

REVOLUTIONS IN CONSCIOUSNESS

From Copernicus to Newton to Darwin to Einstein to Sai

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Vice-Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (Deemed University)

by

Alvin Drucker, Visiting Lecturer, Prashanti Nilayam, August 25, 1986

Introduction

A number of times Sai Baba has mentioned in his discourses some of the eminent scientists of the West, who by their dedication and genius had significantly affected the course of human progress. Prominent among these are **Copernicus**, **Newton**, **Darwin**, and **Einstein**, who represent the central thrust of Western Science over the past four centuries. It is this very Science which has led mankind from the Dark Ages to the high technology of the 21st Century, but it is also this Science which has taken mankind to the brink of annihilation.

It is a mark of the high drama of these times, that the greatest opportunity that has come in many millenia for mankind to evolve into the highest reaches of the Spirit, happens to coincide with a widespread moral degeneration and a threat of total extinction of the human race. To a great extent, it is the world outlook spawned by Science that has brought on this crisis. But quite paradoxically, as we shall see from this article, historical developments in Science themselves point the way towards a transcendence of the present human condition, leading man from the dark depths of physical materialism into the profoundest Realms of Being.

The purpose of this article is to explore how some of the great historical figures in Science are connected in one long thread which ties together the great changes in world outlook that have occurred over the past four centuries. This thread leads right up to the present time of world crisis and momentous human transformation, heralded by the appearance on the world-scene of a divine incarnation who will lead the new generation into the Golden Age of the Spirit.

What we will be speaking of here is really a series of revolutions, **revolutions in human consciousness**, that have, and still are transforming men's minds.

God, World and Man

Before the blossoming forth of Science during the Renaissance in Europe, it was predominantly the ancient Greek philosophical tradition that prevailed in the West. This world outlook held that Man was the measure of all things. Although the Divinity, in the form of the Gods, was very much feared and propitiated, it was Man, not the Divinity, who held center-stage. It was man's body and mind which were idolized. Man was considered the zenith of the Creation, the specially chosen one, around whom the whole Creation revolved.

In its highest aspects this world-view fitted in remarkably well with the Judeo-Christian doctrines based on the Bible. Although Greek thought conflicted with the strict monotheistic beliefs of the Jews, yet it had such strong appeal to reason and to the proof of the senses, that it slowly infiltrated both Jewish and Christian thinking. By the time of Augustine, and later Aquinas, it had become well established in Church doctrine, clothed in the artifacts of the particular religion in which it was embraced. Nobody doubted that the Sun and Moon, and all the planets and stars in the heavens, which were seen rotating in their daily passage around the Earth, were heavenly luminaries that were there to provide the background for the mighty Drama of Life which was taking place on Earth.

With the rise of the Medieval Church, it was Man glorified in the form of the Saviour, the Risen Christ, on whom the whole world centered. Jerusalem was the epicenter of everything that was, and Christ was

the epicenter of everything that was to be. Man's existence had purpose, and the whole of Creation with Earth at its center was given to Man as a vast stage on which to work out his destiny. It was here under the central Eye of God that he must fight the battle of good and evil and triumph over his lower nature.

It would have been totally unthinkable that the Earth, on which the titanic events of the Creation had taken place, and on which the historic saga had unfolded leading to the advent of Christ...that this Mother Earth on which all the Biblical prophesies were being enacted...*was just a microscopically insignificant pebble in the backwaters of a vast Universe.* Such an outrageous idea could never have been entertained in the medieval mind. It would have destroyed the very basis of faith in the primacy of God.

According to the belief of the time, it was God in whose image Man was created, and in whose name Man ruled over the Creation, and with whose Grace Man retired to Heaven, after having honorably completed his stewardship on Earth. This, it was believed, is how it was and always will be.

But then came the first of five mind-transforming revolutions that rocked Man's view of himself in relation to the Universe and God. Even now the full implications of these **revolutions in consciousness** are still revealing themselves.

Copernicus – The Age of Matter

The first major **revolution of consciousness** that was provoked by the emerging Science was what we might call the Copernican revolution. Copernicus was a polish physician, mathematician and clergyman who was one of a small band of courageous and innovative souls who ushered in the Renaissance in Europe. The very birth, or perhaps we should say rebirth of Science, is frequently credited to the publication of Copernicus' Heliocentric Theory in which he held that the Sun was the center of our System, and that the Earth was much like the other then known wandering stars, circling the Sun in a yearly orbit.

This insight into the organization of the heavens was a great stroke of genius, and it is sometimes seen as a great victory for truth and scientific inquiry. It is believed that starting with Copernicus, the emerging

Science sounded the death-knell for the many superstitious biblical beliefs and religious doctrines which were prevalent in those days, but which had no basis in reason or verifiable experience.

However, when we view this in retrospect we see that *far from being a victory, the effect of Copernicus' revelation was a catastrophe*, for it cut away Man's moorings in the safe harbor in which he had taken shelter for 1500 years. Its effect was to set Man adrift in an infinite caringless sea without landmarks and without hope. Suddenly, Man lost his innocence and his security, and with it, his centrality, in this new understanding of the make-up of the Creation. Dead matter replaced Man at the center. That was the long-term effect of the revolution brought about by Copernicus.

Even a great stroke of genius and vision does not make a mind-transforming revolution. That came about much more slowly as the spirit of the times steadily shifted towards popular interest in the rigorous logic and objective reality revealed by Science. The revolution we are speaking of here did not really crest until hundreds of years after Copernicus, but it had its beginnings with him in the 16th Century. When the time had come for a great leap of consciousness, a Copernicus had to come along to sow the seeds which were to fructify much later, and which were destined to put mankind on a long and lonely path, that was dry of heart and devoid of light.

What was the revolutionary change in world-view that we link with Copernicus' heliocentric insight? What did it eventually lead to? It led to this: That we are just completely negligible little specks of matter on this globe which is the Earth; but that this Earth itself is just one of the minor planets orbiting the Sun; and that the Sun is just a rather ordinary member of a huge assembly of stars circling within this Milky Way Galaxy; and that the Milky Way is but one of an incredibly vast number of island worlds like it, making up this infinite Universe.

So, as physical entities we are a vanishingly small and insignificant part of this unlimited Universe. Far from being the most important entity in the very center of the World, we are essentially nothing. And should even this whole Earth and the Solar System and the Galaxy in which it is embedded all suddenly vanish without a trace, the Cosmos would be about as much affected as would be a vast colony of ants if one of its members disappeared.

With the Copernican revelation, suddenly Man had to face up to his smallness, a smallness which was now in his relation to cold matter where previously his smallness had been in his relation to God. Far from being the measure of all things, Man was now a measure of no consequence, at all. Man, the heroic figure was lost; and with him God became lost also. In a Universe of infinite matter that ran like a vast clockwork, there was no continuing need for God, except perhaps to assemble the whole thing and wind it up at the beginning. Once it got going, blind laws could take over and a personal God could easily be dispensed with.

And so, more and more, God went out of sight in the consciousness of Man, and with His departure went the grandeur of the original vision, of a Father-protector who looked after Man and eventually brought him home. Since there was no requirement for such a God in the new philosophy, *both God and man effectively disappeared into the realm of the insignificant*. It was the grand triumph of Nature over God.

This was the powerful current that launched Science and became its dominant theme for hundreds of years. This was the **materialistic view** based totally on gross matter, which was the early preoccupation of Science.

In the mystical understanding we can speak of five levels of illusion or unreality, maya, which makes up the corpus of the Universe and can also be seen to make up the successive sheaths or gross and subtle bodies of Man. Each of these levels or sheaths interpenetrate each other and is successively finer and more extensive than the previous. Beyond all these is God, the one true Reality, the Single Source and Essence of everything, the One Self of which we cannot speak. Covering that in our human awareness are the five sheaths. Our progression into the realm of Spirit is to uncover these one by one. The first and grossest of these sheaths is the physical, which represents the material aspect of the Universe. It is associated with the materialistic view given above. It is a cold, dreary, heartless domain, which still has much of the World locked in its grip. It represents the insane world-view in which physical matter is recognized as constituting the only reality.

Newton – The Age of Energy

The second major revolution in the realm of ideas which was brought about by Science, and which actualized a fundamental transformation of thinking from that time onwards, was the Newtonian revolution. Again, as with Copernicus, although this revolution was brought on by the brilliant insights of Newton, it did not fully mature in the educated mind of mankind at large, until long after Newton's time.

And what is that major change in consciousness? It is this: *Whatever happens out there in the vast macrocosm also happens in exactly the same way in here, in our little microcosm*. The same gravitational law and the same principles of motion that hold together this Solar System and all the huge Galaxies, and account for the large-scale motion of the whole Universe, are also responsible here on Earth for dropping an apple into our lap from the tree branch that is overhead in the garden where we sit.

The gist of this great breakthrough in human understanding is that *Nature's laws are universal. They tie together the largest and smallest into a unified web of connections and relationships*. We may be infinitesimally small compared with our vastly greater brothers out in the heavens, like the planets and stars and nebulae and galaxies and all the other grand structures that inhabit the Universe. But despite our vast differences in size we all use the same natural laws and follow the same physical processes.

Associated with all matter, whether big or small, is the subtler property of energy, shifting from its potential into its kinetic form and then back into its potential, and thus providing the basis for the continuous flux of change that is characteristic of all forms of matter. Old forms degenerate and disappear, and new forms emerge to take their place in an ongoing river of change.

This revolutionary insight into the workings of Nature can be associated with the second level of Reality or the second sheath, called the vital or pranic sheath, which represents the energetic aspect of the Universe. Here we are aware of a higher level of organization, an intangible and more subtle level associated with potential and kinetic energy. Energy can organize or chaotize matter, dominating it, animating it, and structuring it into variable forms. So in this second major revolutionary step we recognize the organizing principle of energy, which

is a step above the gross, physical aspect of matter, previously discussed.

This energetic view with its universal laws, is a significant step upwards in Man's consciousness from the stage of awareness that we associated with the Copernican view, where Man was reduced to just an unrelated, insignificant speck lost in the infinite ocean of time and space. With this second revolution a grand underlying organization of the universe has revealed itself, tied together by the invisible strings of natural law, through which everything large and small is related.

Although, in this, the Divinity has not reentered man's thinking, nevertheless, the stage is being prepared for a subtler awareness. Now we have Science moving on from its earlier focus on gross matter to pursuing the discovery of the underlying governing laws, involving the extremely powerful concepts of energy and force fields.

Darwin – The Age of Information

The next major revolution which takes us another 150 years further along in the progressive development of Western thought, is the Darwinian revolution. This revolution in consciousness characterizes all the other revolutionary steps in the historical development of Science. Its principal theme is this: Not only is there relationship and connectedness between every object across the vast Universe because of the common natural laws which govern the behavior of all matter, but *there is also a progressive hierarchy of order in the Universe.*

Within the great river of change which moves every individual form towards dissolution and chaos, there is a finer stream that moves on a much longer time-scale, slowly wending its way upstream towards greater order. It has the effect of slowly but surely changing all the templates or blueprints, we might say, out of which like forms have been created throughout the Universe, steadily evolving those forms towards higher and higher levels of organization.

For example, all matter in the early Universe was made up of only simple Hydrogen and Helium; but then as the Universe grew older, some of this early matter evolved into the heavier elements and the large range of molecules that we know today. All of this is governed by an evolutionary process that is

universally the same everywhere.

Of course, Darwin was concerned only with the evolution of living species on Earth and he worked out the theory based on individual variation and natural selection through mutation; but these details are not important in the context of our discussion here. It is the basic principle of evolution that we are concerned with, which holds true for matter in general, as well as for life, and even for cultural information and ideas. This process changes the simple, the limited, the potential into the unlimited creative expression and varied spectrum of possibilities in which forms have manifested themselves, and in which ideas have expressed themselves, as life and matter and ideas evolved here on Earth.

The vast range of complexity that we find in the World today has all originated from the simplest forms. To give some examples, we have the evolution of the chemical elements from Hydrogen all the way to Uranium, the evolution of amorphous cosmic dust clouds into moons and planets and stars and giant galaxies, the evolution of volcanic rocks into seas and continents, the evolution of life from simple bacteria all the way to the miraculous manifestation of the infinitely complex human being, and the evolution of ideas from simple grunts to the most sublime poetry and from simple tool-making to Quantum Mechanics and Relativity Theory.

This understanding of the dynamic makeup of the Universe, leading upwards step-by-step, in an orderly progression from primeval matter to Man, who is the crowning achievement of the evolutionary process, provides a much subtler and higher level of awareness than that given by the universal laws. For it provides not only a set of common rules for the behavior of matter, but *it also provides a characteristic niche, a purposeful role for every individual entity and even every thought...* for each there is a place on the ladder of development of forms and ideas, progressing from the least to the greatest.

Underneath the surface everything is alike; everything is made up of the same stuff and follows the same laws. But in manifestation everything has its own individual uniqueness, its own role to play and its own destiny to fulfill. The inescapable philosophical implication of this is that in the Universe there is not only matter and energy, but there are also embedded informational packets, codes which give rise to specific forms and provide them with their

unique function. Information is always at a higher level of organization than energy, and matter. Through information, such as that contained in a blueprint, vast amounts of matter and energy can be organized in a specific way to express an infinite array of different forms having different functions. For instance, through the information contained in the DNA molecules matter and energy can be organized to produce everything from an amoeba to a blade of grass to a cockroach to a human being.

Through the evolutionary process, the informational code changes, and consequently forms progress in complexity and order so as to associate with each other in mutually symbiotic ways, in the process building up ever greater capabilities of functioning and specialization. Organisms of greater and greater complexity develop with ever greater capabilities of functioning and purpose. Ultimately everything is seen to have a characteristic purpose, and even the whole Universe can be considered to be tied together as one vast, growing, changing, developing and eventually disintegrating organism.

When we see everything this way, the demarcation between Physics, Astronomy, Chemistry, Biology and even Psychology gets increasingly fuzzy. We become concerned with the dynamics of the whole and not so much with its reduction into definable parts. This naturally leads to ecological thinking, tying together the whole range of possible experiences that make up Nature and our existence within it. This is a true revolution in thought which has not yet fully matured in the established scientific thinking, but it is slowly filtering into the awareness of the new generation.

We can associate this level of understanding with the cosmic mental, the still more subtle mind aspect of the universe. At this level, Science began to shift its attention to the Master Plan and the overall organizing principles that unify the various manifestations which have taken form, into a coherent whole. For example, as already mentioned, in the Life Sciences we discovered the genetic code, the informational blueprint which is common to all life forms, wherein recorded messages express themselves as all the different organisms found on Earth.

When the awesome beauty, the ingenious intricacy, the progressive flowering of forms throughout the Universe, unfold themselves to our view, like interwoven scenes on a grand tapestry, it be-

comes increasingly difficult to deny the existence of an underlying organizing intelligence, a creative consciousness, which through its will gives purpose to this entire awesome fabric of expression.

“How could all this have happened without a responsible agency, a maker?” we ask ourselves. There must be some organizing, animating principle behind it all. It is like remembering a particularly vivid dream and wondering about the dreamer, or seeing an outstanding film and wondering about the director, or seeing a striking complex of modern buildings and wondering about the architect. Behind the plans there surely must have been a designer. Yet, in the case of the World, the design is so intricately balanced and the laws so ingeniously conceived, that the master planner can remain totally hidden, and only the power, the exquisite scope of genius and the delicacy of the design, reveal the possibility of such a presence.

And so, we are beginning to get hints that there is still a higher level of organization beyond information, beyond energy and beyond matter. We can call it consciousness or pure awareness, a more subtle and subjective quality, a considerably more powerful organizing principle than either information or energy. But it had to take yet another revolution in awareness before the principle of Consciousness began to expose itself in inexplicable ways, as Science moved closer to rediscovering the eternal truths known to the ancient Seers and Mystics.

Einstein – The Age of Consciousness

And so we come to the last of the scientific revolutions, one that has made its appearance in this century, and which is every bit as radical as the previous ones in changing man's outlook and inlook. We can call it the Einsteinian revolution, although Einstein himself would have taken issue with some of the conclusions that can be drawn from it.

For example, he never agreed with many of the ramifications of the Quantum Theory. Nevertheless, he more than any other, is responsible for the wide-ranging philosophical implications of the revolution in thought that was brought about by the New Physics. What is this new view? It is this: That everything we perceive with our senses and attempt to analyze and classify into relationships and laws, has to do with a relative world...a kind of phantom play of names and forms, all flowing along in a stream of Space-Time.

Everything is in flux; everything is caught up in the great flow. In this relative world there are no absolutes. Time and change govern every phenomenon. There are no fixed reference frames to be found anywhere. There are no objects that can be considered independent of the observing subjects. There are no events that can be perceived in exactly the same way by all observers. Each has his own world view. And there is an irreducible uncertainty which precludes the possibility of our ever knowing all the fundamental properties of the various phenomena that we experience and investigate.

This uncertainty is built into the very fabric of the Universe itself. Nothing can be considered as absolutely certain. The whole cannot be ultimately reduced to a set of basic building blocks. On a Cosmic scale, matter can lose form and become pure energy, and then can again manifest itself into new form. Nothing is substantial; everything is a dance.

We find that our every attempt to fixate Nature and codify it at its finest levels, ultimately fails. It is as if Nature sifts through our hands like sand, and we are left with no substance, holding on to nothing. Nevertheless, there is a basic Truth of Existence that cannot be denied. But apparently, it is not to be found in the analysis and descriptions of phenomena and the collection of facts. It is only in the clarified intellect of the scientist himself, when his intuitive faculty is awakened and he becomes inspired, that the greatest progress of understanding is made. Then he seems to tap in to sources of knowledge beyond his normal mental powers.

Such a time occurred for Einstein in 1905, when from his fertile mind, without resort to experimentation, a series of epoch-making discoveries of the profoundest consequence emerged. It seemed that he tuned in to vast mental worlds which are the repositories of all knowledge...databanks, we might say, for the Wisdom of the Ages.

It is in the awakened intuition of man that the underlying Consciousness begins to make itself known in curious and sometimes surprising ways. If we turn our mind towards the World and its problems, this faculty withdraws and problems remain intractable. But if we concentrate on pure Awareness, to the exclusion of everything else, this *Consciousness reveals itself, and problems begin to dissolve. We come to the realization that it is our thinking process and the will that governs it, which*

shapes the Reality that we perceive and comprehend.

There is a principle in Quantum Mechanics which deals with complementary phenomena, where the occurrence of one state excludes the occurrence of the other state. For instance, one of the curious properties of Atomic Physics is that when an experiment is set up to measure the position of an electron, it manifests itself as a particle; if the experiment is set up to measure the electron's velocity, it manifests itself as a wave. In other words, the state of the particle is determined by the observer's experimental setup.

Similarly, the Principle of Complimentarity seems to apply in a much broader sense to our attempts at understanding the Universe. If we try to understand the Universe by analyzing it and taking it to pieces, then it will only slowly and tortuously yield up a few of its secrets. But if we concentrate on the source of our thinking and open ourselves to inspiration coming through inner channels, then the Consciousness that we have been directing outside in trying to understand Nature, will now itself become the focus of our attention and investigations.

When we turn inside, all the knots that have eluded us for so long, suddenly begin to dissolve, and Nature reveals to us its greatest mysteries. Soon we realize that Consciousness pervades this whole manifested World as beauty, as order, as universal truth, as power and as love and delight... but also as darkness, as pain, as confusion, as chaos and disorder. Every phenomenal or noumenal experience or idea, is just the One Consciousness, in one of its myriads of cloaks. In a world of endless change and variation, the one unchanging Absolute, which we have been seeking outside in Nature through our Science and our search for original causes, we now discover inside as the unchanging Consciousness, on which the whole Universe plays itself as in a dream.

And, just as the electron seems to know the experimenter's mind and transforms itself accordingly, to suit his experiment, so also the Consciousness seems to know the esthetic sensitivities of the investigator and responds in a way that brings to him the experience of great insight into the workings of Nature, which fills him with wonder and delight.

Consciousness proves itself to be whole, singular and inseparable. It inexplicably connects even separated particles of matter into unified coordinated responses, but without any conventional

communication having occurred between them. For example, in an atomic accelerator, a particle can be split in two subparticles and these separated parts sent off in opposite directions. Yet if one of the subparticles is subjected to a powerful magnetic field that flips its spin vector, the other particle, although totally free of any comparable field, will at the same time also flip into its opposite spin state, although there is no field acting on it at all, forcing it to respond. Nor is there the possibility that the one subparticle could have sent a message to the other, because the synchronous response of the one to the other occurred faster than a message could have been sent and received because of speed of light constraints. We can say that what indivisibly tied them together into a shared destiny was their shared inseparable consciousness, which they also share with their observer and with all the seemingly separate bodies and things and individuals in the Universe.

We associate this level of organization, which, as we previously pointed out, is higher and more powerful than information and energy, with the intuitive awareness of the observer or the *Buddhi* or the Consciousness, an even more subtle and higher mental aspect of the Universe. Here there occurs a natural flowering of Knowledge, as the Consciousness focuses and concentrates itself in the clarified intellect of the receptive observer. This involves no pre-defined forms or dogma. It is simply a totally fresh step of creative insight, going to a whole new level of organization, way beyond what has been understood before. In other words, it is a major revolution of new insight, just like the others before it in their time, moving to an ever higher level of awareness. And as we have seen, this follows naturally along the direction of the arrow that has been pointed out by the historical development of Science itself.

In this discussion we have now reached the present state of development of scientific thought, which, for the most part, is still known only to a few theoretical thinkers in the field. This is as far as Science can take us, but clearly there is much more to this journey that continues on even after we part company with the methods of Science.

Before we go on into those regions beyond the scope of Science, let us review what we have learned so far from this exploration of the scientific epochs which we have been discussing here as major

revolutions in consciousness associated with the West, but seen through the mystical framework of the East:

Matter: First we found that Man, who identified himself primarily with his physical body, got lost, as he became aware of his insignificance in a cold, uncaring Universe of infinite dimensions, in which this Solar System and the Earth that is part of it, occupy only a most minor place.

Energy: Next Man discovered the universal laws that bind all matter and energy together, and he realized that he was part of a greater family that includes the whole Cosmos.

Information: Then Man discovered the progression of order in which a long evolutionary saga had led from the simplest matter to complex forms everywhere in the Universe, and then on to life here on Earth, and then to the development of mind, and finally, on to the crown jewel of the creation, the awakened Awareness and purified Heart of the Self-realized Man.

Consciousness: In the fourth epoch Man realized that the world of objective reality was an illusion and that the profoundest insights into its makeup come not from without but from within, as flashes of inspiration awaken Man's intuitive faculty, and an underlying order and unity reveals itself in numerous subjective ways as wonder, beauty and joy.

If we can accept these four revolutionary phases as Western Man's progress towards his ultimate destiny, that of the highest reaches of Spirit, we see that through the development of Science, Western thinking has come onto a converging path of agreement with the revelations of the Vedic Seers of India. In these developments we see the orchestration of a grand drama, in which Man has gotten himself into a self-defeating cul-de-sac with his Science and Technology. But, at the same time, Man has also readied himself with that same Science to receive the guiding Light of Spirit, a level beyond consciousness, which is no longer associated with the human mind but that of the Divinity. This Divinity now manifests itself on center-stage, and helps Man to realize his own Truth, and thereby fulfil himself and lead himself home, letting go of his human consciousness and coming into his god-consciousness.

Sai – Age of Spirit

This brings us to the next step, which is still only in its seed form. That is a revolution which involves a *massive re-education of mankind along spiritual lines*. For us, this revolution in consciousness is associated with Sai Baba and his wide-ranging system of education with its emphasis on *Education in Human Values*. What is this spiritual philosophy that is destined to make such a powerful impact on the future course of civilization?

Sai Baba has declared that **Man is the greatest of all treasures in the universe** and He advocates the inner inquiry into the true essence nature of Man as the greatest of human pursuits, because it will lead to the highest wisdom and the supremest joy that can ever be experienced. In effect, *this philosophy returns Man to his natural place at the center; but the focus here is not on Man as a psycho-physical being but on Man as the manifestation of Spirit itself.*

The basic premise of this revolution in consciousness is that no matter what one's circumstances and station in life, there is no greater gift than being born a human being, for a human has the capacity to fully know the Truth of himself; and when he knows his own Truth he knows the Truth of everything else. And what is that Truth? It is that the Spirit as pure Beingness, as pure Consciousness and Eternal Delight is the unchanging basis of this whole Universe. And that One Reality known in the East as Sat-Chit-Ananda, underlies all the changing forms and phenomena that we experience through our mind and senses.

Baba tells us that if, instead of demeaning Man by separating him from his essential nature, we value him as the great jewel that he truly is, by emphasizing his noble qualities and encouraging these to blossom forth in his character, and purifying him of his dark lower qualities, then we find that Man's world-view changes dramatically and he sees all the phenomena of the World and all the ideas that make up the cultural heritage of mankind in a totally new light. When our intuitive faculties are awakened and our hearts are purified we begin to experience the Spirit directly. We find it pervading everything there is, being all there is, the only thing that has eternal value. It is the basis of all endeavors, all ideas, all experiences, all feelings and expressions, all fields of knowledge. We know it to be the

underlying Reality that is the very basis of all knowledge.

Once we are embarked on that road, we no longer separate our experiences into secular and spiritual compartments. From that point on, all experiences are spiritual because the Spirit is apprehended in everything. It is the only Reality, and it reveals itself as an all-pervading Presence behind the scenes, shining forth everywhere. Every human encounter, every experience, every subject of knowledge, every process, every name and form, is seen as a perspective of that one Reality. All are windows through which the Light of the Spirit shines.

In our educational process we develop not only the intellect but also a finer awareness, in which the Beingness that is the unseen root of our phenomenal world becomes known to the purified and sensitized mind. Sai said that this kind of education can take hold only in an integrated personality where the springs of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence, are flowing freely.

We associate this level of Consciousness, where we become aware of the Spirit present everywhere, with the universal bliss sheath, the finest and most subtle of all the sheaths. Here the Unity underlying all diversity is cognized directly as Ananda or Divine Bliss. Bliss is an intensely subjective experience of unmitigating joyfulness. Yet such a subjective term dealing with an intense inner experience is the only one appropriate for describing the Universe at this highest level of subtlety, because here it is no longer made up of objects or even ideas. At this level the World as we know it has disappeared back into its potential unmanifest form, all conflict has disappeared with it, and the experience that remains can only be spoken of as unceasing joy and delight.

Here the individual self has turned inwards and has absorbed itself in the True Self, the Immortal Atma. From here on, God, Man and Nature all blend together, just as ice cream of different hues and flavors mixes together and dissolves on the tongue, leaving a sweet taste of pure delight. Once the Eternal Self is known then we are unalterably established in God-consciousness. From that moment on, we realize that all there is the One Supreme Reality, describable only as unending Beingness, Consciousness and Bliss.

According to Sai, these are the three steps that lead to Man's spiritual awakening:

First, the springs of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence which lie hidden in every man must be encouraged to flower in his character. By developing these we cultivate all the noble qualities that make up a true Human Being.

Next, the Spirit which we know to be present everywhere illuminating everything we call the phenomenal world, is now experienced directly in the purified mind. In this regard we practice detachment and discrimination, and develop our faith and devotion until the Spirit becomes our constant companion, remembered in every phenomenon of our waking experience.

Then we are ready for the final spiritual ascent which is the culmination of our journey, where we experience the Spirit directly as our own reality, the Eternal Self. To reach this level we must purify, step-by-step, all the overlying sheaths that have veiled our Truth until we finally discover that the beloved indwelling Lord is our own Inner Self. And that Inner Self is the one True Self of all. It is the same Spirit which previously revealed itself to us as the joy we experienced in our discoveries and the love we felt when we realized our connectedness with everything and everyone in this vast World.

As we progress deeper into the spiritual path we find that the World appears less and less objective and instead becomes a reflection of our own inner view. As we spiritualize our outlook and Love becomes our unchanging inner experience, then Love also comes back to us as our outer view. Nature is but an appearance projected by mind onto the Spirit. When mind ceases in its busyness then the Spirit which is the only Truth reveals itself. Then the long dream is over and only the True Self, the pure I remains.

The explosion of information in this century which has made the Ancient Wisdom of the East available to the common man around the World, the progressive development in the philosophy of Western Science as outlined in this article, and the urgency for a new world-outlook in the face of the threat of global catastrophe, are all factors pointing to a unique opportunity in the history of the Human Race for a great spiritual movement towards Unity Consciousness.

Now Sai Baba has Himself told us that the Divine Will has resolved to bring all of mankind into the

transcendent awareness of the Spirit. He said, "Everyone must develop the higher values and consider himself as *Atma*. To make known to all this *Atma-Dharma* is the mission for which I have come. I will bring all people near me, for they are all mine, and I am theirs. Then I will start teaching and training them until they become completely ego-free. For many years it has been sweetness, kindness and soft persuasion. Hereafter it will be different. I will drag them, place them on the table and operate. It is my Love that prompts me to save them, to open their eyes, before they get deeper into the morass."

We are the fortunate recipients of this promise made by the Divine Will to rescue us all from the bog of worldly life and lead us back home to the One Reality. How very blessed we are. For, the Divinity has come into incarnation to oversee this last phase of our journey and struggle through the long night of ignorance. Now this dark journey will soon come to an end. In this journey we have occupied and discarded so many countless forms without ever having known the one great Truth, which is our true birthright, for it brings us back to our True Self. When we discover this True Self of ourself, we also realize that It is all there ever was, It is all there is and It is all there can ever be. It is the Absolute, the Ultimate Divinity Itself, the *Paramatma*, the One Immortal Self, the One in All.

OM TAT SAT