

11/23/12

Verse 1 – beforehand

Three people sent premeditations:

This is from our new friend in Latvia, who Sujit assures me is named Maris:

Namaste\_

Interestingly, yesterday I also read about Nancy's trip in Kerala :) Then started to read the first Atmo lesson. And was very, very surprised from both that clear vision and explanation. Years ago I took a part in study circle wich was organized by Latvian Sri Satya Sai Baba center. We studied a lot about human values... also theme I AM THAT was observed. Also, later I read from other sources about it. But never I found such great way of thinking. After 15 years of different studies of similar texts I am really surprised. It is good we have a week for each verse, because I have to look in dictionary, too - because english is my third language - I am still learning it :)

In short - today I can say - I am very happy to be on the new and bright path.

~ **Om Namō Bhagavate Narayana Guru** ~

from Jake, who admits “I'm taking a decidedly American bent on the work and trying to address that audience, a non-existent audience perhaps. We'll see.”

**Verse 1:**

“Permeating the knowledge which brilliantly shines  
at once within and without the knower  
is the *karu*; to that, with the five senses withheld  
prostrate again and again with devotion and chant. “ (p. 1)

OR

“May the chanting be commenced, with the five organs of perception turned inward and pacified, again and again prostrating before that mysterious embryo, the Karu, shining within and without the knower.” (p. 712)

OR

In his foreword to *That Alone*, Nitya Yati presents an anecdote about a student asking Narayana Guru the nature of Vedanta. The answer is so simple—Do you know that the wave and the water are not two?—that the student misses the point and continues with his questions until they turn on themselves, leading the student right back to the beginning. This circular path describes the danger inherent in reading this opening verse straight through in order to move on to others with, perhaps, more familiar references. The key to the entire work appears in such a straightforward and simple manner that it one can easily overlook it as obvious and forgettable, especially if you are well versed in an American education for which bits of experience are anything but in-formation, a continuous evolutionary process of knowing the transcendent/immanent self.

The wave and the water are not two. This opening offers a perspective on that claim and constitutes the Core of the Core. In this simple metaphor is the essence of all the guru’s visions but can represent mere words to those refusing (or incapable of accepting) anything other than what their senses and mind present as possible. From the materialist’s point of view, issues beyond measurement—life/death, meaning/meaninglessness—are temporarily inexplicable but will be revealed sooner or later once the human mind rationalizes the post-rational Absolute in terms it (mind) can reduce to rationalizations. The mind’s obsessive compulsion to spin endless and elliptical narratives in its focus on somatic survival, a universal will to life, reinforces the distraction

with enormous power as do the senses' constant input. What appears "out there," to those of us with nowhere else to stand, is on the other side of a very thick boundary of our own design.

Many of us deal with the paradoxes and ironies that keep popping up—innocent children developing terminal cancer, the material inequalities of a bewildering variety, or random act of violence and hate—by handing them off in one way or another to any number of organized groups for which the conformity itself is the coin of the realm, one that finances an infinite number of "isms" and "ologies" of our Electronic Dark Age.

If, on the other hand, the wave and the water are not two, if, that is, the concrete sense perceived "reality" (we interpret as stationary and within time) of the ever-changing Cosmos and our interior interpretation of it are not two, *Narayana Guru's 100 Verses as handed down to us through Nataraja Guru and in this more recent commentary by Nitya Yati offers a universal vision that not only makes sense of existence as we experience its continuous manifesting and dissolving and manifesting but does so without the characteristic self-righteousness that is built into such works in the West, especially in contemporary America where puerile ethics and collectivist dogma more often than not masquerade as profundity.*

In this opening verse, the guru begins by identifying that which is common both "within and without," the Karu or unlit eternally shining lamp identical to the light of the universal Absolute. Our interior experiences of the mind in constant flux are mirrored in the motion of the world constantly arising out of the transcendent: the metaphoric wave on the water, the Prakriti (material) out of the Purusha (spirit) for the Sankhyans, the explicate order out of the implicate one for the physicist David Bohm. Experiencing that unity, that bi-polarity, in daily life is the lesson of this first verse, one that the guru states is best approached by devoting one's full attention to the task, again and again, holding fast to that which is not changeable in our elliptical work-a-day world.

from Wendy:

This first verse is very beautiful. It is so complete, and yet to understand this completeness we have to first take it apart. What permeates the knowledge? It is the Karu, the transcendent, the Absolute, that which contains everything. Knowledge refers to what is within, what is felt within the body. The knower is my status. The known is everything outside. Experience is the link between the knower and the known.

*Guru says on page 2, 'that although these are seemingly separate entities, in terms of consciousness there is no differentiation. On all such occasions, what you experience is a single consciousness undergoing different modulations. Here knower, known and knowledge refer only to aspects of your personal and private experience. They take place within your own awareness as mere transformations.'*

My intimate sense of the Karu is one of wonder and gratitude. That I am a manifesting Self, at one with the Karu, born from its mold and being created each day afresh.

When I awoke from sleep this morning it was just becoming light. I recognized that I knew it was a new day. I understood that darkness was fading and light is breaking and I could imagine the next few hours, from my meditation, shower, breakfast etc. My senses were awakened to the temperature and the sounds of the seagulls and early traffic outside. I was the knower inside the knowledge and relating it to the known. It was so clearly all transforming from moment to moment. I was aware of my heartbeat, of my seamless body movements, of my balance and ability to make movements. It all felt a living wonder.

This was before my ego, 'I,' woke up and started to make demands. Although it is a fine tool, it also gets in the way and dims the light. I recognize that I tend to be anxious and like to be in

control. I also am aware that when I trust, that mostly everything works out very well. That is when I am more surrendered to the Karu and feel at one with life. It is all about balance. When I become the witness of myself, I can act from the best possible motives without ego demands getting in the way. It could be so simple except that my ego is so well established it gets in before I notice!!

This is when the verse is a lifeline. Instead of being angry with myself I repeat the verse. It acts like a healing balm and fills me with hope and joy.

I love this verse. It is a treasure.

How do I prostrate with devotion?

Well, I kneel for my morning prayers in devotion. I play and sing along with the CD of Guru chanting the verse. I read the verse in 'Neither This nor That but Aum.' I say the prayer at the end of verse 1 which is beautiful and makes a perfect start to the day.

I feel gratitude and wonder for the beauty in the garden. In nature, in plants, animals, birds. In smiles. I feel a sense of oneness without limits, a connection. A melting of my separateness. All this happens anyway, but I am separating it out for these exercises. Becoming reminded of my patterns, which is always helpful.

I am sure we will have a wonderful adventure through these verses together.

With love from Wendy.

\* \* \*

Please note, At times there will be a large amount of material being sent out. No one is expected to read everything, just what you are in the mood for! Some read everything eagerly; some read only the original material from the gurus. As with gifting, it's the thought that counts, so just think about the ideas in whatever way suits you best. I'll pass along everything I possibly can.

Sujit sent an exemplary meditation on the first verse:

Guru Nitya's explanation of Verse 1 is thought-provoking and brilliantly transcends the original language that it was authored, as evidently experienced and enjoyed by those here from different corners of the globe. I humbly stop further wondering how others can enjoy it as much as a Malayalee.

Greatly appreciate how Nitya has vividly explained 'Karu' using the parable of the mould; and further using Narayana Guru's own references to 'Karu' in other works, to bring out the author's usage, or the intended all-encapsulating meaning of the 'Karu' word.

Going through this verse once again was an improvement on earlier readings. In the last 48 hours I physically moved across continents and spent quite a bit of time contemplating the three entities - knowledge, known and knower. Applied it (knowledge and known) to one and more (multiple) sensible objects, both tangible, and the intangible – like music etc.

Sitting for long hours on an airplane to India, with eyes closed, I could apply my mind more precisely to the two homes at both ends of the journey (Canada behind me, and India impending), a lot more in 'thoughtful envisaging', than the airplane itself (the present tense) which was so full of unknown entities in the form of co-passengers. Despite having all five senses active in my body on the airplane, the unfamiliarity was initially so distancing, while I continued to live in and extrapolate the past experiences at both ends of the journey. Seeing different peoples, all unfamiliar in person and at best understood by applying my limited knowledge, of their distinguishable and prominent features of race, ethnic, economic, aesthetic inclines and other backgrounds, I further applied this thought of extension of the 'Karu' outside, as different

forms of 'jagat'. Interestingly I was able to see through all of them as manifestations, without much to worry about who they really were. I could most importantly see a common 'purpose' (the big 'Self'?) in them all heading for some duty-bound or purposeful mission. That duty or responsibility of purpose is how I was able to realistically translate the prostration to 'Karu' (if prostration is taken as a metaphor).

No introductions, no learning curve, no inclined plane towards the peak of the philosophy; Verse 1 takes us on, full swing and bang into the heart of Narayana Philosophy. Wonder what's left for 99 more to come! J

Sujit

P.S.: Could not make much of "nature that natures" – or should it have been "nature that nurtures".

Scott:

I can throw a little light on "the nature that natures." This is part of the philosophical "spicing up" that Nitya did after his morning prophesying, in the first 8 verses. Both Nitya and Nataraja Guru were enamored with Spinoza, whose ideas closely resemble Advaita Vedanta. To Spinoza, God and Nature were the same, a single universal *substance*, as he called it. He divvied this up into *nature naturata* (nature that is natured) and *nature naturans* (nature that is naturing, or the nature that natures). The first is the passive, eternal aspect, and the second is the active, changing part. The active aspect is what Nitya is speaking of here in describing the Karu, the mold or original cause that produces all this.

Nitya's prized Encyclopedia of Philosophy now sits in my workroom, and it has a terrific article about Spinoza's thought. A couple of excerpts are worth adding to the mix, the first relating to the absolute nature of Spinoza's substance, and the second on the

unity of knowledge, a central principle of Vedanta and our upcoming study:

It is true that Spinoza follows his native Judaism in affirming the existence and the unity of God.... But since "God" is the name of the one substance whose other name is "Nature," the contrast between God and the world, a contrast which is at the heart of both Judaism and Christianity, is obliterated. The one substance can have nothing outside itself to limit it. It is and therefore must be undetermined from outside itself and unbounded; hence, Spinoza calls it infinite. Thus, not only the unity and existence but also the infinity of God are preserved in Spinozism, although all three, it is clear, are given a new sense. (Vol. 4, 533)

Anticipation of Spinoza's type of pantheism can be found in the Jewish mystical traditions. When both Jewish and Christian Scholastics spoke of God's knowledge of his creatures, they found it difficult to hold that his creatures were external objects to God, about whom God could know contingent truths. In answer to this problem a sixteenth-century cabalist, Moses Cordovero, wrote in words which are almost reproduced by Spinoza (*Ethics* II, Prop VII, *Scholium*): "But the Creator is Himself knowledge, the knower and the object known. His knowledge does not arise from His directing His thoughts to things outside of Him, since in comprehending and knowing Himself, He comprehends and knows everything that exists" (*A Garden of Pomegranates*). Thus, Spinoza could and did legitimately claim to be developing one strain in the Jewish theological tradition. (Vol. 4, 534)

from *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Collier Macmillan, 1972)



\* \* \*

John H continues his lively input:

Where I am confused is when I consider the perceiver and the perceived aren't the same wave, but maybe different waves, but still part of the water? I might be able to wrap my mind around this if I go back to Aristotle's genus and difference - but not emphasizing the difference, just noting it. The wave and the water are one, but one may, for the sake of clarity we use the difference part when we talk about stuff. But the point is to understand that this differentiation is to help understand, not to draw a line, close a door, build a wall. As for devotion - well, there are many kinds. I have been meditating on the Canaanite woman who lipped off to Jesus, got her daughter cured, and in a way, showed that devotion can be not so reverential as all that, and even border on insolence. I suppose it's intention when we get down and dirty about it. Many kinds of waves to be had in the water - some tidal, some ripples. Likewise devotion.

Much L,  
Eeyore the Perplexed

I responded:

As long as your perplexity prompts you to look deeper and not simply reject the whole business, it's a very positive feature. Of course, if it prompts you to reject something worthless or detrimental, it's also very positive. Since your perplexity is intelligent and penetrating, it's an excellent quality you should highly prize.

It's a little like peering through a tiny hole in a fence outside a nudist colony. You peer as hard as you can, but you really want to make the hole bigger so you can see better. You scour it out with a knife, (intelligence) and take another peek. Once you get a good

look around, you might even decide to go through the gate and join the party.

That's what they call peer pressure.

And he wrote back:

Perplexion - I hadn't thought about it, but yes, I think that for some people it's an excuse to give up, throw in the towel, cover the peep hole, or justify lazy thought, improper motives, etc. What perplexion does for me is to stop and study. Kind of like some of my interactions with "wild" animals - or even tame ones, for that matter -they do something and I have to stop and observe, and consider even. Like a time I was gardening, pulling weeds, and I accidentally exposed a garden snake. She coiled up as if to strike. I wasn't alarmed as this snake was no bigger than a pencil, and it wasn't a copperhead or any of the small and deadlies. Still, I sat back, not frightened, nor particularly startled, but perplexed. How is it that such a small snake would coil like that. Then I got it. I realized that she was guarding something looking like eggs - her nest, obviously. I gently removed, and then when she relaxed, I gently re-covered her nest with some devotion, sensing that I had come upon something quite holy in its own right - the eternal motherness of the universe.

But just cause I'm perplexed doesn't mean I have this strong motivation to solve it. I can walk away from a crossword puzzle, but not quit. Sometimes one just has to let the understanding rise, as it were.

But back to the water and wave.

11/20/12

Verse 1

Nitya has provided us with three versions of the first verse of Atmopadesa Satakam, the book's, its appendix, and his initial

effort. It's undoubtedly impossible to capture the many nuances of the Malayalam original, even taking all of them together, but our class managed to make significant inroads:

Permeating the knowledge which brilliantly shines  
at once within and without the knower  
is the *karu*; to that, with the five senses withheld,  
prostrate again and again with devotion and chant.

May the chanting be commenced, with the five organs of  
perception turned inward and pacified, again and again prostrating  
before that mysterious embryo, the Karu, shining within and  
without the knower.

Filling the entire awareness of the knower,  
at once permeating the subjective self  
and shining as the world outside,  
is the manifesting Self;  
to That, with the five senses withheld,  
prostrate again and again with humble devotion  
and chant.

And Nataraja Guru's:

Rising even above knowledge, what within the form  
Of the one who knows, as equally without, radiant shines,  
To that Core, with the eyes five restrained within,  
Again and again prostrating in adoration, one should chant.

Although we never seem to have the same people in attendance twice, a fine gathering gave our concentrated attention to this seminal verse, and achieved a sublime level of peaceful intensity that was thrilling to the Core.

Narayana Guru poetically establishes the Karu or Core as the central hub from which all else will emerge, both in the book and

in our life as a whole. Everything that fills our awareness can be traced back to a point source of origination from which it has expanded, and the source of all the beginning points collectively is called the Karu, which is the same as the Self or the Absolute. Science too has traced the entire universe back to a single event called the Big Bang, and now sees traces of an even prior cause looming behind that. The Guru wants to call our attention to this Karu, this point of origin, because it is the source of joy and enthusiasm, of freshness, and of every level of evolution. We have learned to wall it off and block its influence, and hardly realize the violence we have done to our whole being in the process. The Hundred Verses is an unsurpassed program of restoration of our native delight in our own existence, with our life being one unique, potent example of this infinite potential.

Most of us come to the study because we realize we have lost the spark of excitement that was once ours. There are a million methods that promise to restore our joy in the world. Many of them are exploitive moneymaking schemes. A few are genuine and effective, and these cover a wide range of interests. Narayana Guru's style, as elaborated by Nataraja Guru and Guru Nitya, is best suited to independent-minded types who are uncomfortable following a specific program, especially one that requires faith in extravagant beliefs. The three gurus have worked very hard to strain out the excesses of fantasy that humans are prone to, making significant strides toward a fully realized Science of the Absolute, or brahmavidya. For those longing to regain their psychic balance while retaining their independence and dignity, and without offending their intelligence, this is a promising course to investigate.

With that in mind, the class reassessed the implications of the words translated as devotion (or adoration) and prostration, words generally associated with religion. They are used in a very different sense here, one that goes to the heart of the unusual style we'll be attuning ourselves to.

The last part of Nitya's essay is a wonderful exposition of what I might call practical devotion, of how to touch every moment of our daily existence with a heightened awareness and appreciation. It's worth rereading, as well as pondering how we have been led astray by lopsided thinking and the constraints of social pressure. Cold logic has analyzed the structures of our world and excised the love, the meaning. But we can reclaim them if we want to. We just have to retrain ourselves to alter our thought patterns and to interact somewhat differently with our environment. That's why the verse says "within and without." It does take some dedicated effort. We have to devote ourselves to the task of rehabilitating ourselves, and that is the devotion the Guru asks of us. Nataraja Guru puts it this way, in his own commentary on Atmo:

A mere academic interest or intellectual curiosity alone will not suffice for the task of Self-realization. A wholehearted interest is needed. Ecstasy and wonder are only to be expected normally in the appraisal of such a high human value. An attitude of ceaseless adoration is therefore recommended so as to attune the mind to the implicit central notion which is the content of the whole work. Such a notion, being beyond the paradox of logic, has to be approached dialectically. In such a unitive approach, the attitude of reverence or adoration is but a natural corollary. Hence the prostrations here are indicated without violating the requirements of human dignity in its everyday sense. No abject idolatry or kowtowing is implied, but rather an adoration of the Absolute as the highest and dearest of human values. (11)

Prostrations are usually thought of as self-abnegation, of lowering oneself and exalting something else. Vedanta philosophy is about finding our balance, of being neither too low or too high. We will be doing a lot of work in this area as we proceed. We did talk about it in an interesting fashion last night. The key idea is that our

ego and its awareness have come to dominate our sense of who we are. But the rishis were well aware, and neuroscience has come to agree, that this self-consciousness is the very last stage of the very complex process of expression. Deep in our core, ideas and motivations gestate, then gradually take shape, are planned out and refined. Only then do they dare to press upward into conscious awareness, at which point we say, "I just thought of something."

If we were wise, we could promote the best of these complex notions and discard the rest. But our egos have been seriously warped by social pressures to the point where we have no idea what is in our best interest. Our interests have been transferred out of our domain. Taira said, "I always think of other people as better than me." She is not alone. When we do that, by suppressing everything in us that doesn't seem to be encouraged by the outside world, we cause damage to our own system. We depress ourselves; literally press ourselves down. And then we fit in, because we no longer stand out. This is a tragedy that is repeated over and over in billions of souls: souls with a potential of extreme excellence, where modest excellence at the very least is easily within reach.

We can revitalize our whole being without drawing any notice from the hostile forces of the world. It's simply a matter of reorienting our state of mind. We can still be as invisible as we like. The thing is, if we want to feel satisfied, we can't base who we are on what we imagine others want us to be. This is why the verse asks us to restrain our senses. Who we are is vaguely reflected in the world outside, but it is ever pulsing brightly inside. We have to spend some time turned away from the pale reflections and attending to the brilliant luminosity of our inner self. And when we regain it as adults, it is much easier to retain it than it was when we were children.

Taira brought a very relevant question at this point. We are asked to restrain our senses but also experience wonder and awe as we go through the world. To her, the wonder and awe come from the wonderful and awesome things which fill the world and are perceived by our senses. And that's exactly right. The Gurukula

philosophy is by no means escapist, aimed at withdrawal from the world. We are given free rein to appreciate the beauty of every drop of existence. We are trying to live a more or less active life to the best of our capacity. What's intended by sitting quiet and restraining the senses is something other than escape or deprivation. It's a reconsolidation of several tendencies that have been drawn out and stretched thin in chaotic directions, allowing us to be knit back together.

By being turned outward all our lives, we have lost touch with most of what we are—a vast being which can be compared to the proverbial iceberg, but we now know our waking consciousness is not even the tip of the iceberg above the waterline, but more like a gnat perched on the top of the tip, imagining it is the whole iceberg. (Because they identify so strongly with the gnat of consciousness, the poor neuroscientists think we have no free will, but while the gnat may be just along for the ride, the berg itself is much, much freer, even while being swept along by the winds and currents of its ocean. In other words, free will originates beneath consciousness, and supports and carries it along. But that is still us.) The gnat, because it is oblivious of the iceberg it rides on, feels it has to take its identity only from the outward experiences it can have. And yes, great art, great wisdom, and great friendship bring a lot of pleasure to the gnat, and make it a much better gnat than if it wasted its time on trivialities. But even the most perfect life of stimulation doesn't reconnect us gnats with our "iceberg," our whole Self. As Eugene said, the culture promotes the fiction that stimulation is everything, because it's very profitable. As long as we keep bathing in new sensations, we hardly have a moment to stop and question where we are headed.

If we know the Self, even our trivial activities will be of transcendental moment. If we forget the Self, even the best experiences will have a faint hollowness to them, like an echo. They won't sustain us. So we close our eyes and look for that missing part of who we are, which is the lion's share and also

worthy of cherishing. Renewing that connection helps us to be more alive when we open our eyes again, too.

Eugene talked about how he felt after he first discovered *That Alone*. Like all of us, he was saturated in the culture of possessiveness, yet here was a bold statement that we gained much more by letting go than by reaching out to grasp. He felt excited and yet terrified, because he wasn't sure if he even existed beyond the externalized images everyone around him had. Would he still be able to live if he dared to stop needing to possess? It's a major adjustment to come to see that we possess everything in our knowledge, and that we actually push it away from us by imagining we don't have it, that it's not ours. We all agreed that it's a process, not a one-time conversion. We constantly struggle to remove the old clothing that has become too ragged or too tight. Even if we do strip off the old, we tend to put on something else that will eventually pinch.

Every once in awhile Nitya would stop at a flower or a sunset and exclaim, "Oh, how beautiful I am!" He well knew that his cherishing of the moment was what mattered. It was the most alive possibility he could bring to his experience. He never needed to own anything, and didn't. At the same time, everything was his, even the clouds in the sky.

The idea of the knower and the known being united in knowledge—yet another central idea of this verse—provides the key. Deb started the whole discussion by referencing this point. When we break everything apart by thinking we are a separate knower perusing distant objects outside of us, it fragments our sense of wholeness and makes us desperate to restore it. The more we pursue fragments to try to assemble an admirable self-image, the more estranged from ourselves we feel. What is missing isn't better entertainment, it's our authentic self-esteem, neither positively or negatively exaggerated.

We are even convinced that our self-esteem should be derived from our performance, but that's a very shaky basis for it, causing it to go up and down due to happenstance. Nitya counsels



us to look to the miracle of every molecule, every detail, every event of our lives, as uplifting and inspiring, and that will give us a solid basis for a meaningful life. Getting things like self-esteem in balance means they disappear: they only exist when they are out of balance. When we are who we are, no esteem is necessary, pro or con. After that, events no longer undermine our equanimity.

Neuroscientists now agree with the rishis: our mind fashions our reality to a shocking extent, much more than we realize. The “outside world” is a drama very convincingly staged in our imagination. It’s thrown together with just a tiny bit of outside stimulation, and overlaid with our expectations and prejudices. We can help our stage manager to tell a better story; in fact, a better story already exists in us. We have somehow bought into some dead end thinking, but there’s no reason we have to hold on to it. Narayana Guru, with the able assistance of Nitya as interpreter, is holding out a supremely compassionate hand to us, to help us convert to a more inspiring passion play. We are very fortunate to have come to spend some time with him. Aum.

## Part II

John H. continues his lively engagement with the topic, distinguishing monetary value from the transformational value being freely offered by the gurus:

A wonderful verse and wise narrative. I have always maintained that the moment one solves a problem is a spiritual experience - which is where mind and mystical mind come together. The moment of discovery is a mystic experience. Even in my curious profession of assigning a monetary value to things that in supreme reality don't have monetary value - and I'll come back to this as a point for this wonderful narrative - the element of discovery is argued as a characteristic of value. But going back - assigning monetary value to things like discovery - this is a perfect case where one can see reality generated from an idea or concept. For example, as an appraiser - if I tell someone that their old book is

worth \$1,000, I put that idea into the human general consensus - people say that John says it's worth that and people register that as reality. I will tell a story on myself to make the point clear.

I had heard that the photographer Ray Atkeson had died and when one of his books, Oregon II, went out of print, I raised the price to \$100 because he was gone. Other booksellers saw I had done that and raised their prices. People saw booksellers raising their prices and began to buy up copies. People with a little more money began to buy copies at \$100 and thereby validated my opinion of value. You probably see where this is going - or at least you do until the wonderful ending. Oregon III came out and people bought up tons of copies as investments.

Then one day this nice man came up to me at the bookstore and asked me if I was John Henley, and I was, and he gave me his hand and introduced himself as Ray Atkeson. He thanked me for making him a collected author.

It's so obvious that we can impact reality. But in turn, the universe and all of its beautiful and wonderful things interact with us, too, and just as we impact, we are impacted. Realizing that I am a center of amongst centers, which I think is a zen concept, was the beginning of my understanding of myself and myself among other selves, and who knows, maybe I'll even get to understand the supreme self - if that is even a good way to refer to it.

Happy Thanksgiving one and all  
with love

JH