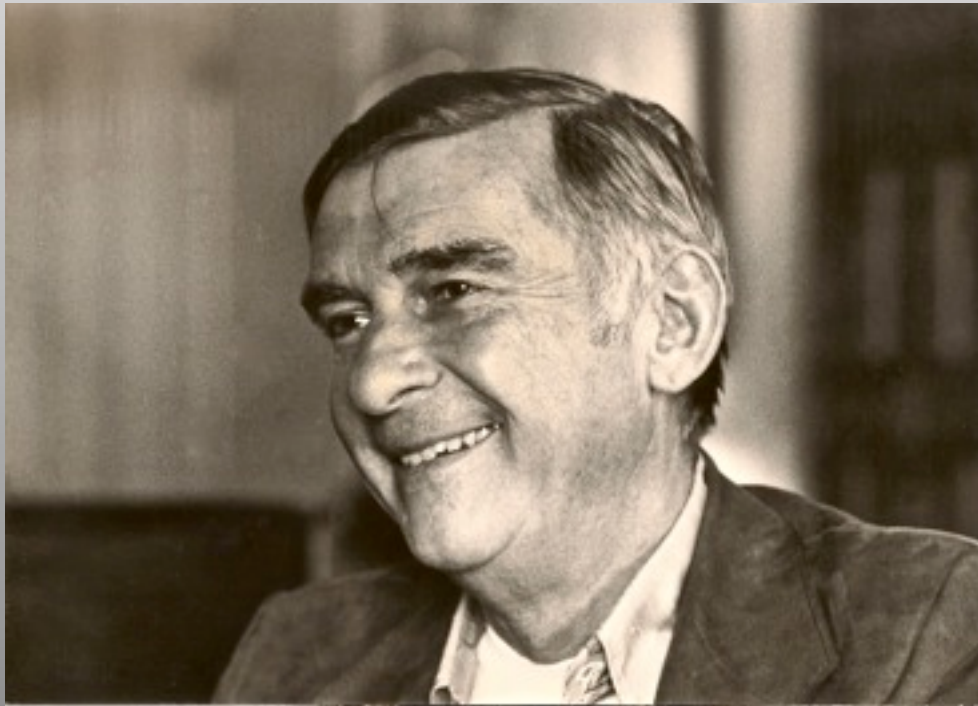
"Revenge follows hatred and forgiveness follows love. Without love none can cultivate the noble habit of forgetting and forgiving. You forgive a wrong done to you in the same measure in which you love the wrongdoer.

"You can counteract a disease only by its antidote. Love is the antidote to hatred. When you feel like hating a man try to remind yourself that he is a form of your own self."

~ Meher Baba

(from Treasures from the Meher Baba Journals, p.13-14)





VERY DEAR FRIENDS,
COMPANIONS

TODAY, WHAT IS LEFT
FROM DON'S PHYSICAL
BODY IS BEING SPREAD
OUT FROM THE SECLUSION
HILL AND IN THE
MEANTIME TOMORROW IS
HIS BIRTHDAY.

I CELEBRATE HIS BEING
WITH US ALL, WITH THIS
PICTURE TAKEN BY ME IN
1979 IN CAGNES - SUR - MER
IN HIS APARTMENT WHILE
LISTENING THE FRENCH
GROUP SINGING A SONG
FOR BABA.

Hasan Selisik

The Last Photo

Sevn McAuley scatters Don's ashes
from the peak of Seclusion Hill,
January 13 2012

photos Dhiresha Chapman



Scattering Don Stevens' Ashes On Seclusion Hill

by Jan Baker

From New Delhi airport Rachel and I went directly to the Baba Centre and a welcome bed and heated room as the weather was surprisingly cold.

After a two hour catch up we were whisked around Delhi to Qutub Minar, and two Sufi saint's tombs (please forgive me but I cannot recall their names other than they were associates of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti). The atmosphere and energy reflected that of Ajmer but unfortunately the inner sanctums are strictly men only now. In complete contrast just down the road is Inayat Khan's Darghah.. oh my.. such gifts.. The tomb is situated in a marbled and lush garden of peace and tranquility. We were the only visitors which of course enhanced the intimacy of the moment. As we each read His words engraved on the wall the spiritual emotions they ignited still resonate within me.

Because it was Don's favourite eating place we lunched at the prestigious Gymkhana Club - guests of Kusum (Singh) and family.

In the evening Rhaki had organised a memorial for Don at the Delhi Baba Centre where Rachel and myself shared our memories of Don's last weeks and we watched the video kindly sent by Kathryn of the service at St James. And I was reminded how important it is to keep these memories alive in our hearts and not allow dust and distance to dim them.

Rhaki then kindly put us on our train to Ahmednagar where we shared a sleeping compartment with two disciples of Sai Baba - on route to Shirdi to take His darshan.

It was so joyous to meet again with Digambar Gadekar, Dr.Prasad and Balaji for the final farewell to Don. I think we comprised a group of about 30 as we ascended Seclusion Hill. Wayne Smith collected a beautiful painting of Baba from MPC to accompany us.

Then, whilst trying to send a text to Kathryn whilst walking up the hill my phone suddenly started downloading and playing the Buddhist Dakini Yoga - now whether this was meaningless or not or just pertinent to myself I don't know but it made me feel even more that we were not alone.

The intimacy of the service - everyone sharing their memories, thanks and stories of Don sprang from the spontaneity of the moment preceding and came straight from the hearts of all gathered. Balaji recounted the first bottle of red wine he procured for Don - not being a connoisseur himself he didn't discriminate one red from another and was so touched when - after tentatively tasting it - Don gushed that he reminded him of his dear mother.....adding - after a pregnant pause.....that his mother used to make him drink castor oil.

Richard Griffin recited the Universal Prayer in deference to Don's memories of its recital by one of the Mandali in the company of Baba and then we joined as one to sing Happy Birthday before each cupping a small portion of his ashes to be separately cast to the winds.

I was instantly reminded of the name emblazoned on the boat in Marseilles - Don du Vent? which stood in attendance directly in front of us on our same recital at the harbour.

Dee thankfully captured these moments so you too can see how Don's ashes were momentarily suspended in the sunlight.

I think that Sevn is compiling a list of all the people that were present as I only know a few, but as Dee commented that although many of us were strangers, at that moment we were very much brought together as one family.

Because of dental and university appointments Rachel and I spent 3 days in Pune during which time we contacted Digambar. This sweet man not only met us at the Pune Baba Centre but accompanied by Pratap Ahir and his brother, sang us Kabir's ghazal's as they had all sang to Baba himself when he visited in the 60's. He then contacted the caretaker of Guruprasad so that we might go for Darshan. Such precious, precious moments.

I truly can't find the words to do justice to the care, friendship and consideration we've enjoyed since our arrival here. Recounting and sharing both ours and others memories of dear Don both Rachel and I have been very conscious of his presence with us every step of our way.



The Big Crayon-Colored Mountain

children's poem

Baba is a man reading a book to you.
But he's fooling you—he hasn't written
the book yet.
You listen for a while and realize
the book is about you.
Baba gives you a crayon and
asks if you want to write it.
"Don't worry," says Baba,
"I'll be a little bit of fire
on the tip of the crayon."
Suddenly, in no time,
you and Baba write a million million books.
In one you have a toothpick in your mouth
and drive a car down the biggest alley in the world
when a policeman stops you
and gives you a driver's license.
Your car goes straight up
and docks at a party
a few angels are having just
over Cleveland. Baba says
he's there too
writing a book for kids about your age.
You try to see the book he's
writing and think you see
a story about a dog
who makes himself invisible
to follow the little girl
who loves him.
"Where's my dog?" she asks everyone.
The dog can see she's really scared
and is so sorry he licks her
though still often becomes invisible and might be here now.

Another story goes:

You are a mirror.
People stand in front of you and you give them
their picture back.
Then one day someone
reaches behind the
mirror and takes the
dark piece of
cardboard away
from the glass.
People go through you
like light through a window.
They see the big crayon-colored mountain behind you.
You want to see it too but are turned in the wrong direction.
So Baba comes down
the mountain
and paints a picture of you as a child
on the window. Then he
holds a mirror up to
your picture, holds the hand of the
child in the mirror,
and you both walk up the
big crayon-colored mountain.

Stephen Paul Miller





"TO LOVE GOD IN THE MOST PRACTICAL WAY IS TO LOVE OUR FELLOW BEINGS. IF WE FEEL FOR OTHERS IN THE SAME WAY AS WE FEEL FOR OUR OWN DEAR ONES, WE LOVE GOD."

— AVATAR MEHER BABA FROM "HOW TO LOVE GOD" IN THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE (1964). —

CALL YOURSELF A LOVER OF AVATAR MEHER BABA, BUT YOU MUST BE WILLING FOR YOUR LOVE OF BABA TO SUFFER LABORS AND SORROWS, VEXATIONS AND ANXIETIES AND LACK OF NECESSITIES, SICKNESS, INJURIES, REPROOF, DISGRACE, HUMILIATIONS, SHAME, CORRECTION AND CONTEMPT. "JAI BABA" WILL THEN BE YOURS.

~ ADI K. IRANI



A Year With Hafiz, Daily Contemplations, by Daniel Ladinsky

(New York: Penguin Books, 2010)

Reviewed by Laurent Weichberger, December 18, 2011

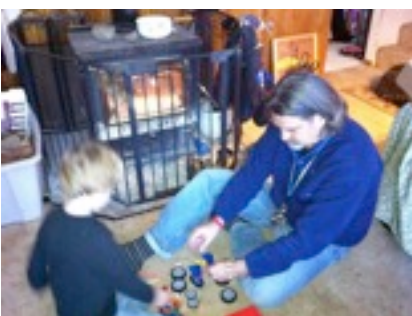
I am sitting at my home in Boulder, Colorado having just spent a week with the Persian spiritual master, and great poet, Hafiz. I had just returned from spending a week with my family in Arizona, and found Hafiz waiting for me upon arrival at my new home in Boulder. The long awaited new book, *A Year With Hafiz, Daily Contemplations*, by Danny Ladinsky is structured as a one poem per day journey, so that you can open it to the day you are living through, or any date that's meaningful (such as a birthday), and revel in the associated wisdom. I decided to read a poem a day for an entire week before writing about this new volume.

Danny has come a long way from that first volume of translations, *The Subject Tonight is Love, Wild and Sweet Poems of Hafiz* back in the early 90s. When that book came out, I knew that Danny's inspired work was to be the flute music, the breath of life, making Hafiz truly accessible for the Western reader. It was a fresh approach, and Danny stood on the shoulders of Barks, and other great adventurers in the epic struggle to translate what even Meher Baba and other great masters said was almost impossible to translate properly from the subtleties of Persian.

I remember reading his next Hafiz book, *I Heard God Laughing*, and I fell into a nap while reading it on a summer afternoon. I dreamed that I was explaining to someone about Hafiz, but I couldn't quite find the words to express his greatness. To fully get my point across I pretended to BE Hafiz, and suddenly I started to become filled with infinite bliss! I woke up with the book on my chest, in a state of bliss. So, Danny has taken on the job of translating bliss into the most unromantic of languages, English, God bless him. Of course we will forgive him for using phrases that Hafiz would never have uttered, like "Love kicks the ass of time and space."

To give you a sample of my week with Hafiz, here is how my days started here:

"There is an invisible sun we long to see. The closer you get to the present, the brighter and more real it will become, even at midnight." Anyone who has played on the floor with a five year old child knows about that sun.

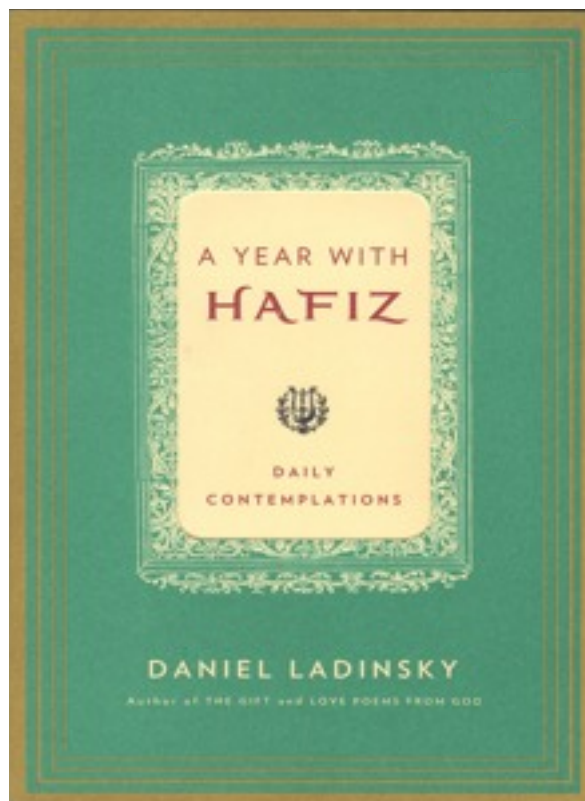


Cyprus and Laurent
at home, Jan. 2012

And this, "Anyone you have made love with, it is because you were really looking for God." Ain't that the truth we don't like to hear, that every romantic affair is nothing but a desperate search for the divine?

Then this, "We circle inside what we love, what we fear, what we hope. The mind is like a falcon ever ready with its sight on its choice prey – beauty. For nothing satisfies like Her taste. A holy infant, taken from God's womb, is each creature." Hafiz sees past the ragged surface of each one of us, like the Arch Mage he really is, to help us realize our own inherent divinity.

I have traveled around the world, and been in many airports and coffee shops, talking to Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Sufis, and Hindus... as well as atheists and agnostics, and all of them seem to be reading Hafiz, and loving it. They are more inspired by Hafiz in English than their own scriptures these days. Would they have been so thrilled with Henry Wilberforce-Clarke's 1891 renditions? Of course not. Chapeau, Danny, your work for Hafiz has arrived in all its glory, and when the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him and his family) said, "God has treasures beneath the Throne, the keys to which are the tongues of poets," I am certain he counted you among them.





"Remembrance" by Elaine 'Najma' Carter

Translation from the Arabic:

"Allah Mudhill, As-Sami, Al-Basir, Al-Hakim."

The Humiliator, The All-Hearing, The All-Seeing, The Wise

Pilgrimage to Mevlana Rumi

by Laurent Weichberger ~ Flagstaff, Arizona
January 2012

Over Thanksgiving 2011, my daughter Aspen and I went to Turkey for a holiday. In the spirit of Meher Baba's Beads on One String (or the honoring of all faith traditions), my goal was to reach Konya, and the tomb (dargah) of Mevlana Rumi, the great Spiritual Master and poet of the 13th century CE. Most in the West know little about his life and work, other than some colloquial translations by Coleman Barks, or Danny Ladinsky. But, as with all great people, and certainly real Spiritual Masters, Rumi's life is rich with stories and relationships.

We left Flagstaff together with the plan to rest overnight in New York, at my family apartment there, before continuing to Istanbul. However, upon arrival I learned that my "uncle" Dieter, who felt he was a Sufi (and a Mennonite), was dying of cancer in Lancaster, PA. So, I left my daughter with my mother Anne, and took a train to Lancaster to see him one last time. Looking back on it, I think Rumi and Baba would have been happy with this. I only spoke to him for about 10 minutes, before he drifted off again. I never saw him again.

Before long we were back at the airport and taking off for Istanbul (Byzantium and Constantinople of old), one of the most ancient cities in the world, dating to about 660 BCE. Our arrival was uneventful, and soon our driver, a nice Turkish lady, deposited us at our hotel in the heart of downtown: The Byzantium Hotel and Suites. It was all lit up with bright pinks

and purples from outdoor lighting. The Turks, like the Indians, love color and food.



We were exhausted, naturally, and so it was rapidly nap time. Upon awakening to the Turkish night, we found a great restaurant with a perfect view of the Sultan Ahmed "Blue" Mosque, which was in the center of downtown, across from the Ayasofya (another church/mosque/museum).

All this was a necessary, but for me a distracting part of the trip. I wanted to go to Konya to see Rumi, but I also wanted to make my daughter happy, and she just asked, "Tomorrow can we see the Ayasofya?" She had been studying that splendid location in high school and was eager to experience it first hand. Of course I said yes.

After dinner we walked the streets of Istanbul, lovely city that it is, with many cobblestone, and worn buildings, and stories from every doorway. The Turkish people were extremely nice, and I noticed at once how clean they keep the city. Almost everyone spoke English. When we were tired enough to sleep we returned to our hotel.

The next morning we made for the Ayasofya. On the way, I had to have Turkish coffee! We found an outdoor restaurant, and we rapidly discovered cats come free with the coffee.



Aspen and I felt at home almost instantly in Istanbul. After sufficient caffeine was coursing through our veins we ventured to absorb the Ayasofya. Let it be noted that this was one of the few spots that Meher Baba made a point of visiting while in Istanbul.[1]

Aspen was well pleased! The museum was a mosque, and before that a church, but the secular government of

Ataturk made sure there would be no fighting over it as a museum.



Inside there are two levels to explore, filled with architecture, art, and much spirit. We took a lot of photos, and pointed a lot, and absorbed quite the atmosphere which was a profound mixture of Christian, Muslim and other types of worship over the years since it was first constructed in 360 CE.[2] Of the many marvels, some the most inspired are the mosaics. The ceilings are domed masterpieces of architecture, now containing Christian and Muslim art.

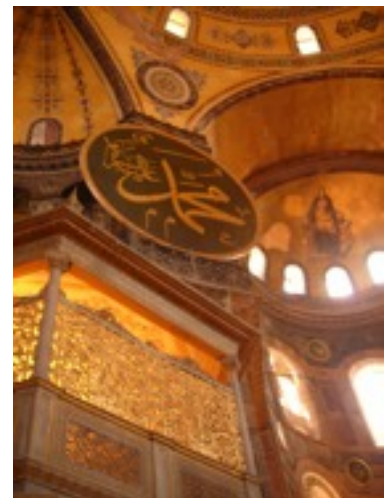


After the Ayasofya experience we went to a special dinner to meet the Meher Baba group of Turkey. It was a splendid love-fest at the restaurant of one of the premier universities of Istanbul. We felt welcomed, even adopted by our Turkish Baba-loving sisters and brothers. Jai Baba!

Now that Aspen was happy, I started to think about how to get to Konya. I didn't even know where it was in relation to Istanbul, except that it was somewhere South. After visiting different travel offices, and comparing prices and options (bus vs. plane, etc.) we were off on a short flight to Konya. I knew no one there, and decided on a small hotel nearest to the tomb of Rumi. We arrived at night, and struggled to find a restaurant still open. We did find one, and the most intriguing item on the menu was "containing cheese bread." I ordered that!

It was like a cross between garlic bread and grilled cheese, and boy was it yummy at almost midnight! We went back to the hotel, Aspen went to bed, and I went to find an "international phone card" to speak with Lilly and Cyprus in America. I asked at the front desk, and they gestured to where the phone card could be purchased, roughly "across the street." I looked here and there, and there were two open shops. One sent me the other, and the other sent me down an alley. I ventured down the dark alley, and sure enough there was a tiny shop, with a sign hanging that said, "phone cards." The shop keeper welcomed me, and started to find a phone card for me, and then asked why I was in Konya. I explained I came on pilgrimage to Rumi.

I asked where the dargah is located, and he gestured, saying it was extremely close. Then he explained that he is a Sufi, and a taxi driver, and that he is only watching the shop... he asked if I was interested to meet Rumi's 22nd



generation grand-daughter? Of course I said yes. He further explained that she runs the Konya Sufi group, and we can arrange for a meeting. He said she just arrived in Konya, and was staying nearby. I remember I asked him about the "whirling dervishes" that dance in Istanbul for the public, and whether they are genuine. His answer surprised me, saying, "How can we know what is in their hearts?"

We made a date to meet the next morning, and he offered to show me around Konya, visiting the Sufi places, starting with the dargah of Mevlana (Our Master) Rumi. I felt Baba had arranged this whole adventure at this point. It is important to note that Baba confirmed Rumi's status as a Perfect Master (Qutub) of his time, as well as that of Rumi's Masters Shams of Tabriz.

I went back to the room and slept soundly.



Laurent at the Dargah of Hazrat Mevlana Jelalludin Rumi
Konya, Turkey, November 2011

So, the next morning, after the hotel-free-breakfast, we found Abdullah, our new Sufi-taxi-driver, and off we went on our adventure. Wow, what a day... Here is what we saw:

1. As with the Ayasofya, Rumi's dargah has been turned into a museum, literally. We had to purchase tickets, and go through a turnstile to enter the walled compound. The building enclosing the dargah is enormous, and encapsulates the tombs of his family and followers as well (not all the disciples, as I will explain). The dargah was busy, and (unfortunately) the guy standing next to me answered his mobile phone when it rang

and started talking. I heard someone's cell phone ring at Meher Baba's Tomb at Meherabad, but they just let it ring. This fellow actually answered (while I was praying in the dargah). Otherwise, I felt that while it was nicely preserved, it had more of a museum vibration than a sacred vibe. While I was saddened by this, it made me appreciate all the more Meher Baba's atmosphere of love at His Samadhi (Tomb), as well as the intimacy we still have at Meherabad. Let's do what we can to sustain this sense of Oneness, and kindness, with each other.

Right after visiting the dargah, we went across the alley to a felt-maker, named Jelaluddin, whose shop was love-filled, and we bought handmade felt gifts and shared in a sacred atmosphere with him!

2. Our next stop was to visit the dargah of Shams. Interestingly, Abdullah, explained that since Shams disappeared (long story), his body is not there at the dargah... However, it is next to a well, where Shams liked to "hang out." So, we said yes, we want to go. Amazingly, to both Aspen and me, Sham's dargah was totally humming with "barakah," even though he was "absent." Ha![3]

3. After Rumi and Shams, we went to the dargah's of Rumi's disciples. The list is long...

a. Rumi's doctor was the first of the disciples we found. This is the point (on pilgrimage) when you realize that the disciples of such a great Master have their own followings. The doctor's tomb had an adjoining mosque and quibla (the nook which faces Mecca). I asked Abdullah to lead us in a Muslim prayer, which he did out loud but softly. Aspen and I prayed by his side.

b. Nearby was Rumi's gardener. He wanted to be buried outside, with the sky above, and surrounded by nature. Lovely place.



c. Further away was Rumi's cook. The story we were told by Abdullah is that while cooking for the Master, and the other disciples, he ran out of wood for the fire. So instead, he placed his feet in the fire, to serve as fuel. He was able to finish cooking the food. There are other miracle stories associated with the cook, but it is too much for this little article. His dargah was charged, and the dargah keeper gave us "salt" from him, for our cooking. Aspen took the salt.



d. Then we found Rumi's caretaker, a male-nanny, who helped raise young Jelaluddin when the family of Bahauddin moved from Afghanistan to Turkey, fleeing the Mogul invasion(s)... Rumi called him "Camel" since he used to give Jelaluddin rides on his back, and pretend he was a camel, making camel sounds to amuse the child. Rumi loved him dearly.



Abdullah also took us to an overlook, and the tomb of a local saint, and he explained that Rumi would come to these places with his disciples to get away for a break. After that, took a lunch break, and had more containing cheese bread, this time including lamb, and beef. While I normally avoid red-meat, this time I indulged and wow – was it good. From lunch we went to a small museum that contained clippings from the beard of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him and his family).

From there we visited the dargah of Hazrat Fahrunnisa, the only female Murshida (spiritual guide) appointed directly by Rumi during his lifetime.[4] She was now in the backyard of someone's home. We got the feeling that at the time of Rumi the town of Konya was much smaller, and these dargahs would have been in the countryside, not in backyards!



We were exhausted. Ironically, the only dargah my daughter did not visit was that of Murshida Fahrunnisa. It was after this that we went to see Esin Celebi Bayru, the 22nd generation granddaughter of Mevlana Rumi, through his oldest son, Sultan Walad (Veled). When we arrived at her office, which serves also as the headquarters for her "International Mevlana Foundation," there were already visitors. In fact, I couldn't immediately tell which woman she was, as there was one woman wearing a turban, and I thought maybe that was her. But no, the woman seated behind a wooden office desk, middle aged, and with the stature of a Germanic woman, with light brown hair, and smiling eyes, bade us sit and kindly bade farewell to the previous guests.

What does one say to the great-great-great-great (+18 more greats) granddaughter of Rumi? I just said, something like – we are so happy to be here. She explained her foundation work, which boiled down to trying to serve humanity, and expressed her happiness at seeing Aspen and I (me not I, I believe). I said we came from Meher Baba. She didn't seem to know about Baba, but said something like – “we are not different.”

At that point, I gestured to my daughter and said, “She is only 16, would you please bless her?” At which she got up from her chair behind the table, and came around to where Aspen and I sat, and replied, gesturing to a painting of Rumi on the wall, “Not I should bless, but Mevlana, and she found a brand new cardboard box, containing freshly printed glossy cards. Each card had a quote from Rumi, and she asked Aspen to pick a card from the box, and then I was also asked to pick one. I don't remember what Aspen's card said, but I have mine, it is on my refrigerator (like a good American), and reads:

Learn from thy Father; for in
(the hour of) sin Adam came
down willingly to the vestibule.*
When he beheld that Knower of
secrets, he stood up on his feet
to ask forgiveness.

~ Mawlana Jalaaluddin Rumi
Mathnawi 4/0324-5

(*“A passage, hall, or room between the outer door and the interior of a building” ~ Merriam-Webster)

I was surprised to read this, as my trip to Turkey, and my pilgrimage to Rumi was right in the middle of the deepest forgiveness work of my life, related to the most painful betrayal I have ever experienced. It seemed as if the word forgiveness alone was a confirmation from Rumi that I am on the right path.

After she embraced us, I asked her who in America is a representative of Sufism that she trusts. She immediately gave me three names: Kabir Helminsky (with whose work I was already familiar), Ibrahim Gamard, and Gustavo Martinez. She wrote their names down for me, and gave me her business card.

Before long, it was apparent that it was time for our visit to end. I offered my support of her foundation work, and we departed for dinner in Konya, and sleep. The next morning, Abdullah came before dawn to take us to the airport and we were suddenly back in Istanbul.

That day we visited the Topkapı Palace, which was the home of the Ottoman Sultans for about four hundred years. We had heard that it contained, among other things, the personal belongings of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), and I had to experience that. Little did I know, after seeing thrones studded with gems and covered in gold and silver, and magnificent jewelry, we would find the real treasure room...

The first hint came when we saw a sword, with a card next to it, “David's Sword.” It was the sword of King David the second Jewish King. Amazing. Then was the “Rod of Moses.” It looked like a very red and worn piece of ancient bamboo. It was not a staff, but a rod. Then it got even more intense as we saw, literally, the right forearm of the Spiritual Master, John the Baptist. The arm was completely encased in gold, like a gold mannequin arm, with a little hinged-hatch over the top of the hand, by the wrist (open), showing the bones and mummified flesh inside. Also present were clippings from the beard of Prophet Mohammed, one of his teeth, his cloak, and other of his personal affects (including swords). Lastly, I saw a turban allegedly belonging to Joseph, the son of Jacob.[5]

At that point, I moved out of the viewing area, to the side and started to pray. Later, Aspen said the guard asked her, “Is your father a Muslim?” To which she replied, “Yeah, kind of.” Naturally no photos are allowed in that divine room, and the lights were dimmed. Talk about Barakah, holy Moses! Who knew all these spiritual treasures were kept in Istanbul?



We spent the rest of our days in Istanbul exploring the city, walking everywhere (especially around the old city wall), having tea whenever we wanted – generally just being on vacation. After Konya and all the holy relics, I was pilgrimaged-out, and just content to spend time with my lovely daughter. We went to

a performance of the "whirling dervishes" and enjoyed it thoroughly.

I had one last dinner with Hasan and Fulya and their beautiful family, who leads the Meher Baba group in Turkey. I found Aspen back at the hotel and we slept like dead-rocks. Then first thing in the morning, before we knew it, we were taking off from Istanbul for New York City. I wholeheartedly recommend Turkey to anyone wishing for an Eastern adventure, as the people were super warm-hearted, intelligent, and made tremendous efforts to keep their country clean and welcoming. Oh, and the food was great too. Thank you Baba for a wondrous Sufi adventure.

Notes:

1. See Lord Meher, p. 1455: <http://www.lordmeher.org/index.jsp?pageBase=page.jsp&nextPage=1455>
2. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hagia_Sophia
3. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barakah>
4. If there are other Murshidas, I don't know who they are.
5. See en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Topkapı_Palace.





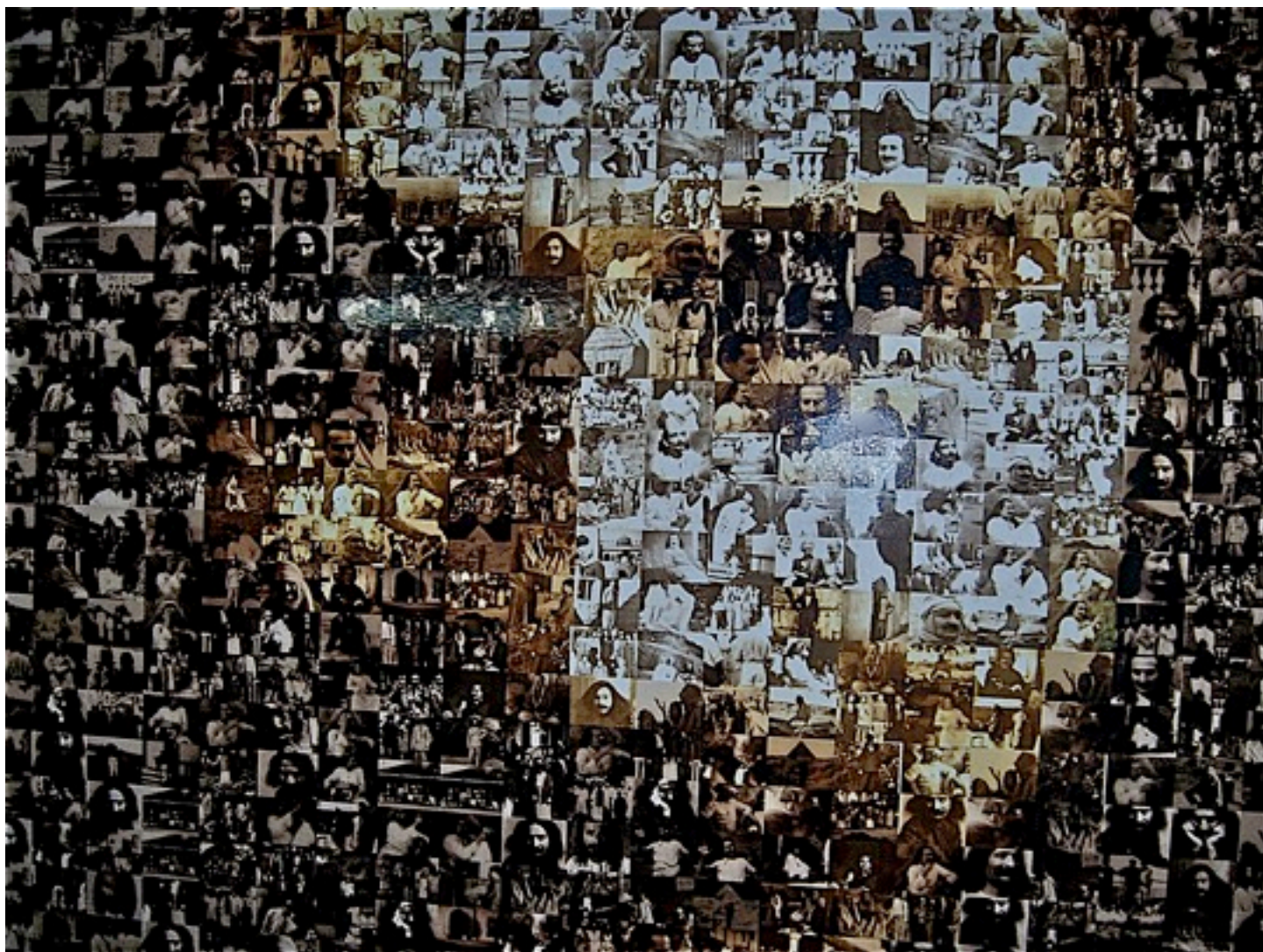
Meher Baba to Jean Adriel:

“IT IS ALL A BUBBLE. SO EASY TO PRICK!”

(As he drove with Jane Adriel through Wall Street,
New York - November 1931)

Published in Avatar by J. Adriel, p.23.





As found on Facebook in Meher Baba in Motion group, Baba in the dining hall at Hostel D (Meherabad, India).

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