

# **Maharishi and Percival: Two Giants of Consciousness**

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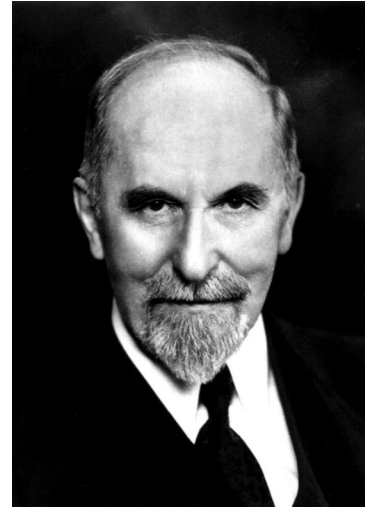
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Maharishi Mahesh Yogi



Harold W. Percival

## Introduction

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and Harold W. Percival both developed sophisticated theories of consciousness based on their own experience. This article examines the similarities between the theories of these two great thinkers.

Harold W. Percival (1868–1953) is best known as the author of *Thinking and Destiny*, an encyclopedic work on the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual evolution of the human being. He authored three other books and numerous essays.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1917–2008) is best known as the founder of the Transcendental Meditation (TM) program. He also led a revival of the ancient Vedic wisdom of India, through what became known as Maharishi Vedic Science. This science espouses not only TM but many other techniques, including Maharishi Ayurveda (traditional health system), Maharishi Jyotish (astrology), and Maharishi Sthapatya Veda or Maharishi Vastu (architecture).

### My background

I have been a close student of both Maharishi and Percival for several decades. I have been practicing TM since 1975 and the advanced TM-Sidhi program, including Yogic Flying, since 1979. I have a Master's degree in Maharishi Vedic Science from Maharishi University of Management in Fairfield, Iowa. I have also been a student of Percival since receiving a copy of *Thinking*

*and Destiny* from another Percival student in 1996.

## **Scope of this work**

In this paper, I will be comparing the teachings of Maharishi and Percival. I have endeavored to find direct quotes for each point of comparison, but since much of my training in Maharishi Vedic Science has been in the form of unpublished video and audio recordings, I will sometimes state a point of Maharishi Vedic Science in my own words rather than Maharishi's. Since both Maharishi and Percival wrote thousands of pages of books and other publications, I can only cover a few highlights of their teachings in this essay.

## **Maharishi's recommendation of Percival**

Maharishi once recommended *Thinking and Destiny* to participants of one of his courses. I was not personally present, and it was not recorded, but the story I have heard from several independent witnesses is as follows. In each of the summers of 1970, 1971, and 1972, Maharishi held a TM teacher training course on the campus of Humboldt State College in Arcata, California. On one of these courses, a group of course participants approached Maharishi with a set of books, which included *Thinking and Destiny*, and asked which of them he would recommend. Without even opening any of the books, Maharishi pointed to *Thinking and Destiny* and said, "Read this one. Every word in it is true." As far as I have been able to determine, *Thinking and Destiny* is the only Western book that Maharishi ever recommended.

## **Sources**

This paper features extended quotes from several works by Percival and Maharishi. The names of these works are indicated with three- or four-letter uppercase abbreviations, e.g. "[T&D](#)" for *Thinking and Destiny* and "[MVUI](#)" for *Maharishi Vedic University: Introduction*. A complete list of these abbreviations is given in the References section at the end of this paper.

*Direct quotes from Percival, including Thinking and Destiny, are in indented italics like this.*

**Direct quotes from Maharishi, including any of his books or recordings, are in indented bold type like this.**

# Consciousness

Consciousness is the primary concern of both Percival and Maharishi. The following passages show that they have similar concepts of consciousness.

*CONSCIOUSNESS is another mystery, the greatest and most profound of all mysteries. The word Consciousness is unique; it is a coined English word; its equivalent does not appear in other languages. Its all-important value and meaning are not, however, appreciated. This will be seen in the uses that the word is made to serve. To give some common examples of its misuse: It is heard in such expressions as "my consciousness," and "one's consciousness"; and in such as animal consciousness, human consciousness, physical, psychic, cosmic, and other kinds of consciousness. And it is described as normal consciousness, and greater and deeper, and higher and lower, inner and outer, consciousness; and full and partial consciousness. Mention is also heard of the beginnings of consciousness, and of a change of consciousness. One hears people say that they have experienced or caused a growth, or an extension, or an expansion, of consciousness. A very common misuse of the word is in such phrases as: to lose consciousness, to hold to consciousness; to regain, to use, to develop consciousness. And one hears, further, of various states, and planes, and degrees, and conditions of consciousness. Consciousness is too great to be thus qualified, limited, or prescribed. Out of regard for this fact this book makes use of the phrase: to be conscious of, or as, or in. To explain: whatever is conscious is either conscious of certain things, or as what it is, or is conscious in a certain degree of being conscious.*

*Consciousness is the ultimate, the final Reality. Consciousness is that by the presence of which all things are conscious. Mystery of all mysteries, it is beyond comprehension. Without it nothing can be conscious; no one could think; no being, no entity, no force, no unit, could perform any function. Yet Consciousness itself performs no function: it does not act in any way; it is a presence, everywhere. And it is because of its presence that all things are conscious in whatever degree they are conscious. Consciousness is not a cause. It cannot be moved or used or in any way affected by anything. Consciousness is not the result of anything, nor does it depend on anything. It does not increase or diminish, expand, extend, contract, or change; or vary in*

*any way. Although there are countless degrees in being conscious, there are no degrees of Consciousness: no planes, no states; no grades, divisions, or variations of any sort; it is the same everywhere, and in all things, from a primordial nature unit to the Supreme Intelligence. Consciousness has no properties, no qualities, no attributes; it does not possess; it cannot be possessed. Consciousness never began; it cannot cease to be. Consciousness IS.*

[T&D](#), Introduction, p. 25-26

**Consciousness is that which is conscious of itself. Being conscious of itself, consciousness is the knower of itself. Being the knower of itself, consciousness is both the knower and the known. Being both the knower and the known, consciousness is also the process of knowing. Thus consciousness has three qualities within its self-referral singularity—the qualities of knower, knowing, and known—the three qualities of ‘subject’ (knower), ‘object’ (known), and the relationship between the subject and object (process of knowing).**

[MVUI](#), p. 53

**Consciousness is wakefulness, unbounded alertness, pure intelligence, pure existence, self-referral fullness, all knowingness—the self-sufficient and unmanifest source, course, and goal of all creation.**

[MVUI](#), p. 58

**Consciousness is fundamental to life. It is the prime mover of life. Every word that we speak and every act that we perform is an impulse of consciousness.**

**All speech, action, and behaviour are fluctuations of consciousness. All life emerges from and is sustained in consciousness. The whole universe is the expression of consciousness. The reality of the universe is one unbounded ocean of consciousness in motion.**

**Since consciousness is the most basic element of everyone’s life, knowledge of consciousness is the most basic requirement for everyone to exist consciously and intelligently and enjoy full, unbounded creative potential of life, with maximum success in all fields of personal and professional life.**

[MVUI](#), p. 67-68

**As knowledge is structured in consciousness, complete knowledge is only available when consciousness is fully awake. Complete knowledge is only available when consciousness is full self-referral. Fully self-referral state of consciousness is Transcendental Consciousness, which is available to everyone through Maharishi's Transcendental Meditation.**

[MVUI](#), p. 100

# Realization

In the following passage, Percival describes an important incident in his life, in which he realized the supreme value of consciousness. He also describes how this realization enables him to obtain knowledge of any subject of inquiry. This passage is followed by one in which Maharishi describes a level of consciousness in which one can know or do anything.

*From November of 1892 I passed through astonishing and crucial experiences, following which, in the spring of 1893, there occurred the most extraordinary event of my life. I had crossed 14th Street at 4th Avenue, in New York City. Cars and people were hurrying by. While stepping up to the northeast corner curbstone, Light, greater than that of myriads of suns opened in the center of my head. In that instant or point, eternities were apprehended. There was no time. Distance and dimensions were not in evidence. Nature was composed of units. I was conscious of the units of nature and of units as Intelligences. Within and beyond, so to say, there were greater and lesser Lights; the greater pervading the lesser Lights, which revealed the different kinds of units. The Lights were not of nature; they were Lights as Intelligences, Conscious Lights. Compared with the brightness or lightness of those Lights, the surrounding sunlight was a dense fog. And in and through all Lights and units and objects I was conscious of the Presence of Consciousness. I was conscious of Consciousness as the Ultimate and Absolute Reality, and conscious of the relation of things. I experienced no thrills, emotions, or ecstasy. Words fail utterly to describe or explain CONSCIOUSNESS. It would be futile to attempt description of the sublime grandeur and power and order and relation in poise of what I was then conscious. Twice during the next fourteen years, for a long time on each occasion, I was conscious of Consciousness. But during that time I was conscious of no more than I had been conscious of in that first moment.*

*Being conscious of Consciousness is the set of related words I have chosen as a phrase to speak of that most potent and remarkable moment of my life.*

*Consciousness is present in every unit. Therefore the presence of Consciousness makes every unit conscious as the function it*

*performs in the degree in which it is conscious. Being conscious of Consciousness reveals the “unknown” to the one who has been so conscious. Then it will be the duty of that one to make known what he can of being conscious of Consciousness.*

*The great worth in being conscious of Consciousness is that it enables one to know about any subject, by thinking. Thinking is the steady holding of the Conscious Light within on the subject of the thinking. Briefly stated, thinking is of four stages: selecting the subject; holding the Conscious Light on that subject; focusing the Light; and, the focus of the Light. When the Light is focused, the subject is known. By this method, Thinking and Destiny has been written.*

T&D, Foreword, p. xxv-xxvi

**When awareness is permanently established in Pure Consciousness, only the truth will dawn in one’s awareness. This state of consciousness is called *Ṛitam bhara pragyā*, “that intelligence which knows only the truth.”**

**During the practice of Transcendental Meditation, as the awareness goes from the gross thinking level to finer thinking levels and then to the Transcendent, the experience of *Ṛitam bhara pragyā* can occur on the finest thinking level, very close to the Transcendent. In this experience one feels “I know everything”. As the practice advances, the experience of *Ṛitam bhara pragyā* becomes permanently established.**

**When one’s awareness is established on the level of *Ṛitam bhara pragyā*, it is possible to produce specific impulses, or sounds, in order to produce any desired influence on an object. This level of consciousness has control over the whole field of objectivity. By developing this ability to produce effects in creation according to one’s desire, one gains mastery over Nature.**

FIS

## The Individual Trinity

*The Triune Self is an indivisible unit, an individual trinity of three parts: I-ness-and-selfness are identity and knowledge, as knower of the Triune Self; rightness-and-reason are law and justice, as thinker of the Triune Self; feeling-and-desire are beauty and power, as doer of the Triune Self. The knower as the authority of knowledge, and the thinker as justice in relation to whatever subject is judged, are complete, perfect. But the doer, to be an operator of the body, must prove its ability to manage and maintain its perfect body whose functions are laws of nature. Every unit in that body is a balanced unit. Through the breath-form unit of the perfect body, all other units in that body are kept in balance. The doer part of the Triune Self is to be operator and manager of the perfect body. For this purpose it has been trained and educated in that university machine. The doer as feeling-and-desire must equalize and balance itself in beauty and power, in an inseparably balanced union, else the units of the perfect body would become unbalanced, imperfect, and would leave the Realm of Permanence. In the Eternal Order of Progression the doer does balance its feeling-and-desire, and so completes its Triune Self. Then the Triune Self, complete, is constituted as one of The Governors of the world in the Realm of Permanence.*

[T&D](#), chapter 5, section 6, p. 145-6

**In its 'self-referral' state, or transcendental state, consciousness knows itself alone; as such, it is the knower of itself. By being the knower of itself, it is also the object of knowledge and the process of knowing. Thus, in its self-referral state, consciousness is the unified state of knower, knowing, and known.**

**In the Vedic language this 'three-in-one' structure of consciousness is called Samhitā (unity) of Rishi (knower), Devatā (dynamism of the process of knowing), and Chhandas (the known).**

**Consciousness is the unity or coexistence of two qualities of intelligence that are contradictory to each other:**

- 1) Singularity of self-referral Samhitā, and**
- 2) Diversity of Rishi, Devatā, and Chhandas.**



**The evolution of consciousness into its object-referral expressions, ever maintaining the memory of its self-referral source—ever-evolving structure of consciousness maintaining the memory of its source—progresses in self-referral loops—every step of progress is in terms of a self-referral loop.**

**As every point of consciousness is infinitely correlated with every other point, the entire field of consciousness is structured in self-referral loops of infinite frequency.**

**The basic process is the same—flow and stop ... flow and stop ... flow and stop. The basic process of change, this basic process of transformation, continuously maintains the momentum of evolution of different levels of expression, creating different levels of manifestation upholding the process of evolution.**

# Vedic Science

“Vedic” refers to the ancient civilization of India, whose ideas and experiences are recorded in the Vedas and Vedic literature. Maharishi regarded the Vedic literature as comprising a total science which he called Vedic Science. Percival also seems to have discovered a wealth of wisdom in the ancient Vedic writings. Here we compare their outlooks on several topics of Vedic science.

## Bhagavad Gītā

*There is a treasure that is not entirely hidden: The Bhagavad Gita, the most precious of India's jewels. It is India's pearl beyond price. The truths imparted by Krishna to Arjuna are sublime, beautiful, and everlasting. But the far off historical period in which the drama is set and involved, and the ancient Vedic doctrines in which its truths are veiled and shrouded, make it too difficult for us to understand what the characters Krishna and Arjuna are; how they are related to each other; what the office of each is to the other, in or out of the body. The teaching in these justly venerated lines is full of meaning, and could be of great value. But it is so mixed with and obscured by archaic theology and scriptural doctrines that its significance is almost entirely hidden, and its real value is accordingly depreciated.*

[T&D](#), Introduction, p. 15-16

*Today there is in the East a remnant of the great teaching of the Light of the Intelligence going into nature and of its reclamation, hidden under the theology about purusha and prakriti and atma in its various phases. The Conscious Light, once known to ancient Hindus as the Ancient Wisdom, has in the course of time been shrouded in myth and mystery and is lost in their sacred books. In that little book, the Bhagavad Gita, the Light can be found by one who is able to extract the essential teaching of Krishna to Arjuna from the mass of other doctrine. One's conscious self in the body is Arjuna. Krishna is the thinker and knower of one's Triune Self, who reveals itself to its conscious doer in the body when one is ready and prepared to receive the teaching.*

[T&D](#), chapter 9, section 7, p. 545

**The Bhagavad-Gītā is the Light of life, lit by God at the altar of**

man, to save humanity from the darkness of ignorance and suffering. It is a scripture which outlives time, and can be acknowledged as indispensable to the life of any man in any age. It is the encyclopedia of life and this commentary provides an Index to it.

[BGNT](#), Introduction, p. 19

The Bhagavad-Gītā needs a commentary which restates in simple words the essential teaching and technique given by Lord Kṛishṇa to Arjuna on the battlefield. There are commentaries to extol the wisdom of the paths of knowledge, devotion and action in the Bhagavad-Gītā, but none to show that it provides a master-key to open the gates of all these different highways of human evolution simultaneously. No commentary has yet shown that through one simple technique proclaimed in the Bhagavad-Gītā, any man, without having to renounce his way of life, can enjoy the blessings of all these paths.

This commentary has been written to present that key to mankind and preserve it for all generations to come.

The Bhagavad-Gītā is the Scripture of Yoga, the Scripture of Divine Union. Its purpose is to explain in theory and practice all that is needed to raise the consciousness of man to the highest level. The marvel of its language and style is that every expression brings a teaching suitable to every level of human evolution.

[BGNT](#), Introduction, p. 20

## Killing of desires

*The Eastern teaching recognizes the fact that in order to attain to knowledge of the conscious self in the body, one must be freed from the illusions of the senses, and from the false thinking and action that result from failure to control one's own feelings and desires. But it does not transcend the universal misconception that feeling is one of the senses of the body. On the contrary, the teachers state that touch or feeling is a fifth sense; that desire is also of the body; and that both feeling and desire are things of nature in the body. According to this hypothesis it is argued that the purusha, or atman—the embodied doer, feeling-and-desire—must completely suppress feeling and must utterly destroy, "kill out," desire.*

*In the light of what has been shown here concerning feeling-and-desire, it would seem that the teaching of the East is advising*

*the impossible. The indestructible immortal self in the body cannot destroy itself. If it were possible for the human body to go on living without feeling-and-desire, the body would be a mere insensible breathing-mechanism.*

[T&D](#), Introduction, p. 14-15

**The Lord [Kṛishṇa] says [in the Bhagavad Gītā] that lasting peace is never achieved by one who is not complete in himself and still craves worldly things. However, this does not mean that in order to attain peace in life a man should cease to desire and to aspire. It is the desires that lead a man to greater happiness and to fulfilment — not the control and killing of desires, which has been widely advocated through the ages.**

**This verse too has been wrongly interpreted, with a consequent increase in dullness and inefficiency, particularly in the young people in India. The undue stress laid on fatalism has proved disastrous for their physical well-being and for the material progress of society. Thinking that to desire and to aspire will not lead to peace, people begin to abstain from enterprise and cease to open the gates of progress. This is simply a wrong understanding of the Lord's teaching.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 2, verse 70, p. 171

**Unfortunately it is commonly held that desires should be subdued in order to attain enlightenment. This is completely wrong. The misunderstanding has grown during the last few hundred years, and in consequence the task of those who seek the Truth has become more difficult than ever before. Here the Lord [Kṛishṇa] says: Go to the state of enlightenment in order to come out of the bondage of karma, bring the light in order to remove the darkness. It is this which is the underlying principle of the verse; not that one should try to remove the darkness in order to come into the light.**

**So that Arjuna may be released from the bondage of karma, the Lord wishes him to leave the whole field of karma. He wants him to know the transcendental Reality and thereby build up his mind to such a degree that it will rise above the binding influence of desires and actions. This is a direct way of realizing the state of integration and of eternal freedom during one's lifetime here on earth.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 3, verse 43, p. 244

## Realization of Brahman

*Aside from their misunderstanding of feeling-and-desire the Indian teachers give no evidence of having a knowledge or understanding of the Triune Self. In the unexplained statement: "thou art that," it must be inferred that the "thou" who is addressed is the atman, the purusha—the individual embodied self; and that the "that" with which the "thou" is thus identified is the universal self, Brahman. There is no distinction made between the doer and its body; and likewise there is a corresponding failure to distinguish between the universal Brahman and universal nature. Through the doctrine of a universal Brahman as the source and end of all embodied individual selves, untold millions of doers have been kept in ignorance of their real Selves; and moreover have come to expect, even to aspire, to lose in the universal Brahman that which is the most precious thing that anyone can have: one's real identity, one's own individual great Self, among other individual immortal Selves.*

[T&D](#), Introduction, p. 14-15

**Veda is the knower and the process of knowing, and that which hides—together—Rishi, Devata, and Chhandas. This is just a scrutiny of what it is. It is the knower of itself. It is the knower, knowing, and known—three together in the state of unmanifest. It is neither this nor this, it is togetherness and togetherness of this. It is a field of all possibilities.**

**It is Brahm Consciousness. It is Unity Consciousness, all-pervading everywhere, so all the diversities are points of Unity Consciousness—nothingness, zero. It is a beautiful field of the play of the enlightened. This is the field of talk between the enlightened. This is the field of play of Unity Consciousness—Brahm. "Aham Brahmasmi"—I am Totality. And not only I am Totality, not only "Aham Brahmasmi", "Tat Tvam Asi"—you are also That. I am Totality. You are Totality. "Sarvam Khalv Idam Brahm"—all this is Totality.**

**These are the Vedic expressions which bring together the Veda. And Veda means: yes and no together; one and three together; zero and everything together. That is why Transcendental Consciousness is zero. There is no multiplicity—"Neha Nanasti Kinchan" is the equivalent word in the Vedic Literature.**

**So, "Aham Brahmasmi", "Tat Tvam Asi", "Sarvam Khalv Idam**

**Brahm”, “Neha Nanasti Kinchan”—these are the Vedic expressions. All these expressions, Dr Hagelin [a quantum physicist working closely with Maharishi] has experienced. All these are the Vedic expressions he has found in the equations of mathematics, systematically satisfying the intellect.**

[IAAR](#), par. 39-42

## **Loss of knowledge**

*Another movement which affects a considerable number of people in their mental destiny is the Eastern Movement. Over a hundred years ago scholars translated books of Eastern philosophy and religion for the West. Only a few students were interested until toward the end of the nineteenth century the Theosophical Movement made Indian philosophy prominent. Then thoughts to be found in Eastern literature attracted wider attention.*

*It was seen that the old Eastern nations had a record about knowledge which the West had not. That record concerned a vast chronology based on astronomical cycles, a history of the world divided into ages, information about the structure and functions of the body, the correlation of forces in man and the universe, and the existence of other worlds within and without the visible earth. It dealt with some of the hidden forces by which the life of man and of the earth functions, with some of the elementals, gods and Intelligences. It is likely that ancient Eastern sages had knowledge of the relation of the doer to its body, and of the control of the body through training and through the use of nerve currents. They knew about “the science of the breath,” of states after death, of human hibernation, of mystic trance states, of the possible extension of life, of the virtues of plants, minerals and animal matter in sympathy and antipathy, and of the powers operable by means of the senses of seeing, hearing, tasting and smelling. They were therefore able to change matter from one state to another, to handle forces of nature which are unknown to the West, and to control thinking.*

*This knowledge was taught to the East by Wise Men in a past age. Nothing remains but a few records and even they are changed. The Wise Men withdrew after the human beings had ceased to follow the teachings. The Wise Men could stay only as long as the people showed a desire to go along right lines. When those to whom the*

*knowledge and the power had been given, used it for worldly advantages or refined selfishness, they were left to themselves. The existence of the Wise Men became a legend except to a few. Some of those who knew the teachings, gradually became priests and developed a priestcraft and religious systems which they supported with the knowledge remaining to them. They transcribed the knowledge into words which required to be read with keys. They omitted parts of the ancient teachings and fabricated additions to meet their ends. They forgot a large part of the ancient knowledge. They suited the philosophy to the environment of the country with its vast mountains, plains, waters and jungles, to hierarchies of gods and devils, mythological monsters and sprites. They fostered superstition and ignorance. They put the four classes of doers into a caste system that holds many persons out of their true class. They restricted the acquisition of knowledge to certain layers of people.*

*They subverted the philosophy to support their system of priestcraft. The whole course of living and thinking was arranged on a religious foundation, and science, art, agriculture, marriage, cooking, eating, dressing, laws, everything rested on religious observances, which made priests necessary everywhere. The country, India, gradually lost freedom and responsibility. Invasions, internal wars and diseases devastated the land, which was repopled several times. Each time the people got further away from the enlightened age which had been when the Wise Men moved among men. Today they have only remnants of a past which is greater than they know.*

T&D, chapter 7, section 26, p. 393-394

**The truth of Vedic wisdom is by its very nature independent of time and can therefore never be lost. When, however, man's vision becomes one-sided and he is caught by the binding influence of the phenomenal world to the exclusion of the absolute phase of Reality, when he is thus confined within the ever-changing phases of existence, his life loses stability and he begins to suffer. When suffering grows, the invincible force of nature moves to set man's vision right and establish a way of life which will again fulfil the high purpose of his existence. The long history of the world records many such periods in which the ideal pattern of life is first forgotten and then restored to man.**

**Veda Vyasa, the sage of enlightened vision and greatest among the historians of antiquity, records the growth of unrighteousness in**



the families of those who rule the people about five thousand years ago. It was then that Lord Kṛishṇa came to remind man of the true values of life and living. He restored that direct contact with the transcendental Being which alone can give fullness to every aspect of life. He brought to light absolute Being as the basic Reality of life and established It as the foundation of all thinking, which in turn is the basis of all doing. This philosophy of Being, thinking and doing is the true philosophy of the integrated life. It not only helps the doer to gain success in his undertaking but, at the same time, sets him free from the bondage of action, bringing fulfilment to every level. Such is the teaching of eternal Truth, given by Lord Kṛishṇa to Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gītā.

Gradually the teaching came to be forgotten, so that two thousand years later even the principle of Being as the absolute Reality, the source and basis of all creation, was overshadowed by misguided beliefs which glorified only the relative aspects of life. 'The long lapse of time', says Lord Kṛishṇa, is the reason for such a loss of wisdom.

When the philosophy of the integrated life restored by Lord Kṛishṇa was lost from view, the idea grew that everything which life can offer is present on the obvious levels of existence, and that it would therefore be useless to aspire to anything that might lie deeper than external appearances. Society became dominated by this superficial outlook, insight into Reality was lost, the right sense of values forgotten and the stability of life destroyed. Tension, confusion, superstition, unhappiness and fear prevailed.

[BGNT](#), Preface, p. 9-10

This age has, however, been fortunate. It has witnessed the living example of a man inspired by Vedic wisdom in its wholeness and thus able to revive the philosophy of the integrated life in all its truth and fullness. His Divinity Swami Brahmananda Saraswati [Maharishi's teacher], the inspiration and guiding light of this commentary on the Bhagavad-Gītā, adorned the seat of the Shankaracharya of the North and, glowing in divine radiance, embodied in himself the head and heart of Shankara [an ancient teacher who restored Lord Kṛishṇa's essential teaching]. He expounded the Truth in Its all-embracing nature. His quiet words, coming from the unbounded love of his heart, pierced the hearts of all who heard him and brought enlightenment to their minds. His message was the message of fullness of heart and mind.



[BGNT](#), Preface, p. 16

**The purpose of this commentary is to restore the fundamental truths of the Bhagavad-Gītā and thus restore the significance of its teaching. If this teaching is followed, effectiveness in life will be achieved, men will be fulfilled on all levels and the historical need of the age will be fulfilled also.**

[BGNT](#), Preface, p. 17

# Percival's Vedic Glossary

In *Thinking and Destiny*, chapter 7, section 28, Percival defines several Vedic terms. It is interesting how closely these match Maharishi's definitions.

## Brahman

*Brahm. A complete Triune Self which has become an Intelligence. It has no contact with the four worlds of nature and is alone in its own light in the fire sphere.*

*Brahma (neuter). The same Intelligence, which has raised the aia to be a Triune Self. The passive and the active sides are equal and it is alone with the Triune Self it has raised. Brahma (neuter) in the spheres signifies the Intelligence whose Triune Self—later, in the worlds—maintains its sexless and perfect physical body in the Realm of Permanence, the Eternal.*

*Brahmâ (active). The same Intelligence, but the circumflex accent over the a in Brahmâ signifies that it has become active. This means that the doer of its Triune Self has separated its perfect sexless physical body and has procreated a new universe for itself, a man body and a woman body. Therefore the doer has exiled itself from its thinker and knower and is no longer conscious of the Realm of Permanence, the Eternal; it is conscious only of this man and woman world of time. Here it must continue periodically through life and death to re-exist in a man body or in a woman body, until it regenerates and restores its physical body to its original state of perfection, that is, balances its feeling-and-desire in permanent union and unites with its thinker and knower; and, by so doing, again becomes conscious of and regains its place in the Realm of Permanence, the Eternal. By so doing it will free the Intelligence (Brahma) and complete its Triune Self by being itself free.*

*Brahman. The same Intelligence, to which its Triune Self has restored all the Light loaned and whose Triune Self is now itself a Brahm. A Brahman is freed from all connections with nature and is a free Intelligence.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 413

**Brahman is the Reality which embraces both the relative and absolute fields of life. Having gained the state of Brahman, a man has risen to the ultimate Reality of existence. In this state of enlightenment he has accomplished eternal liberation, and once a man has risen to this state there is no falling away from it.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 4, verse 24, p. 291

**When the mind becomes infused with Being, then no thought, word or act can take the mind out of Being. This is the state of cosmic consciousness. The purpose of the present verse is to describe clearly the relationship of action to cosmic consciousness in which all actions form an integral part of that consciousness and are therefore appreciated as none other than that consciousness, none other than Brahman.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 4, verse 24, p. 291

## **Prakṛiti**

*Prakṛiti, which is (1) the matter of which the human body is composed; (2) outside nature making up the four worlds.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 414

***Prakṛiti*, or Nature, is the primal substance out of which the entire creation arises. Its constituents are the three *Gunas*, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. They are responsible for all change and form the basis of evolution.**

[BGNT](#), Appendix on Sāṃkhya, p. 481

## **Puruṣa**

*Puruṣa (unqualified). (1) The knower of the Triune Self in its noetic atmosphere. (2) The thinker of the Triune Self in its mental atmosphere. (3) The doer of the Triune Self in its psychic atmosphere. In none of these cases is puruṣa connected with nature.*

***Puruṣa*, or Cosmic Spirit, is the transcendental Reality which comes into direct experience during transcendental meditation at the point where even the subtlest level of creation is transcended and pure transcendental consciousness alone remains. *Puruṣa* forms the basis of the subjective aspect of life. He is the eternal silent witness of all that was, is and will be.**

## Sat-Chit-Ānanda

*Sat (unqualified). Truth as a self-perpetuating Light of Parabrahman, Brahman, Brahma (neuter), Brahmā (active), and Brahm. Truth as the Light of the Intelligence in the atmospheres of the Triune Self. It is the Conscious Light within, which shows all things as they are. Truth is of the degree in which one has that Conscious Light.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 414

*Chitta. The matter of the life world or life planes which has been impressed by the diffused Light of the Intelligence in the mental atmosphere of a human. It may still be in the mental atmosphere or it may act in forms of nature.*

*Chitt. (1) The Light of the Intelligence in the mental atmosphere of a human; (2) "Consciousness," used in the sense of being conscious of; and, (3) "Consciousness," in the sense of being conscious that one is conscious.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 416

*Ananda. Joy or bliss, a certain state of feeling which is produced when feeling uses the feeling-mind, independently of the body-mind.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 416

**The essential nature of Being is absolute bliss-consciousness. ('Sat-Chit-Ānanda' — It is 'Sat', that which never changes; it is 'Chit', that which is consciousness; it is 'Ānanda', that which is bliss.) Without knowledge of its basis, absolute bliss-consciousness, life is like a building without a foundation. All relative life without the conscious basis of Being is like a ship without a rudder, ever at the mercy of the tossing sea.**

[SBAL](#), "What is Being?", p. 4

## The three guṇas: sattva, rajas, tamas

*Sattva, rajas, and tamas are the three gunas, which are said to be qualities, attributes, of nature, one of which rules the other two in the psychic atmosphere of the human.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 415

**The entire creation consists of the interplay of the three Guṇas — *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas* — born of *Prakṛiti*, or Nature. The process of evolution is carried on by these three Guṇas. Evolution means creation and its progressive development, and at this basis lies activity. Activity needs *Rajo-guṇa* to create a spur, and it needs *Sato-guṇa* and *Tamo-guṇa* to uphold the direction of the movement.**

**The nature of *Tamo-guṇa* is to check or retard, but it should not be thought that when the movement is upwards *Tamo-guṇa* is absent. For any process to continue, there have to be stages in that process, and each stage, however small in time and space, needs a force to maintain it and another force to develop it into a new stage. The force that develops it into a new stage is *Sato-guṇa*, while *Tamo-guṇa* is that which checks or retards to process in order to maintain the state already produced so that it may form the basis for the next stage.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 2, verse 45, p. 128

*Sattva. In nature, the matter of the light world which is made light by the Light of the Intelligences in the noetic atmospheres of their Triune Selves. In the human the matter of the light world which is in his psychic atmosphere.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 414--415

*Tamas. In nature, the matter of the form world, which is without light and therefore dull and heavy. In the human the matter of the form world in his psychic atmosphere.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 415

***Sattva* and *Tamas* are opposed to each other, while *Rajas* is the force complementary to both. *Tamas* destroys the created state; *Sattva* creates a new state while the first is being destroyed.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 4, verse 13, p. 269

*Rajas. In nature, the matter of the life world made active by the mental atmospheres of human beings and the acting desires which in thinking and thoughts enter into these atmospheres. In the human, the matter of the life world in his psychic atmosphere.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 415

**‘Rajo-guṇa’: Rajas, one of the three Guṇas of Nature. It is responsible for motion and energy.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 3, verse 37, p. 236

**The force of *Rajas* plays a necessary part in creation and destruction; it maintains a bond between the forces of *Sattva* and *Tamas*. Thus all three *Guṇas* are necessary for any state of manifested life.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 4, verse 13, p. 269

## Ātmā

*Atma. The Light of an Intelligence; the Conscious Light within a human, by the use of which he thinks and creates thoughts.*

*Atman. The Triune Self (as the knower) in the Light of the Intelligence; the portion of that Light which the Triune Self (as the thinker) allows its human being to use.*

*Jivatma. Every living thing in physical nature, which is given its being by the atma (Light) which the human thinks into nature.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 415

***Jīva*, then, is individualized cosmic existence; it is the individual spirit within the body. With its limitations removed, *Jīva* is *Ātmā*, transcendent Being.**

**When the individuality of the *Jīva* and the universality of the transcendent Self, the *Ātmā*, are united and found together on one level of life, then there is *Brahman*, the all-embracing cosmic life.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 2, verse 18, p. 98

## Mahat

Mahat. *The nature-matter which had been in and is sent out again from the mental atmosphere of a doer or of all doers. It is nature, but made intelligent by the Light of the Intelligence used by the body-mind, which is sometimes assisted by the feeling-mind and the desire-mind, when these are used by the doer in the body.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 415

**Mahat is that first state of evolution where the previously undifferentiated primal substance, *Prakṛiti*, begins to move towards manifestation, begins to take a specific direction. It is the cosmic will in operation, satisfying the urge for manifestation that has been created by the disturbance of the perfect equilibrium of the three *Guṇas*.**

[BGNT](#), Appendix on Sāṃkhya, p. 481-482

## Ahaṃkāra

Ahankara. *Egoism or egotism, as the doer's distinctive feeling of the presence of the I-ness of the knower.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 415

**Ahaṃkāra is the principle responsible for the individuation of mahat.**

[BGNT](#), Appendix on Sāṃkhya, p. 482

## Manas

Manas. *The body-mind, sometimes aided by the use of the feeling-mind and the desire-mind.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 415

**Manas is the cosmic mind which provides provides the object for the individuating principle, *Ahaṃkāra*. In the state of *Manas*, the urge of *Prakṛiti* towards manifestation becomes clearly defined.**

[BGNT](#), Appendix on Sāṃkhya, p. 482

## Māyā

*Maya. The screen as nature and the everchanging objects on it, made by feeling-and-desire when thinking with the body-mind according to the senses.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 416

**From a cosmic standpoint, Vedānt explains the relationship of the unmanifested absolute Reality (*Brahman*) with the manifested relative aspect of life by introducing the principle of *Māyā*. The word ‘*Māyā*’ means literally that which is not, that which does not exist. This brings to light the character of *Māyā*: it is not anything substantial. Its presence is inferred from the effects it produces.**

[BGNT](#), Appendix on Vedānt, p. 491

## States of consciousness

*Jagrata. The waking or outermost state, in which the doer is conscious of the appearances of objects.*

*Svapna. Dreaming or the inner state, in which the doer is conscious of the appearances of objects as forms.*

*Sushupti. The state of dreamlessness, in which the doer is not in contact with the four senses and is conscious of objects and forms only as subjects.*

*Turiya. The state of the doer of the human as self-knowledge, where all other states are included and vanish in the Light.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 416

**In this state of of *Naishkarmya* [non-action], the doer has risen to the fourth state of consciousness, *Turiya*; this, in its essential nature is Self-consciousness, the pure absolute state of bliss-consciousness — *Sat-Chid-Ānanda* — but yet is inclusive of the three relative states of consciousness.**

[BGNT](#), commentary on chapter 3, verse 4, p. 187

**The seven states of consciousness are:**

**Waking (*Jāgrat Avasthā* or *Jāgrat Chetanā*), Dreaming (*Swapn Avasthā* or *Swapn Chetanā*), Sleeping (*Sushupti Avasthā* or *Sushupti***



***Chetanā*), Transcendental Consciousness (*Turiya Avasthā or Turiya Chetanā*), Cosmic Consciousness (*Turiyatīt Avasthā or Turiyatīt Chetanā*), God Consciousness (*Bhagavad Chetanā*), and Unity Consciousness (*Brāhmī Sthiti or Brāhmī Chetanā*).**

[MVUI](#) p. 161-162

Here I will give my understanding of the last three of the seven states of consciousness listed in the previous quote. For each state, I first give the understanding from Maharishi Vedic Science (MVS) and then the understanding from *Thinking and Destiny* (T&D).

**Cosmic Consciousness.** MVS: the inner unbounded Self is realized; the heart and mind are balanced; there is no stress in the body and no need for further human births. T&D: the Triune Self has balanced its feeling-and-desire and does not take further births in the human world.

**God Consciousness.** MVS: the inner Self is unbounded as in Cosmic Consciousness, but the senses are developed so that they perceive the finest relative values. T&D: the Triune Self has become a Triune Self complete, an officer of the Government of the world in the Realm of Permanence.

**Unity Consciousness.** MVS: the highest state of individual consciousness; the inner Self and senses are developed as in God Consciousness, but the senses are further developed so that they perceive the same unbounded value that is present in the inner Self. T&D: the Triune Self complete has become an Intelligence, the highest degree in which a unit can be conscious as a unit, whose Light is a Conscious Light, and who loans Light to a Triune Self.

# Yoga

## Yoga as taught in the West

In the West, “yoga” usually means a system of exercise, either closely or loosely based on a system of yoga called *hatha yoga*. But the original meaning of yoga is much broader. Yoga in this wider sense is primarily a *mental* system.

Maharishi classified Transcendental Meditation and the advanced TM-Sidhi program as belonging to a system of yoga called *rāja yoga*. In ancient India, yoga as a whole was organized by a seer named Patanjali in a short work, the *Yoga Sūtras*.

In *Thinking and Destiny*, chapter 7, section 26, Percival discusses yoga and other Indian teachings.

*The interest recently created in the West by the revelation of the existence of Eastern treasures of knowledge does not center around the noetic and intellectual features of that philosophy. The West picks out the things that cause wonder, like clairvoyance, the astral phenomena, hidden forces, and the acquisition of power over others. Since the road has been opened by this interest, missionaries have come from the East to convert people of the West. Even if the missionaries come with good intentions they often weaken under the lure of the West. Their appetites and ambitions get the better of them and frequently they succumb to the desire for comfort, praise, influence, money and sensuality which they tell their adherents to overcome. The missionaries have grand titles, like Guru, Mahatma, Swami and Sanyasi, indicating perfection in knowledge, virtue and power. What they and their pupils have done so far does not show that they knew much beyond the letters of their books.*

*Whatever may be the darshana, one of the six schools of philosophy to which these missionaries belong, they teach what is so foreign to Western thinking that they do not pass the meaning on to Western people. The Western disciples get only a few general and inaccurate notions about purusha or atma as the soul or self, tattwas, saktis, chakras, siddhis, mantrams, purusha, prakriti, karma, and yoga. These notions are in such forms as to be unavailable for good.*

*The missionaries work up enthusiasm among their followers, and after a while they give practical teachings. These relate to their practice of yoga or the use of physical means to acquire psychic powers, “spiritual” enlightenment, union with Brahman and liberation from the bonds of matter.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7 Section 26, p. 395–396

Percival’s dismissal of Eastern approaches to personal development was largely valid when he wrote the above words sometime in the early 20th century. But with the introduction of TM and its associated programs in the latter half of the 20th century, it is not so easy now to dismiss all of these approaches.

Millions of people have learned TM, and hundreds of thousands have learned the TM-Sidhi program, including Yogic Flying. Hundreds of scientific studies investigating these programs have been performed, many of them showing significant positive effects, and no negative effects. Benefits include increased brain wave coherence, faster reaction time, enhanced creativity, increased intelligence, and improved health. Many of these studies have been published in leading peer-reviewed scientific journals. See [TMSR](#) and [TMCP](#).

At an advanced program called the *Invincible America Assembly* at Maharishi University of Management in Fairfield, Iowa, hundreds of participants spend 7 to 9 hours a day practicing the TM-Sidhi program together, with long periods of group Yogic Flying. Many assembly participants have experienced higher states of consciousness. One example:

The experience of infinite silence of Being is a 100%, all-time, eternal reality. Simultaneously the experience of infinite dynamism, expansion, is also a 100%, all-time, eternal reality. These two infinities are embedded in one another. They coexist eternally and the experience of one or the experience of the other is simply a matter of where the attention is. The same is true for all the manifest values that emerge from the eternal relationship of these two coexisting infinite realities. The two fullnesses of infinite silence and infinite dynamism, and the infinite possibilities in between, are experienced as the totality of all that is, all that ever has been, or all that ever will be. This totality unfolds its progression of *Ātmā*, *Veda*, *Vishva*, and *Brahm*, and the expression “*Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi*, I am totality” is a reality of this experience.

This is a very personal experience of divine grace. It is the

effulgent Light of God present in my conscious awareness as the infinite, eternal, 100% fullness of blissful silence coexisting with the infinite, eternal, 100% fullness of joyful dynamism. My breath is felt as God's breath and each breath is cosmic delight. The eternal silence is not disturbed and the eternal dynamism is not diminished. The totality of both these infinite coexisting opposites is the range of God's creation and it is the range of my own awareness. It's my experience that the gates of heaven are wide open for all to enter.—  
H.S.

[IAAE](#), p. 22

Group practice of the TM-Sidhi program has benefits for the surrounding society as well. For instance, during an assembly of over 4000 TM-Sidhi practitioners in Washington, DC, in the summer of 1993, crime in the DC area decreased 23%, attitudes toward President Clinton suddenly reversed from largely negative to largely positive, and a "quality of life" index suddenly reversed from a downward trend to an upward trend. These benefits all disappeared soon after the group dispersed. See [CBYF](#) p. 373-389. Similar assemblies in the Middle East have reduced not only crime but also war deaths. See [CBYF](#) p. 298-303.

## **Yoga and freeing the doer**

*Patanjali unites the Indian systems of yoga. He is the authority to which most yogis look. He gave a set of rules on the practice of raja yoga, probably the most valuable which have been transmitted on the subject. His rules should cover the period from the purification of the morals, through the various stages of thinking, to the attainment of liberation of feeling from nature. But feeling is by him identified as a fifth sense, and he calls the conscious something in the body by another name or names. Instead of liberating feeling from nature, Patanjali would chain the doer to nature by dealing with feeling as a part of nature, that is, as a fifth sense, instead of as an aspect of the conscious self, the doer-in-the-body. At best that goes only a short way towards the end, which should be union of feeling-and-desire of the doer, and then union of the doer with the thinker and knower. He treats of eight stages through which one must pass. These stages he calls yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7 Section 28, p. 404

**The purpose of Yoga is to gain knowledge by direct perception. Yoga is a practical science of life which lays open to direct experience not only the field of absolute Being but all the different levels of relative creation as well.**

[BGNT](#), Appendix on Yoga, p. 483

**For hundreds of years these different limbs of Yoga [yama, niyama, etc.] have been mistakenly regarded as different steps in the development of the state of Yoga, whereas in truth each limb is designed to create the state of Yoga in the sphere of life to which it relates. With the continuous practice of all these limbs, or means, simultaneously, the state of Yoga grows simultaneously in all the eight spheres of life, eventually to become permanent.**

[BGNT](#), Appendix on Yoga, p. 486

Percival's criticism of Patanjali probably held true for the teachers of yoga in Percival's time, but I don't believe it holds true for Patanjali himself. Consider, for instance, the following three verses from a translation of the Yoga Sūtras.

Yoga is the complete settling of the activity of the mind.

Then the observer is established in the Self.

[YSE](#), chapter 1, sūtras 2-3, p. 11-12

In the absence of activity, the purpose of *puruṣa* is fulfilled, and what remains is *kaivalya*—the infinite power of consciousness established in its own nature.

[YSE](#), chapter 4, sūtra 34 p. 126

This last sūtra can also be translated as follows.

When the Self is brought to its unmanifest source, the activities of nature return to their original source, and the singularity of awareness is established in its own nature—the power of consciousness is ultimate.

Percival unfortunately repeats a mistake, which Maharishi points out, that other students of Indian thought have made for centuries: referring to yama, niyama, etc. as eight *stages* when in fact they are eight *limbs*. Patanjali's word for them (Yoga Sūtras, chapter 2, sūtra 29) is *aṅgāni*, limbs.

## Incompleteness of the teaching of the Yoga Sūtras

*His [Patanjali's] system is written as if in a code language. Without a key and familiarity with the philosophy, the words transmitted as the famous sutras, are insufficient to permit an insight into his system. Patanjali's writing is too sketchy to be followed without the commentators. There are ancient commentaries, which modern commentators merely paraphrase without giving much, if any, further information. This much, however, appears, that when the yogi can perform samyama he goes through most of the eight stages which he should have passed through. And it appears that so he obtains knowledge of all things, states, places, conditions, past and future, and has the powers which that knowledge gives him. He is said to have innumerable powers of which some are given, as: knowing the time when he or any person will die; knowing his own past lives or those of others; knowing the motions of the stars and what the clusters of the stars are; making himself invisible, immovable and invincible; becoming acquainted with celestial beings; walking on the water; rising in the air; surrounding himself with fire; prolonging his life to any age; isolating himself and living consciously apart from the body. But this does not free the practitioner from nature. The fact is that he is more securely bound to nature than he formerly was, because every stage in the accomplishments is connected with nature.*

[T&D](#), chapter 7, section 28, p. 406-408

**Maharishi's Transcendental Meditation Technique is a simple, natural, effortless procedure practised for 15 to 20 minutes in the morning and evening while sitting comfortably with the eyes closed. During this technique the individual's awareness settles down and experiences a unique state of restful alertness: as the body becomes deeply relaxed, the mind transcends all mental activity to experience the simplest form of human awareness—Transcendental Consciousness—where consciousness is open to itself. This is the self-referral state of consciousness.**

**The experience of Transcendental Consciousness develop the individual's latent creative potential while dissolving accumulated stress and fatigue through the deep rest gained during the practice of Transcendental Meditation. This experience enlivens within one's awareness creativity, dynamism, orderliness, and organizing power,**

**which results in increasing effectiveness and success in daily life.**

**Transcendental Meditation can be easily learned by anyone. People of all cultures, religions, and educational backgrounds practise the technique.**

**The TM-Sidhi Programme is an advanced aspect of the technology of Maharishi's Vedic Science. It trains the individual to think and act from the level of Transcendental Consciousness, greatly enhancing the co-ordination between mind and body. The individual gains the ability to enliven Natural Law to support all avenues of life to fulfil his desires.**

[MVUI](#), p. 260-261

Percival is quite correct that Yoga Sūtras by themselves are far from a complete teaching. This is true of Vedic sūtras in general, which are more like bullet points than complete discourses. Until recent centuries, Vedic knowledge was transmitted only orally and was not written down. Books were committed to memory and transmitted from father to son, or village guru to his students. A given family usually specialized in only one type of book. Even long books were memorized, such as the historical epics *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, which in their printed form today occupy several volumes.

Books in sūtra form, such as the Yoga Sūtras, were only intended to be easily memorized summaries, while a complete teaching was only available through personal instruction from a teacher.

Verbal instruction is exactly the way Maharishi has trained his teachers to instruct practitioners into Transcendental Meditation and the TM-Sidhi programs. Information *about* the techniques can be given in any medium—lectures, books, websites, etc.—but the techniques themselves are only given through personal, one-on-one instruction.

In Transcendental Meditation, the awareness gradually settles down into ever subtler levels of thinking, until the subtlest level of thinking is transcended, and the mind is left in its own unbounded nature, pure consciousness. This is called transcendental consciousness (TC), or, in Vedic terms, *turīya* (the fourth state of consciousness, which Percival defines as “*the state of the doer of the human as self-knowledge*”). TC can also be considered a temporary experience of *samādhi*, (evenness of mind).

The TM-Sidhi program builds on this. After practicing TM for several weeks at least, and the experience of TC has become regular, the practitioner is eligible

to learn the TM-Sidhi program. The practice of this program starts with TM, and then moves to practice of siddhis, or powers, other techniques which are outlined, but not fully explained, in the Yoga Sūtras. When siddhis are taught in this way, the practitioner is unlikely to get lost in powers, since they are always performed in the context of samādhi, unbounded consciousness. The practitioner first experiences samādhi, which, in Percival's terms, frees him from "nature". Then the practitioner experiences the results of sūtras in context of his experience of samādhi, as thought projected from finest level of feeling, which is closest to samādhi. In the language of the Yoga Sūtras, this is the practice of *saṁyama* (togetherness) of *dhāraṇa* (direction), *dhyāna* (transcending), and samādhi.

I agree that siddhi practice before Maharishi, especially in the West, was generally unsatisfactory and often produced adverse results for exactly the reasons Percival gives. However, the TM-Sidhi program starts with samādhi, turiya, and this keeps the practitioner from getting lost in boundaries. Quite the opposite—it binds together relative and absolute, which is real yoga, union. This enables the practitioner to be very effective in realizing and integrating higher states of consciousness in his inner life, while at the same time making him more effective in his outward activity.



# The Circle

## Constitution of the Universe

*The circle with its twelve points on the circumference, (Fig. VII-B [reproduced below]), is the origin, the sum and the greatest of all geometrical symbols. Man and the Universe are related to and can only be understood by their relation to the circle with the twelve points on the circumference.*

[T&D](#), chapter 13, section 1, p. 807

*The figure of the circle with its twelve points reveals, explains and proves the arrangement and constitution of the Universe, and the place of everything in it. This includes the unmanifested as well as the manifested parts. It applies to every kind of matter, force and thing in the manifested Universe, from a primordial unit of the fire to the Supreme Intelligence.*

[T&D](#), chapter 13, section 1, p. 807

**Veda is the structure and function of pure knowledge. It encompasses the whole range of science and technology; it is theory and practice at the same time; it is the structure of total knowledge—Śamhitā of Ṛishi, Devatā, Chhandas—the togetherness of observer, process of observation, and object of observation.**

[MVUI](#), p. 5

**All aspects of the Vedic Literature, in the process of structuring Veda, function together simultaneously; so the structure of Veda is structured by those mechanics whose dynamism is always self-referral. That is the reason why the structure of Veda is self-referral, and as such the structure is in a circular form, a *MANDALA* form.**

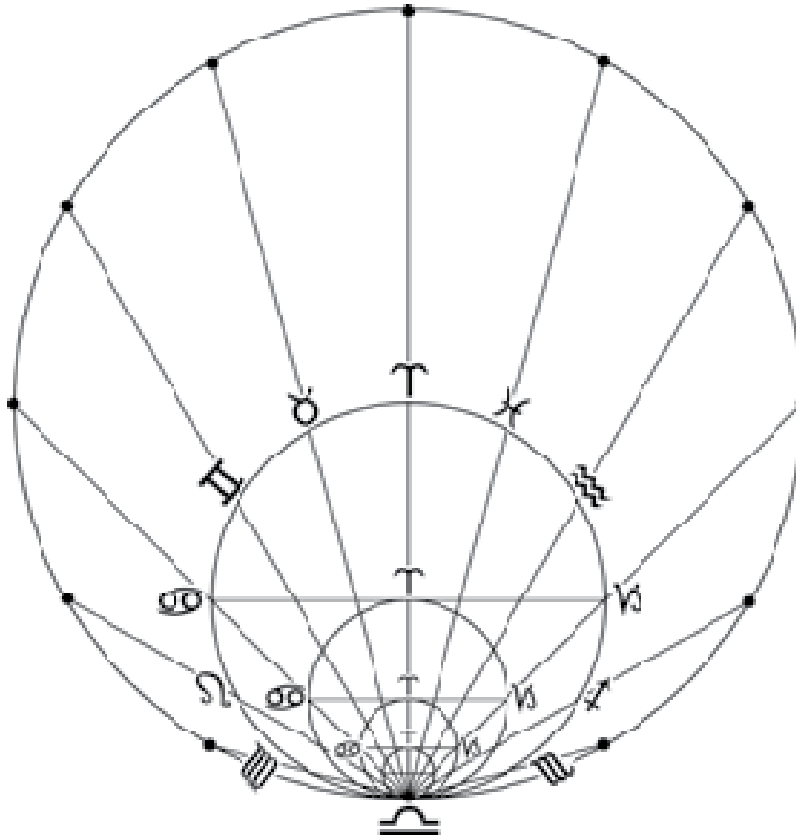
[MVUI](#), p. 75–76

**Veda is the absolute Constitution of the Universe. Veda, the Constitution of the Universe, is the home of all the laws that govern the universe. The entire field of intelligence is the home of all the laws that blossom the material universe.**

[MVUI](#), p. 206–207

## Structure of the circle

### THE ZODIAC WITHIN THE CIRCLE OF THE TWELVE NAMELESS POINTS



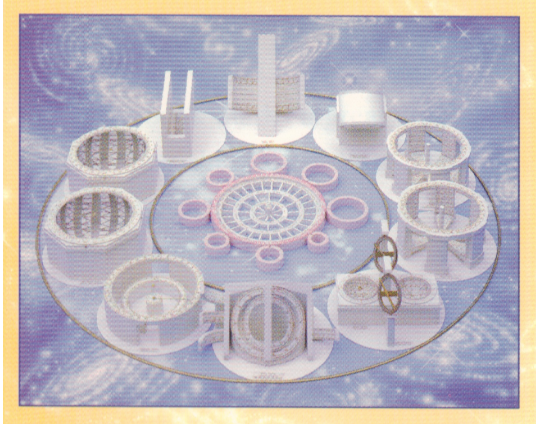
[T&D](#), Fig. VII-B, p. 970

*The twelve points are abstract and the circle is abstract. None of them has a name. However names are needed to distinguish and characterize the twelve points. The names of the twelve signs of the zodiac, (Fig. VII-A), answer the purpose of marking the twelve points on the circumference of the circle. The signs have of course something of the meaning of the points, transferred to the physical plane.*

[T&D](#), chapter 13, section 1, p. 809

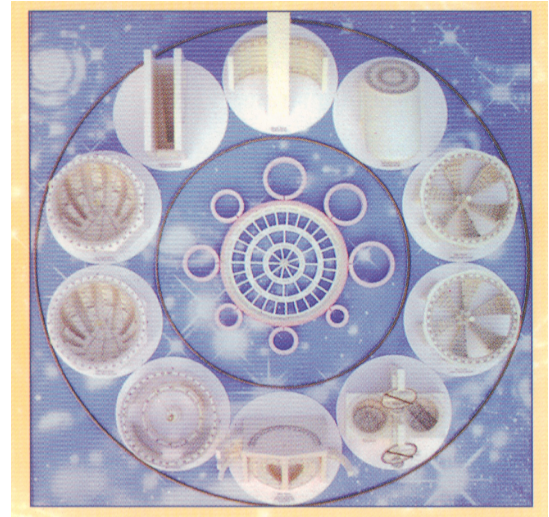
Percival describes the structure of the circle mainly through 12 "nameless"

points. Percival uses lowercased names of the zodiacal signs to give names to these points: aries, taurus, etc.



Maharishi Vedic Observatory  
view from the south side

[MVOB](#), p. 2



Maharishi Vedic Observatory  
view from above

[MVOB](#), p. 8

We compare Percival's circle to the innermost circle of the Maharishi Vedic Observatory. This observatory is described as follows:

**An ancient Vedic technology to expand awareness and train the vision and mind to focus on the mathematical precision and order that regulate the universe without problems.**

[MVOB](#), front cover

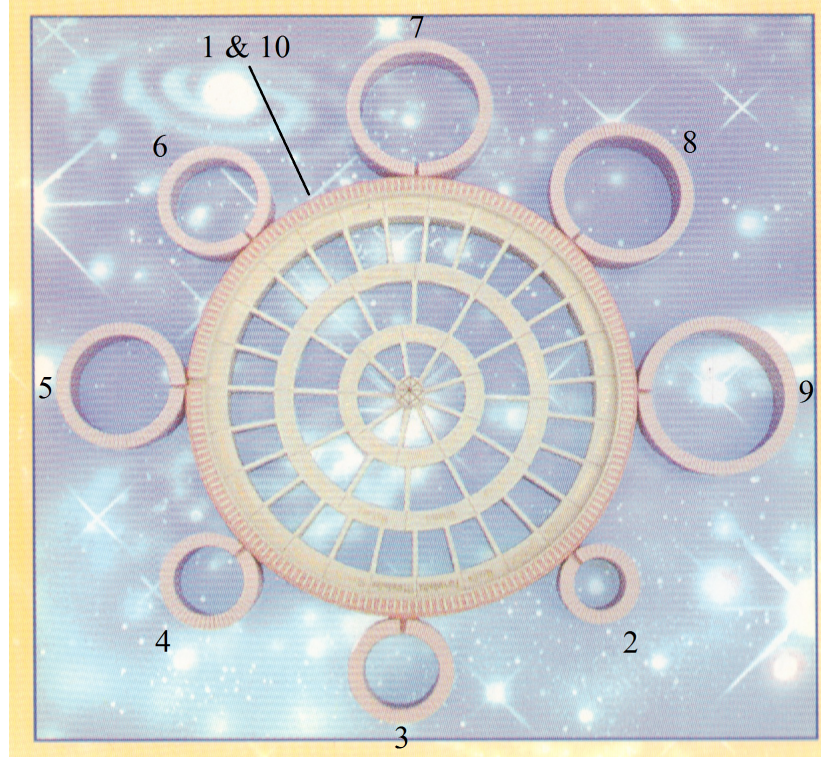
It is an arrangement of ten naked-eye astronomical instruments (the large white devices in the above figures), together with a display of the *maṇḍalas* (circles) of *Rig Veda* (the pink circles in the above figures).

The four Vedas are the most basic of all Vedic literature, and Rig Veda is the most basic of the four Vedas. Rig Veda is therefore the most fundamental text of Vedic science.

The text of the four Vedas is not composed, but heard. It is held to be the sounds of Natural Law speaking to itself. The language of these sounds is Vedic Sanskrit, which is held to be the language of Nature. These sounds of Nature are heard by rishis (seers), who transmit them orally to posterity.

The text of Rig Veda is divided into ten maṇḍalas (large chapters), each consisting of 44 to 192 *sūktas* (small chapters), which in turn consist of an average of 10 verses. The word *maṇḍala* literally means circle.

### Four vs. eight elements



Central portion of Maharishi Vedic Observatory,  
a display of the ten maṇḍalas of R̥g Veda

[MVOB](#), p. 20

**Central to the Maharishi Vedic Observatory is a display of the structuring dynamics of the R̥k Veda, which is the Constitution of the Universe, the total expression of Natural Law.**

**In its form, the structure of the R̥k Veda exactly reflects the order underlying the structure of the universe. Each small stripe on top of each ring represents a sukta [short chapter] of the R̥k Veda. The 192 suktas of both the 1st and 10th mandalas are represented on the large circle in the center. The suktas of the 1st mandala are illustrated by the white stripes. The suktas of the 10th mandala fill the gaps of the suktas of the 1st mandala. This illustrates the complementary relationship of the 1st and 10th mandala of R̥k Veda. The rings outside the 1st and 10th mandala represent mandalas 2**

**through 9, starting in the southeast [lower right] with the smallest ring and moving clockwise.**

[MVOB](#), p. 20

As the above passage explains, the sūktas of the 1st and 10th maṇḍalas are interleaved in the large inner circle, while the remaining 8 maṇḍalas are displayed in the 8 smaller circles. Each of these 8 maṇḍalas corresponds to an element. There are 5 objective elements and 3 subjective elements, shown in the following table.

<b>Mandala</b>	<b>Position in the above figure</b>	<b>Sanskrit name of the element of the maṇḍala</b>	<b>English name of the element of the maṇḍala</b>
1	center	parāprakṛiti	infinite dynamism
2	bottom right	pṛithivī	earth
3	bottom center	jala	water
4	bottom left	tejas	fire
5	left center	vāyu	air
6	top left	ākāśha	space
7	top center	manas	“mind”*
8	top right	buddhi	intellect
9	right center	ahaṃkāra	ego
10	center	puruṣha	infinite silence

\* “Mind” in this case is used in a restricted sense to mean the subjective faculty which accepts and coordinates input from the senses.

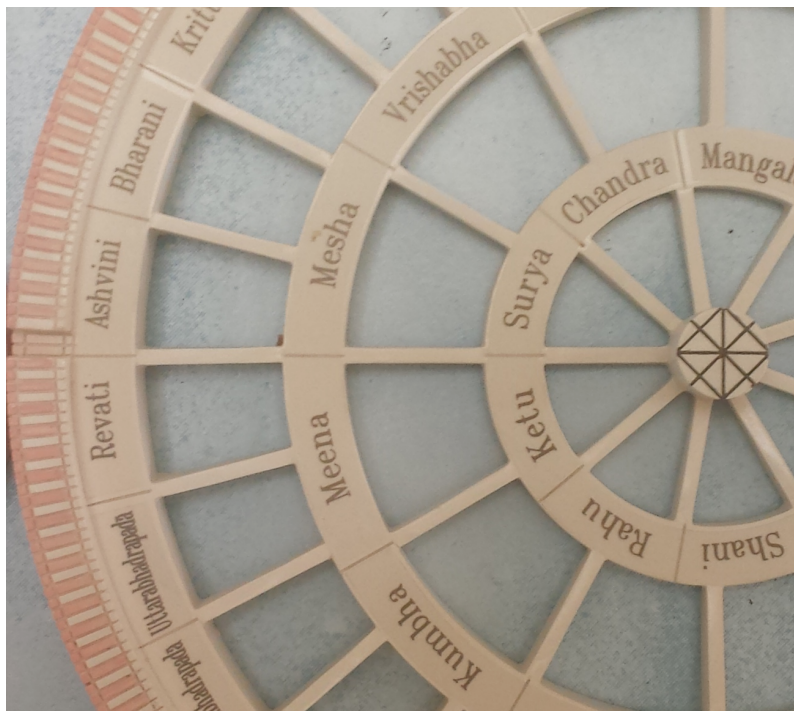
The Vedic literature describes five senses corresponding to the five objective elements.

Since Percival describes the circle only in terms of “nameless” points, it appears that he did not realize the Vedic structure which gives rise to five elements. Since he gives names to the “nameless” points which correspond to the signs of the zodiac, he seems to be thinking of the circle only in terms of the zodiac. Only four elements are represented in the zodiac: fire, earth, air, and



water. He may therefore believe that the circle also contains only these four elements. Since the circle is the constitution of the universe, and since each sense corresponds to an element, he concludes that can only be four senses.

### **The Vedic text of the “nameless” points**



Closeup of the left (west) side of the inner portion  
of the Maharishi Vedic Observatory

Photo of MVOT

**Within the central ring of the 1st and 10th mandalas is a display of the names of the 27 Nakshatras (star constellations [Ashvini, Bharani, etc. around to Revati]), 12 Rashis (Zodiac Signs [Mesha, Vrishabha, etc. around to Meena]), and 9 Grahas (planets [the 7 visible planets plus the north and south lunar nodes: Surya, Chandra, etc. around to Ketu]). This display illustrates that the structuring dynamics of the universe and of the R̥k Veda are the same and that the area of the sky corresponding with a particular planet or star relates to a particular portion of the R̥k Veda.**

[MVOB](#), p. 20

The Maharishi Vedic Observatory gives us a way to locate the signs of the zodiac in the text of Rig Veda.

As described above, the large ring in the center represents the interleaved sūktas of the 1st and 10th maṇḍalas, with the 1st maṇḍala sūktas in pink and the 10th maṇḍala sūktas in white. These are clearly visible in the above figure.

Also as described above, the three labeled rings correspond to the nakshatras, the zodiac signs, and the planets. Each of these starts on the west (left) side, but the sūktas start on the east (right) side. The three labelled rings should therefore be regarded as projections across the center of the circle to the opposite side, so that the sūktas which give rise to the three labelled rings are on the opposite side of the circle.

The 1st and 10th maṇḍalas each contain 192 sūktas, but only 191 are found in books. The remaining sūkta in each maṇḍala is a silent, unmanifest sūkta called the *avyākta sūkta*. The *avyākta sūkta* is located between sūktas 96 and 97, directly opposite the first sūkta. The *avyākta sūkta* is represented in the observatory as a notch in the ring. The notches for the *avyākta sūktas* of the 1st and 10th maṇḍalas are clearly visible at the extreme left of the above figure.

Each of the 12 signs of the zodiac therefore corresponds to 1/12 of the sūktas of the 1st and 10th maṇḍalas, or 16 sūktas in each of these maṇḍalas. For instance, the first sign of the zodiac, Aries, corresponds to the first 16 sūktas of each of the 1st and 10th maṇḍalas.

We can thus find words from Rig Veda which express the laws of nature which give rise to each sign of the zodiac. It appears, then, that these laws of nature are those which are found at each of the “nameless” points on Percival’s circle. This is shown in the following chart.

<b>Name of “nameless” point</b>	<b>Name of corres- ponding zodiac sign</b>	<b>Sanskrit name of zodiac sign</b>	<b>Range of sūktas corres- ponding to zodiac sign</b>	<b>First pada (phrase) in the range of sūktas corresponding to the zodiac sign</b>
aries	Aries	Meṣha	1-16	agnimīle purohitam
taurus	Taurus	Vṛiṣhabha	17-32	indāvaruṇayoraham
gemini	Gemini	Mithuna	33-48	etāyāmopa gavyanta indra
cancer	Cancer	Karka	49-64	uṣho bhadrebhirā gahi
leo	Leo	Siṃha	65-80	paśhvā na tāyumuḡ guhā chatantam
virgo	Virgo	Kanyā	81-96	indro madāya vāvṛidhe
libra	Libra	Tulā	97-111*	apa naḥ śhośhuchadagha*
scorpio	Scorpio	Vṛiśchika	112-127	īle dyāvāpṛithivī pūrvachittaye
saggitary	Saggitary	Dhanu	128-143	ayam jāyata manuṣho dharīmaṇi
capricorn	Capricorn	Makara	144-159	eti pra hotā vratamasya māyayo
aquarius	Aquarius	Kumbha	160-175	te hi dyāvāpṛithivī viśhvaśhambhuvā
pisces	Pisces	Mīna	176-191	matsi no vasya iṣṭaya

\* An avyākta sūkta is added to the beginning of this range, so that the total number of sūktas is still 16. The given first phrase is that of the second sūkta in the range.



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