

THE NARRATION OF
KRISHNA SUCKING HIS TOE,
LYING ON A BANYAN LEAF
AS RECOUNTED IN THE MARKANDEYA PURANA



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'Before the beginning, there was an end:
the end of the old era. . .

Black clouds obstructed the sun
and hurled lightning in every direction.

Unrelenting rains lashed the ground.

The seven rivers began to swell
and the four oceans started to overflow.

Waves as high as mountains drowned the earth.

This was PRALAYA, THE FINAL DISSOLUTION OF THE WORLD,
BEFORE ITS REGENERATION.

The sole witness to this cosmic deluge was
Markandeya Rishi, a great saint.

One evening, Markandeyaji
sat on the bank of the river Subhadraa,
to do the evening Sandhya Vandan worship.

It seemed to him that the sea was rising on all sides,
coming towards him, flooding everything in its path.

The water reached him and swept him away,
but he did not die.

HE SAW THE WHOLE WORLD SUBMERGED IN WATER.

Sometimes, some creatures of the sea would swallow him
and sometimes some other creatures would swallow him,
but they would throw him out again.

He wandered thus for several millions of year.

Ultimately, he saw a tiny baby sleeping
on a cupped leaf of a banyan (peepal) tree.

IT IS STATED BY THE LORD IN THE VEDAS:

“OH, HUMAN!

THIS VILLAGE OF YOURS IS BALANCED ON THE BANYAN
LEAF AND YOUR LIFESPAN IS JUST ALIKE
A DROP OF WATER RUNNING DOWN THAT LEAF,
WHICH MAY FALL ANY MINUTE.”



Suddenly, amongst all the confusion, Markandeya noticed
a banyan leaf
floating on the ocean, tossed by the waves.

On this unlikely raft lay a beautiful and adorable child,
suckling his right toe,
unperturbed by the calamity that had befallen the world.

It was KRISHNA AS BALAJI,
THE NEWBORN COSMIC CHILD.

The infant's heavenly smile
negated the brutality of the pralaya
(cosmic deluge).

His compassionate glance reassured Markandeya that
life would go on,
convincing him that the world never ends,
but only changes.

Now, Markandeya saw that
THE BABY WAS SUCKING HIS OWN BIG TOE.

The Mahatmas have said, about this,
that the baby was the Lord Bala-gopal himself.

He was sucking his big toe, to check what sweetness it has,
which makes people drink the water touched by it.

When Markandeyaji went close to this baby,
HE WAS SUCKED IN WITH THE AIR,
WHEN THE BABY TOOK A BREATH.

Inside, he saw hundreds of thousand of universes
and all that had been consumed by the deluge
– the skies, the seas, the earth,
gods, demons, humans, animals and plants.

So much so, that he even had a glimpse of his own Ashram
on the banks of the Subhadra River.

He saw himself sitting in meditation.
Markandeya thus realized that the child was none other than
the cosmic god (Narayana) who had withdrawn the world into himself.

Since Saint Markandeya, the son of Mrikand Rishi,
was worshipping the Lord, the Lord was pleased with him,
ready to give any boons Markandeya would wish for.

Markandeyaji had no material desire whatsoever,
but when the Lord Narayana appeared before him
and told him to ask for a boon since
He was pleased with Markandeyaji's stuti.

Markandeyaji prayed, "Sir, I have obtained your vision,
and desire nothing else.
However, I want to see what your Maya is.
Please grace me with a glimpse of your Maya."

The Lord was quite surprised to hear Markandeyaji's request.
However, he said, "All right, you will have a glimpse."

THEN MARKANDEYA EMERGED AGAIN,
WHEN THE BABY EXHALED.

When he went to bow down to the baby,
he realized that there was no baby, and no other scene.
He was back at the same spot, on the same day, at the same time,
as when he started his Sandhya Vandan, his worship of the Lord.

Markandeyaji thought, "Oh, what was all that which I saw?"

Then he understood that it was THE PLAY OF MAYA, which he had seen.

Maya hid the Paramatma, hid the truth, and showed

– like a magic show - that, which did not exist.

Markandeyaji was wonderstruck.

He realized that one can never understand God,

but only sing His glories.

– He thus became engrossed in the prayers
and meditation of the Lord again.

The sage Markandeya was the one who witnessed Lord Krishna as
a TOE-SUCKING INFANT LYING ON A BANYAN LEAF,
floating in the vastness of the primordial cosmic ocean.

When the perplexed sage asked the god
to explain the secret behind his apparition,
the lord replied as follows:

"I am the Primal Cosmic Man, Narayana
I am the Lord of Waters."

Thus this image of the playful infant Krishna
is in reality a manifestation of the cosmic form of Vishnu,
and corresponds to the epithet often used
for Shiva 'sadyojata,' or the new born.

This cosmic Vishnu is different from his awesome
universal manifestation envisaged in the Bhagvad Gita
known as the [VISHVARUPA](#)

THIS ARTWORK WAS CREATED IN THE SMALL TOWN OF KISHANGARH,
twenty-five kilometres from Jaipur, the capital city of Rajasthan.

The sun-like baby Krishna is lying on
a huge green banyan leaf floating on water,
he looks at the ignorant world with seeming by innocent eyes.

A smile, displaying a couple of baby teeth, plays on his lips.

Enormous details, though as much realistic,
tend to depict him as a tender, lovable, most extraordinary child,
with beautiful face
-- a face that holds the most impish smile,
naughty eyes that contain a glint within.

Dense, curly locks encompass his adorable and beautiful face.

His mother Yashoda has tried to curtail his unruly hair
in strings of pearls and pieces of jewellery.

The body of baby Krishna is adorned lovingly
with jewellery and majestic ornaments.

T(tilaka) A yellow divine halo can be seen around his face.

Krishna's s bodily gestures are like any child of his age.
With one hand occupied with the flute,
that has been associated in all of his lilas,
he uses the other hand to direct his toe to his mouth
which parts mischievously.

He must have been initially wrapped in a yellow-orange cloth,
which he might have also kicked away.

In the background, towards the left stands an aged,
gentle rishi Markandeya with flowing beard and hair;
tulsi beads form his necklace, bracelets and armlets.

He stands with folded hands paying salutations to Krishna.
He recognizes the divine lord even in his form as baby Krishna Bala-Gopal.

In his expression he has genteel and wisdom
that arises out of dedication and devotion to God.

He stands against a backdrop of the ocean.

Suta Gosvami said:

The Supreme Lord Narayana, the friend of,
was satisfied by the proper glorification
offered by the intelligent sage Markandeya.

Thus the Lord addressed that excellent descendant of Bhrigu.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said:

My dear Markandeya, you are indeed the best of all learned brahmanas.

You have perfected your life by practicing fixed meditation
upon the Supreme Soul, as well as by focusing upon Me
your undeviating devotional service, your austerities,
your study of the Vedas and your strict adherence to regulative principles.

We are perfectly satisfied with your practice of lifelong celibacy.

Please choose whatever benediction you desire,
since I can grant your wish.

May you enjoy all good fortune.

The sage said:

O Lord of lords, all glories to You! O Lord Acyuta,
You remove all distress for the devotees who surrender unto You.
That you have allowed me to see You is all the benediction I want.

Such demigods as Lord Brahma achieved their exalted positions
simply by seeing Your beautiful lotus feet
after their minds had become mature in yoga practice.

And now, my Lord, You have personally appeared before me.

O lotus-eyed Lord, O crest jewel of renowned personalities, although I am
satisfied simply by seeing You, I do wish to see Your illusory potency,
by whose influence the entire world, together with its ruling demigods,
considers reality to be materially variegated.

Suta Gosvami said:

O wise Saunaka, thus satisfied by Markandeya's praise and worship,
the Supreme Personality of Godhead, smiling, replied,
"So be it," and then departed for His hermitage at Badarikasrama.

Thinking always of his desire to see the Lord's illusory energy,
the sage remained in his asrama,
meditating constantly upon the Lord within fire, the sun, the moon,
water, the earth, air, lightning and his own heart
and worshiping Him with paraphernalia conceived in his mind.
But sometimes, overwhelmed by waves of love for the Lord,
Markandeya would forget to perform his regular worship.

O brahmana Saunaka, best of the Bhrigus,
one day while Markandeya was performing his evening worship
on the bank of the Pushpabhadra,
a great wind suddenly arose.

That wind created a terrible sound
and brought in its wake fearsome clouds
that were accompanied by lightning and roaring thunder
and that poured down on all sides torrents of rain
as heavy as wagon wheels.

Then the four great oceans appeared on all sides,
swallowing up the surface of the earth with their wind-tossed waves.
In these oceans were terrible sea monsters,
fearful whirlpools and ominous rumblings.

The sage saw all the inhabitants of the universe,
including himself, tormented within and without by the harsh winds,
the bolts of lightning, and the great waves rising beyond the sky.

As the whole earth flooded, he grew perplexed and fearful.

Even as Markandeya looked on, the rain pouring down
from the clouds filled the ocean more and more until that great sea,
its waters violently whipped into terrifying waves by hurricanes,
covered up all the earth's islands, mountains and continents.

The water inundated the earth, outer space,
heaven and the celestial region.

Indeed, the entire expanse of the universe was flooded in all directions,
and out of all its inhabitants only Markandeya remained.

His matted hair scattered, the great sage wandered about
alone in the water as if dumb and blind.

Tormented by hunger and thirst,
attacked by monstrous makaras and timingila fish
and battered by the wind and waves, he moved aimlessly
through the infinite darkness into which he had fallen.

As he grew increasingly exhausted,
he lost all sense of direction and could not tell the sky from the earth.

At times he was engulfed by the great whirlpools,
sometimes he was beaten by the mighty waves,
and at other times the aquatic monsters threatened to devour him
as they attacked one another.

Sometimes he felt lamentation, bewilderment, misery,
happiness or fear, and at other times he experienced
such terrible illness and pain that he felt himself dying.

Countless millions of years passed as Markandeya wandered about
in that deluge, his mind bewildered by the illusory energy
of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Once, while wandering in the water, the brahmana Markandeya
discovered a small island, upon which stood a young banyan tree
bearing blossoms and fruits.

Upon a branch of the northeast portion of that tree
he saw an infant boy lying within a leaf.

The child's effulgence was swallowing up the darkness.

The infant's dark-blue complexion was the color of a flawless emerald,
His lotus face shone with a wealth of beauty,
and His throat bore marks like the lines on a conchshell.

He had a broad chest, a finely shaped nose, beautiful eyebrows,
and lovely ears that resembled pomegranate flowers
and that had inner folds like a conchshell's spirals.

The corners of His eyes were reddish like the whorl of a lotus,
and the effulgence of His coral-like lips
slightly reddened the nectarean, enchanting smile on His face.

As He breathed, His splendid hair trembled
and His deep navel became distorted by the moving folds of skin
on His abdomen, which resembled a banyan leaf.

The exalted brahmana watched with amazement
as the infant took hold of one of His lotus feet
with His graceful fingers,
placed a toe within His mouth and began to suck.

As Markandeya beheld the child, all his weariness vanished.
Indeed, so great was his pleasure that the lotus of his heart,
along with his lotus eyes, fully blossomed
and the hairs on his body stood on end.

Confused as to the identity of the wonderful infant,
the sage approached Him.

Just then the child inhaled, drawing Markandeya
within His body like a mosquito.

There the sage found the entire universe arrayed
as it had been before its dissolution.

Seeing this, Markandeya was most astonished and perplexed.

The sage saw the entire universe:
the sky, heavens and earth, the stars, mountains, oceans,
great islands and continents, the expanses in every direction,
the saintly and demoniac living beings, the forests, countries,
rivers, cities and mines, the agricultural villages and cow pastures,
and the occupational and spiritual activities of the various social divisions.

He also saw the basic elements of creation along with all their by-products,
as well as time itself, which regulates the progression
of countless ages within the days of Brahma.

In addition, he saw everything else created for use in material life.

All this he saw manifested before him AS IF IT WERE REAL.

He saw before him, the Pushpabhadra River, and his own hermitage,
where he had had the audience of the sages Nara-Narayana.

Then, as Markandeya beheld the entire universe,
the infant exhaled, expelling the sage from His body
and casting him back into the ocean of dissolution.

In that vast sea he again saw the banyan tree
growing on the tiny island
and the infant boy lying within the leaf.

The child glanced at him from the corner of His eyes
with a smile imbued with the nectar of love,
and Markandeya took Him into his heart through his eyes.

Greatly agitated, the sage ran to embrace
the transcendental Personality of Godhead.

At that moment the Supreme Personality of Godhead,
who is the original master of all mysticism and who is hidden
within everyone's heart, became invisible to the sage, just as the
achievements of an incompetent person can suddenly vanish.

After the Lord disappeared, O brahmana, the banyan tree,
the great water and the dissolution of the universe
all vanished as well, and in an instant Markandeya
found himself back in his own hermitage, just as before.

SHOWING COSMIC VISION TO YASODA

ONE DAY YASODA TOOK HER CHILD ON HER LAP AND SUCKLED HIM.

SHE KISSED HER SON AGAIN AND AGAIN.

JUST AT THAT TIME THE CHILD YAWNED.

WHEN HE OPENED HIS MOUTH,

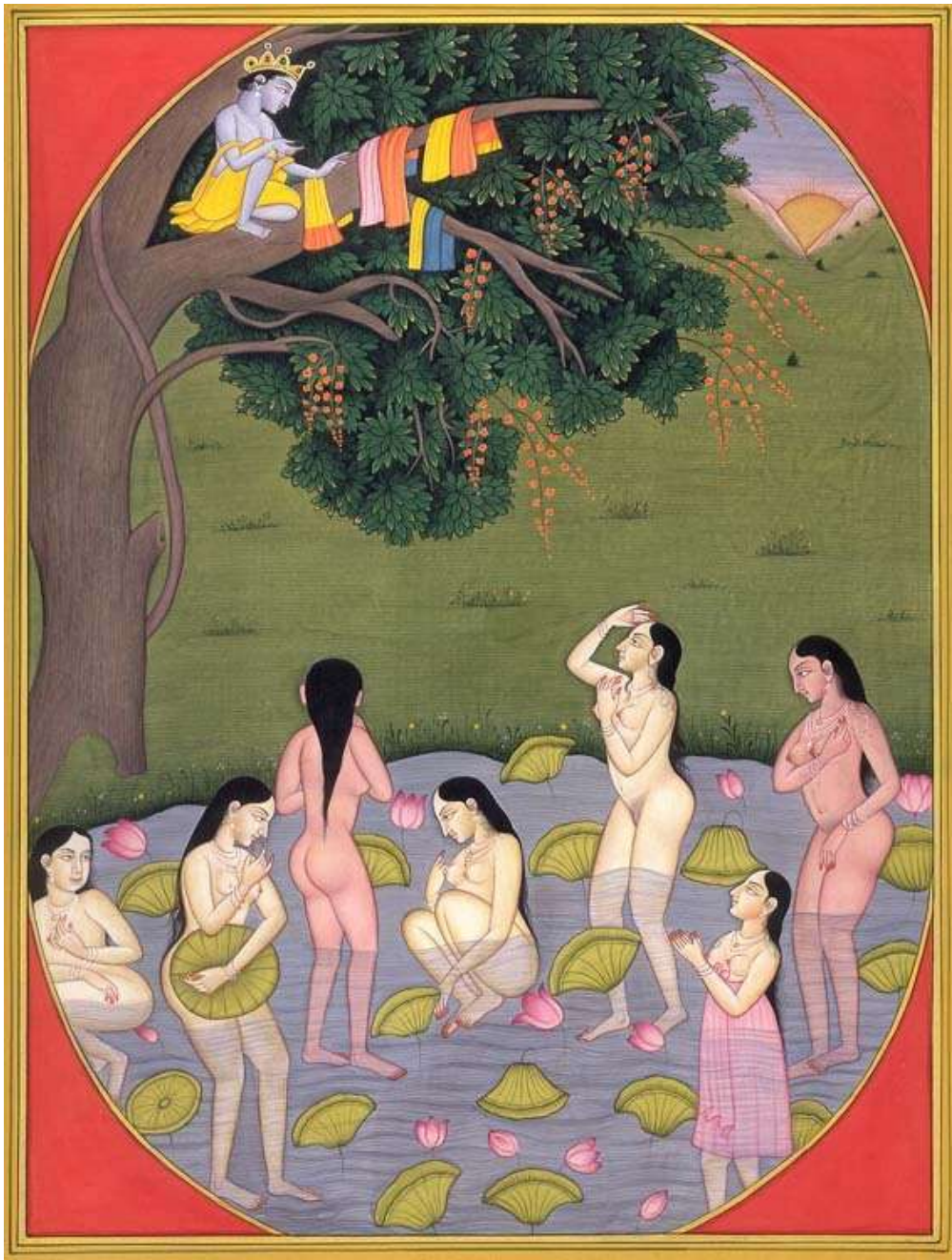
THE MOTHER SAW THE WHOLE UNIVERSE WITHIN IT.

SHE SAW THE SKY, THE SPACE BETWEEN THE EARTH AND THE SKY,
THE SUN, THE MOON, THE STARS, THE FOUR QUARTERS,
FIRE, AIR, OCEANS, CONTINENTS, MOUNTAINS, RIVERS,
FORESTS, ISLANDS, AND ALL THINGS IN THE UNIVERSE,
ANIMATE AND INANIMATE.

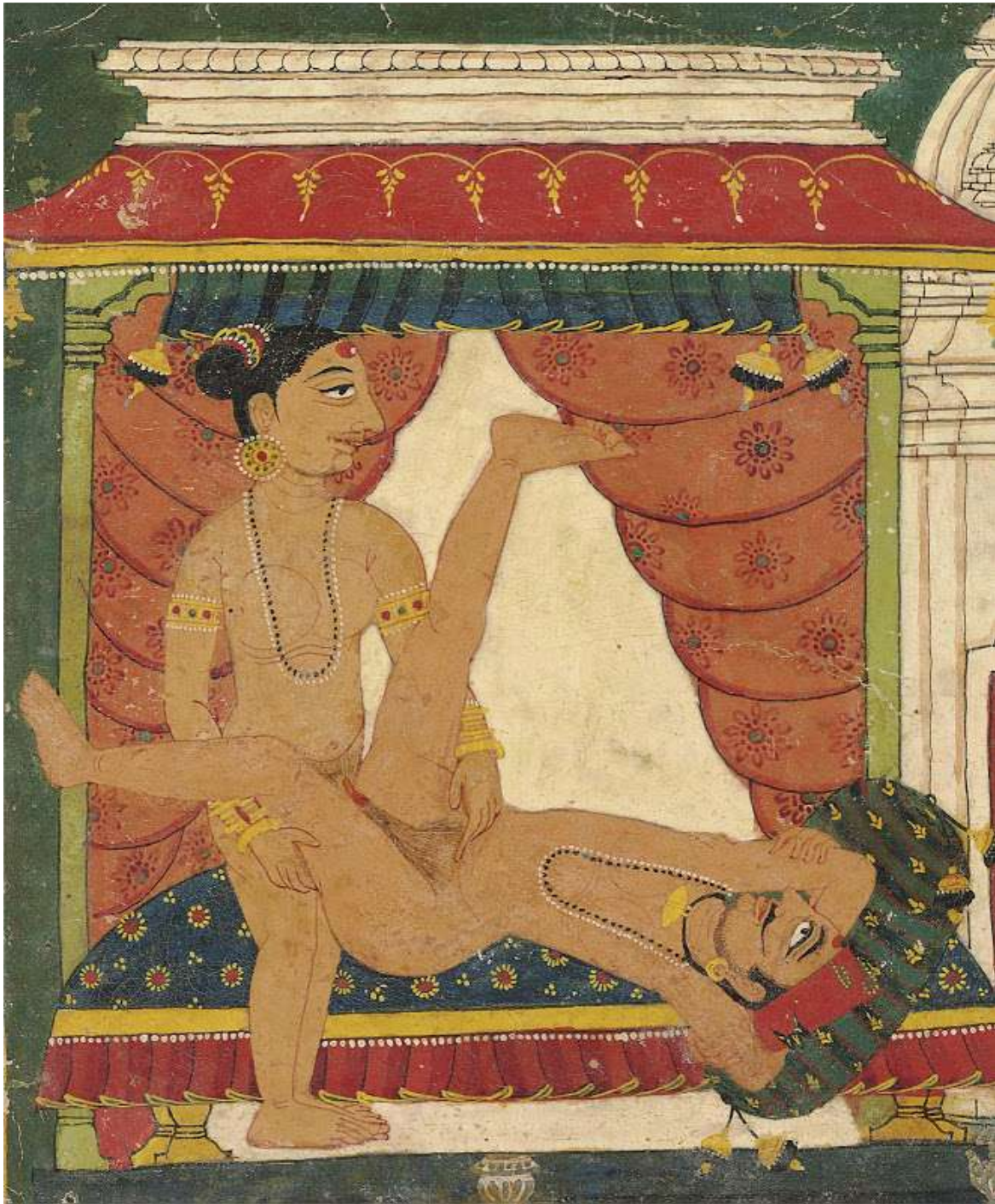
YASODA WHO SAW THE WHOLE UNIVERSE
WITHIN THE MOUTH OF HER OWN SON,
SHUDDERED AND CLOSED HER EYES
IMMEDIATELY IN GREAT FEAR.
SHE WAS STRUCK WITH WONDER.







Krishna stealing the Gopis clothing.
"EYE AM"



[A Man Laying on a Divan with a Lady Standing and Holding Him in a Lovemaking Embrace - Miniature Painting, North India, Probably Basholi, Early 18th Century](http://www.oldindianarts.in/2016/07/a-man-laying-on-divan-with-lady.html)

<http://www.oldindianarts.in/2016/07/a-man-laying-on-divan-with-lady.html>

<http://gaatha.com/history-miniature-paintings/>



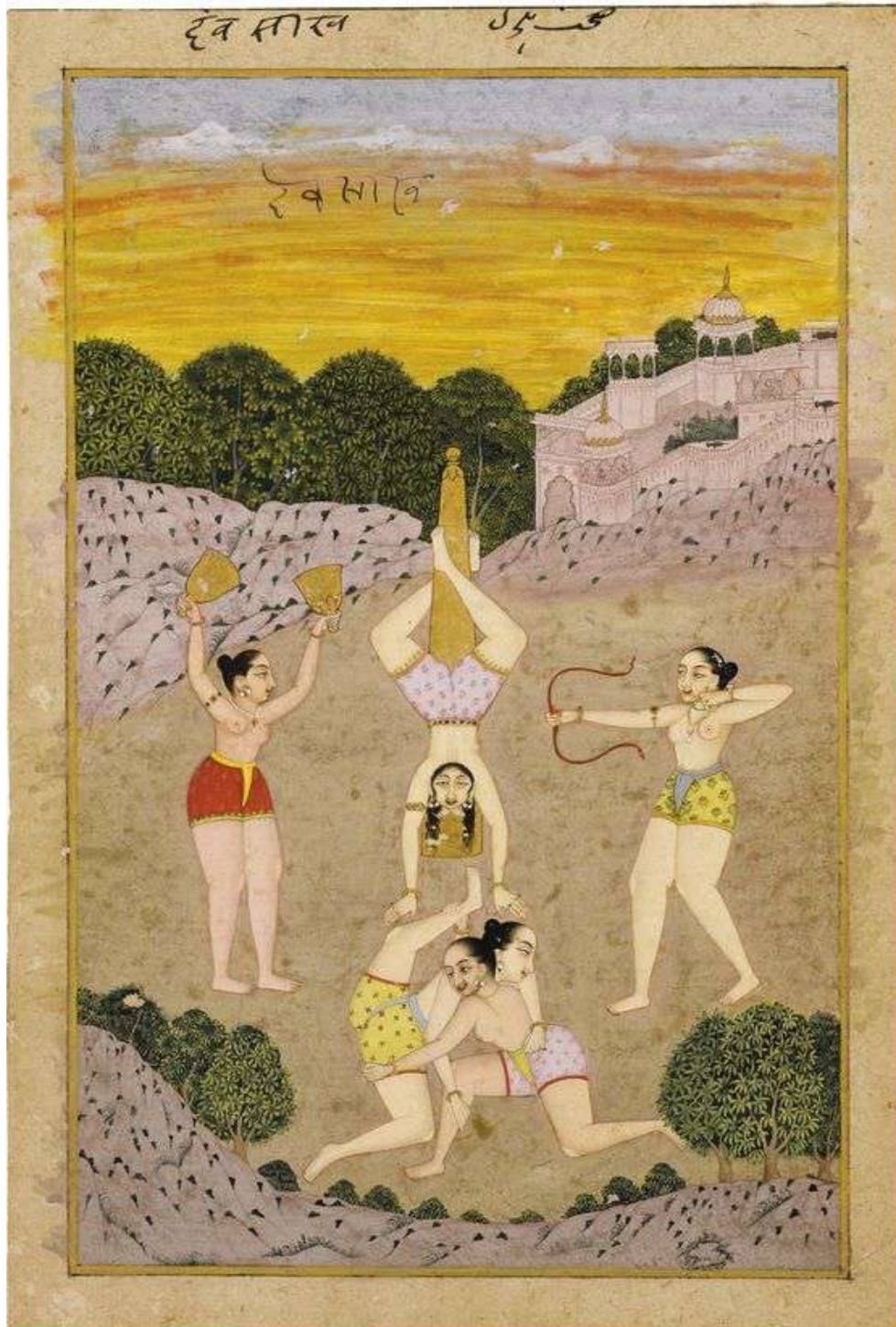


<http://www.oldindianarts.in/2016/07/lovers-engaged-in-lovemaking-on-bed.html>



\\An Ascetic with his Lover on a bed Engaged in Lovemaking
- Rajput Miniature Painting, Mewar, Udaipur, circa 1740-50.

For more high resoluton #Indian #arts please visit <http://oldindianarts.in>

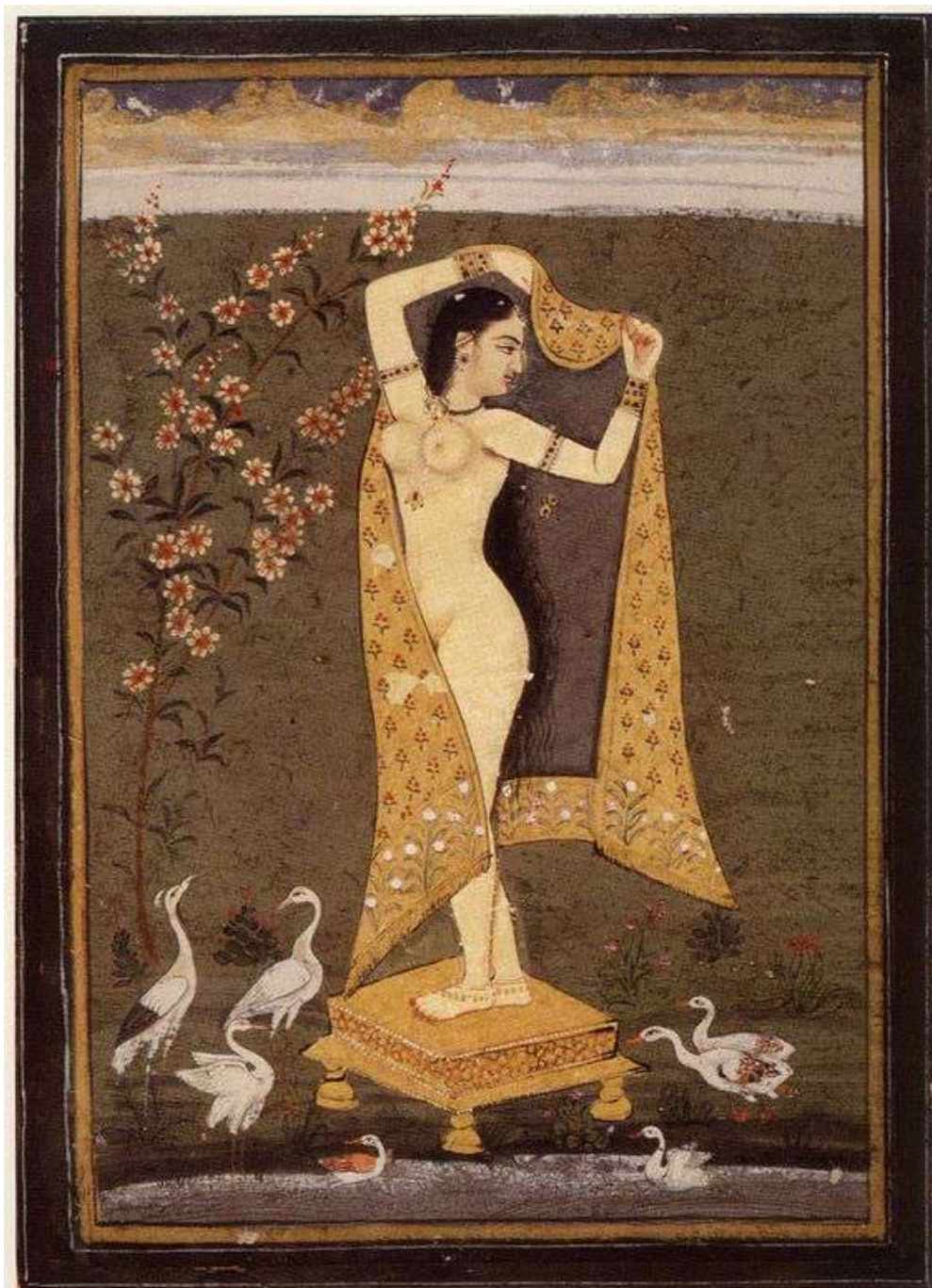


Miniature indienne : Desakhya Ragini, Inde, Rajasthan, XVIIIème siècle
DESAKHYA RAGINI: ACROBATS WITHIN A LANDSCAPE, INDIA, RAJASTHAN, 18TH CENTURY

gouache et or sur page d'album, représentant quatre femmes acrobates pratiquant des exercices liés à l'art de la guerre, un palais se dégageant à l'arrière-plan ; petits éclats à la peinture

23 x 15,5 cm ; 9 by 6 in

<http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2013/regards-sur-orient-orientalistes-islamique-pf1319/lot.115.html>



R9 A lady by a pool with geese
Deogarh (Thikana of Mewar), 1750-75

Lalla Ded. (Lalleshwari) (1320-1392)
was a mystic of the Kashmiri Shaivite sect.
She wrote many devotional and mystic poems,
expressing her longing for the Divine.
She remains an important cultural icon in Kashmir.

To learn the scriptures is easy,
to live them, hard.

The search for the Real
is no simple matter.

Deep in my looking,
the last words vanished.

Joyous and silent,
the waking that met me there.

Lalla Ded

Biography of Lalla Ded

Lalla was a great saint and mystic
from the Kashmir province of India.

She lived in the 14th Century,
which was a period of great religious upheaval and change.

Her home province of Kashmir had
a tradition of fusing religious traditions.

For example although Buddhism has almost disappeared
it was still a significant influence on the different Hindu traditions.

In the fourteenth century the people of Kashmir
came under the influence of Islam.

However the Islam which was brought by mystics such as Bulbul Shah
was heavily influenced by Mahayana Buddhism and Upanishadic philosophy.

Thus the people of Kashmir were sympathetic
to the branch of mystic Islam that Lalla embodied.

Lalla was married at an early age
but was badly treated by her mother in law.

However despite her bad treatment and lack of food
she acted with forbearance and equanimity.

However this cruel upbringing encouraged
her to enter the life of a renunciant
and she found a guru called Sidh Srikanth.

"knowledge is acquired, wisdom is uncovered.

The things that you truly know,
not facts or statistics or even things
that can be expressed through language,
are already in you waiting to be uncovered by your attention.

Spiritual experience is the process of recognizing this innate wisdom.

Compassion comes when we recognize that
others have this wisdom and can access it if they wish.

Sitting and reflecting often requires a certain humility and calmness.

When we stand back and give ourselves
some respect and some space,
wisdom emerges.

It comes in the quiet periods
after thoughts begin to fade away..."

Gawa Chötso

"O conhecimento é adquirido, a sabedoria é encoberta .

As coisas que realmente conhecemos ,
não os factos ou estatísticas,
ou mesmo coisas que podem ser expressas através da linguagem,
já estão em nós aguardando para serem descobertas pela nossa atenção.

A experiência espiritual é
o processo de reconhecimento da sabedoria inata.

A compaixão vem quando reconhecemos que
os outros têm essa sabedoria
e podem acessá-la se desejarem.

Sentar e refletir
muitas vezes requerem uma certa humildade e calma.

Quando nos resguardamos e nos damos
algum respeito e algum espaço,
a sabedoria surge nos períodos de silêncio
após os pensamentos começarem a desaparecer ... "

Gawa Chötso

VAIROCANA

was the main Tibetan translator
and transmitter of the original Dzogchen Atiyoga teachings.

He wrote a text of secret instructions
that he conveyed to his student Nubs Sangye Yeshe.

Chris Wilkinson translated this text fully
and is highly recommended for all to purchase:

Vairocana wrote:

"This is how:

To begin with, sentient beings have failed
in their understanding of their perfectly pure nature, so they suffer."

"Regarding the settling of our minds in their natural state,
there is nothing that is in our view,
so there is nothing that we must think of as our meditation.

We settle ourselves down without thinking of anything at all.

The Tantra itself states:

"Things to think about
Are not to be thought of.

Do not think about not thinking, either.
Not thinking about things is the equanimity of *THUSNESS*."

"This is how we eradicate the disease of searching for something.
We do this with an attitude that there is nothing about
any deed for us to take on or reject, so we let it go,
and we abide in dhyāna meditation itself.

This way, no matter what we do,
we do not move away from our inspiration.

When we have completed this we are just like the Buddha.

The Tantra itself states:

Through brilliantly abiding in dhyāna meditation,
We are the same as the Buddha."

"There really are no Dharma practices
that are separate from this most excellent dhyāna meditation,
or that depart from its objectives.

It suffices to say or exclaim:

"Dhyāna, Dhyāna" to become a Buddha."

Here, we abide in the magnificent direct perception
of our inner self-awareness (rigpa).

We do not follow the thoughts and practices
that are meaningful to the childish,
which draw us outward,
and we don't draw inward with an inner sinking."

"Therefore, there is no particular dhyāna meditation
in which we settle our intellects.

We do not settle our minds on conceptions or non-conceptions,
on visualization or non-visualization,
on remaining or non-remaining, or on anything.
So we do not settle our minds on anything at all."

"So the state in which we don't think at all
is the supreme heart-essence of equanimity.

We set ourselves down where we have no thoughts,
and just stay there, without getting lost
in the forces of depression or wildness."

"Through primordial time
this wisdom has occurred by itself,
being illuminated by itself alone.

So where would there be anything
that could obstruct it, or that could be obstructed by it?

These are contrived problems,
created by the intellects of those on the path.
They don't exist."

"We simply refuse to depart from our natural state,
protecting our consciousness by not conceptualizing anything at all,
and so we practice non-thought, non-attachment, and equanimity."

"Enjoy not thinking, without thinking about it!

Move, sleep, and sit, whether you are happy or you are suffering.

When we do not think of anything,
we naturally have no thoughts."

"A joy is born in our minds,
which makes us feel that the three worlds are also joyous."

All Vairocana quotes from Chris Wilkinson's translation:
<http://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Secret-Upadesha-V.../.../1503270041>

"VARIOUS MOVEMENTS OF THOUGHTS
ARE THINGS OF SAMSAHA;
NOT THINKING,
MIND NOT MOVING,
IS ENLIGHTENMENT."

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF DZOGCHEN

As taught to me by Dzogchen teacher, Namkhai Norbu,
the first principle of Dzogchen is to realize that
your capacity to know as pure awareness, is already perfect.

Everything that appears
arises as the display of that natural perfection.

That means everything is already perfect.

That's why there is no need for practice meditation
or to acquire special insights through study or inner inquiry.

Everything is left "as-is", because no matter what occurs it is itself
an unfolding of the Great Perfection in every case.

There is nothing you could possibly do to make it more perfect.

Relax, and don't try to maintain any special state of mindfulness either.

All appearances and experiences
are always the perfect mandala of Samantabhadra.

Samantabhadra is your current awareness
that is like a changeless mirror
in which all its radiant expressions appear
without benefit or harm without altering it in any way.

Sky Gazing

PURPOSE/EFFECTS

Sky gazing is a way to feel release
from the narrow confines of the personality or ego.

It connects a person to the vast, expansive, clear,
open, space of awareness that is their authentic nature.

It brings relaxation, peace, joy, and a fresh,
crisp sense of connecting to reality, the natural state of things.

METHOD:

Summary

Look at the sky, and on each out-breath
allow yourself to dissolve into it.

LONG VERSION

Sky gazing takes place in three parts:

ARRIVING, INTENSIFYING, AND ALLOWING

1. *ARRIVING*

Settle into a comfortable meditation posture.
In traditional sky gazing, this means cross legged
with your hands on your thighs.

2. *INTENSIFYING*

Breathing normally,
bring your attention to the out-breath.
Pay no special attention to the in-breath.

3.

Rest your gaze softly on your surroundings.
Do not strain your eyes in any way.
Allow them to be soft and open.

4. *ALLOWING*

Lean back and look at the sky,
so that it fills your field of vision.

5. With each out-breath, allow any thoughts, feelings,
tensions, etc., that arise to dissolve into the sky.

Just release them completely.

6. As more thoughts, etc., arise, continue to let go of them.

You are the infinite, openness of the sky.

Thoughts and feelings can arise within you,
but never actually cloud or stain
your open, radiant perfection.

7. Continue this process for as long as you wish.

HISTORY:

Sky gazing is a practice from
the [Dzogchen](#) tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.
Dzogchen is often stated by all sects of Tibetan Buddhists
to be the "highest teaching."

In fact the word *DZOGCHEN* is a Tibetan rendering
of the Sanskrit *MAHASANDHI*,
which can be translated as "great perfection,"
or "total completeness."

Dzogchen strongly emphasizes the inherent,
spontaneous, natural, pure, radiant perfection of awareness
that is already present in all humans.

Sky gazing is one of the techniques
to help a person notice this awareness in themselves.

CAUTIONS / NOTES:

The point of this meditation is not to space out,
nor is it to have some "special experience."

If either of these things is happening, stop for a moment,
concentrate on your breathing, and begin again.

The point is, rather, to notice the natural, clear,
open awareness behind all thoughts and feelings.

Therefore if you are having a special experience,
since it is composed of thoughts and feelings,
you are not focusing on the object of this meditation.
Or if you are spacing out, you are not being aware of awareness.

Sky gazing is all about the quality of the experience.

There is almost no way to do this technique wrong.

It doesn't matter how long you do it for.

What does matter is the fresh,
open, pure, vast quality of your awareness.

It is better to do just a short session of this meditation
with high-quality awareness,
than it is to do a longer session with low-quality awareness.

For people who have a long history of
more structured meditation practice,
the open quality of sky gazing may take a little getting used to.

SEE ALSO:

[What Is Meditation? Do Nothing Meditation](#)

EXTERNAL LINKS:

[Lama Surya Das' instructions for Sky Gazing, from the book Natural Perfection](#)

[Lama Surya Das' website A practitioner's report on their sky gazing retreat experience](#)