

READING THE VEDIC LITERATURE

Maharishi's Program of Reading the
Vedic Literature:
Unfolding the Total Potential of Natural Law

by

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Abstract

This paper examines Maharishi's description of the nature and origin of the Vedic Literature, and its connectedness to the Self of every individual. Maharishi explains that the Vedic Literature is the eternal expression of the self-interacting dynamics of a unified field of pure, self-referral consciousness, which underlies the entire universe. This field of consciousness is not only the basis of all forms and phenomena, but also the simplest form of human awareness, available through the Maharishi Transcendental Meditation® technique. Maharishi describes in detail how self-referral consciousness moves within itself, expressing itself as unmanifest sounds, which constitute the Laws of Nature that create and administer the universe. These sounds are recorded in the texts of the Vedic Literature, and expressed in human physiology. When the texts of the Vedic Literature are read with proper pronunciation by individuals who practice the Transcendental Meditation technique, these most fundamental impulses of Natural Law are enlivened in the mind, body, and environment, accelerating growth to higher states of consciousness.

Introduction

For over forty years His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh Yogi has systematically brought to light the eternal wisdom of the Vedic Tradition. This historic revival of knowledge has produced a complete science of consciousness—Maharishi Vedic Science and Technologysm—designed to bring every individual and every society to a state of lasting fulfillment. Maharishi has included in this science a comprehensive and precisely developed body of theoretical principles, as well as practical technologies for unfolding the deepest values of human experience. Over 600 studies conducted on the technologies of Maharishi Vedic Sciencesm furnish strong empirical support for the theoretical foundation of this science of consciousness.

In formulating his Vedic Sciencesm, Maharishi has provided a comprehensive understanding of the literature of the Vedic Tradition. The Vedic Literature has spanned India's long history, producing a voluminous body of commentaries that attempt to illuminate and expand upon the subtle and seemingly obscure principles of the primary texts. These commentaries highlight individual texts, but as Maharishi (1994) points out: "There have been many interpretations of a philosophical nature but none have connected any part (of the Vedic Literature) to the whole (Veda), and none have connected the whole (Veda) to the Self" (p. 252).

Maharishi (1994) has restored the holistic understanding of the Vedic Literature, explaining that the written texts represent a superficial aspect of its understanding; its more profound significance lies in the understanding of Vedic Literature as the expressions of a unified field of pure consciousness, which underlies and pervades the material universe. Maharishi describes this field as pure intelligence, which moves within itself, and through its own self-interacting dynamics creates unmanifest sounds within its structure. These sounds are the Laws of Nature responsible for the creation and administration of the entire universe; they are also available as the forty branches of Veda and the Vedic Literature. Thus, Maharishi emphasizes, the Vedic Literature was never composed, but was brought to light by ancient seers who experienced the eternal impulses of Nature's functioning as fluctuations of their own consciousness. These seers experienced the dynamics of pure consciousness and its sequential unfoldment into matter, and recorded their expe-

riences in the expressions of the Vedic Literature.

These expressions have been preserved for many generations by the Vedic Families of India, who maintained them through an oral tradition of recitation. In recent centuries, the Vedic Literature has also been preserved in written manuscripts, laboriously re-copied as each generation of manuscript deteriorated. Maharishi points out that while the sounds were effectively preserved in the texts, their proper understanding was lost—the understanding of the literature as the expressions of consciousness gradually became replaced by the erroneous conception of its different branches as collections of literary, philosophical, poetic, or mythological musings.

This paper will examine Maharishi’s description of the nature and origin of the Vedic Literature, and its connectedness to the Self of every individual. It will explain how the Vedic Literature is not the product of human composition, but rather emerges from the self-interacting dynamics of the unified field of pure intelligence. To this end, it will begin by documenting Maharishi’s description of the mechanics through which the Vedic Literature unfolds from pure intelligence. On the basis of these mechanics, the paper will also describe the recent discovery of Tony Nader, M.D., Ph.D., which relates how the expressions of Veda and the Vedic Literature are found in human physiology. Dr. Nader’s discovery not only reveals an important understanding of the nature of the Vedic Literature, but also provides empirical support for Maharishi’s explanation of its nature and origin. The paper will conclude with a discussion of Maharishi’s practical technology of reading the Vedic Literature, which utilizes this remarkable discovery to gain mastery over Natural Law and perfection in life.

The Vedic Literature as Impulses of Self-Referral Consciousness

Modern scholars view the Vedic Literature much as the literature of any culture—a collection of works by individuals in different historical periods.¹ It has been interpreted from a variety of perspectives, including historical, cultural, philosophical, and philological, depending upon the scholar’s interest and background. Maharishi, however,

1 See, for example, Goldman’s (1984) discussion of the text history of the Vāmīkī Rāmāyaṇ, or Potter (1977).

describes the Vedic Literature as impulses of a unified field of pure intelligence—pure consciousness, pure wakefulness—which underlies all forms and phenomena in creation. It is self-referral consciousness, for it is an absolute state of existence, eternally awake to itself, needing nothing outside itself. In his early writings, Maharishi (1963) describes self-referral consciousness as Being, a transcendental state of existence at the basis of creation:

As the omnipresent, essential constituent of creation, Being lies at the basis of everything, beyond all relative existence, beyond all forms and phenomena. Because It has Its pure and full status in the transcendent, It lies beyond the realm of time, space and causation, and out of the boundaries of the ever-changing, phenomenal field of creation. (p. 26)

Maharishi points out that this absolute state of life expresses itself as the universe:

Absolute Being and Its relationship with the relative universe can be understood by an example. Being is like a limitless ocean of life, silent and ever existing in the same status. The different aspects of creation can be taken to be as ripples and waves of the vast ocean of eternal Being. All forms and phenomena and ever-changing states of life in the world have their basis in that eternal life of omnipresent Being. (p. 26)

Maharishi describes Being—self-referral consciousness—as the total potential of Natural Law, for it is the source of each of the infinite number of Laws of Nature that manage every aspect of life: “All the laws governing different fields of excitation in Nature, all the innumerable laws known to all the sciences have their common source in this field of absolute organizing power.” (p. 75)

The discovery of self-referral consciousness as the total potential of Natural Law has immense practical import, for it is not only the source of the vast material universe, but also of individual creativity and intelligence. And significantly, as Maharishi (1995a) explains, it can be accessed through the Transcendental Meditation® program:

My Transcendental Meditation is a simple, natural, effortless procedure whereby the mind easily and naturally arrives at the source of thought, the settled state of mind—Transcendental Consciousness—pure consciousness, self-referral consciousness, which is the source of all creative processes. (p. 280)

Here Maharishi describes how the most fundamental level of Nature's functioning can be located when the conscious mind identifies itself with its own simplest state. He points out that contact with self-referral consciousness is not like most experiences, which involve a clear distinction between the subjectivity of the experiencer and the object of experience. Rather it is the profoundly intimate identification of the conscious thinking mind with one's own inner nature, a field of pure subjectivity. Maharishi (1963) emphasizes that the repeated experience of self-referral consciousness enables one to permanently live the infinite creativity, intelligence, and happiness inherent within, rendering its qualities an intimate part of one's permanent experience:

Through constantly going into the realm of the Transcendent and back out into the field of relativity, familiarity with the essential nature of Being deepens, and the mind becomes gradually more aware of its own essential nature. (p. 53)

Maharishi explains that the human nervous system has the innate capacity to maintain unbounded self-referral consciousness along with the ordinary localized experience of waking state, but due to weakness of the system it becomes incapable of doing so. However, the Transcendental Meditation technique enables one to gain greater familiarity with self-referral consciousness, as mentioned above, while simultaneously eliminating the nervous system's accumulated weaknesses through the deep rest that the technique affords, thus re-establishing the balance that is the characteristic of a normally functioning system.

Hence, the result of repeated experience of self-referral consciousness is the growing ability to establish one's awareness permanently in higher states of consciousness—higher levels of awareness—in which one is fully awake to the unbounded value of life. In higher states of consciousness, one is permanently established in self-referral consciousness and thereby enjoys complete freedom, perfect fulfillment, and a mistake-free life in accord with Natural Law. Maharishi identifies four higher states of consciousness: transcendental consciousness—pure, self-referral consciousness—and three additional states in which self-referral consciousness is permanently maintained along with waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. In Maharishi Vedic Science, these higher levels of consciousness are the goal of human evolution.

An important element of higher states of consciousness is the ability

to live spontaneously in accord with Natural Law. Maharishi (1986) explains that as an individual becomes increasingly identified with the total potential of Natural Law, he or she grows in the ability to spontaneously think and act in accord with the Laws of Nature:

The unified field is the unmanifest basis of the whole creation, the creator and governor of the whole universe. Through Transcendental Meditation it is simple to open our awareness to this state of transcendence. Spontaneously, the conscious mind identifies itself with the self-referral unified field, the fountainhead of all streams of activity in Nature. As we gain more and more familiarity with that self-referral performance, our thoughts and actions spontaneously begin to be as orderly and evolutionary as all the activity of Nature. (p. 97)

Maharishi has also brought to light additional procedures from the Vedic Tradition that enhance the development of higher states of consciousness. In particular, he emphasizes the value of the TM-Sidhi® program, which trains an individual to think and act from the level of self-referral consciousness. This program develops mind-body coordination and the ability to unfold the total potential of Natural Law (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995a, p. 308). The TM-Sidhi program includes the technique of Yogic Flying, which brings the experience of “bubbling bliss” to the individual and creates coherence, positivity and harmony in the environment (p. 309). Also, as will be explained more completely in a later section, reading the Vedic Literature in Sanskrit for its sound value, as a supplement to the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi program—even when the reader does not understand the meaning—is an additional means of accelerating growth to higher states.

The Self-Interacting Dynamics of Self-Referral Consciousness

Maharishi elaborates upon his description of self-referral consciousness as the source of the Vedic Literature—and ultimately of the material universe—by providing a precise account of the mechanics through which this purely abstract field of intelligence expresses itself first as sound, and then as matter. He explains that self-referral consciousness is a field of wakefulness, and because it is wakefulness—and at this level all that there is is wakefulness—it is awake to itself, and completely self-

referral: “This is the state of pure intelligence, wide-awake in its own nature and completely self-referral. This is pure consciousness, transcendental consciousness” (1986, p. 29).

In knowing itself, self-referral consciousness is its own observer, and is thus the observer, the observed, as well as the process of observation:

This structure is very simple to understand. The awareness is open to itself, and therefore the awareness knows itself. Because the awareness knows itself it is the knower, it is the known, and it is the process of knowing. (p. 29)

Maharishi explains that it is the intelligent aspect of the field that discriminates within its unified structure, creating the distinction between these three fundamental values. Thus, even though self-referral consciousness is pure singularity, because it is awake within itself “the unbounded sea of intelligence quietly scans its own structure, and maintaining its unified status, spontaneously recognizes its own nature to be a combination of three values—the observer, the process of observation, and the observed” (1995, p. 7).

A crucial element of this analysis, as Maharishi mentioned in the quote above, is that these values emerge without the loss of Unity. The three values are created, but at the same time self-referral consciousness remains a unified structure, the “three-in-one structure of the self-referral state of consciousness” (1986, p. 29). In the Vedic Language, the three values of consciousness are Ṛishi (observer), Devatā (process of observation), and Chhandas (observed). Saṁhitā—“togetherness”—refers to their unified value (1994, pp. 59–61). When Ṛishi, Devatā, and Chhandas are distinguished within Saṁhitā, as in the quote above, then Maharishi refers to the “Saṁhitā of Ṛishi, Devatā, Chhandas.” Thus, this three-in-one structure of the Unified Field of pure consciousness is the coexistence of one unbounded unified field and three unbounded but differentiated values within it.

Maharishi (1994) further explains that the transformation of singularity (Saṁhitā) into diversity (Ṛishi, Devatā, Chhandas), and diversity into singularity, creates an unmanifest sound, a “hum”, within the structure of fully awake self-referral consciousness, which expresses the dynamics of transformation of self-referral consciousness into the diversified structures of Natural Law (1994, p. 63). This hum is not heard with the ears, it is the unmanifest reverberation of pure self-referral

consciousness within itself; it is experienced only on its own level. It is, as Maharishi points out, available to anyone who identifies the awareness with self-referral consciousness:

It is generated in the self-referral field of consciousness. On that level, those values of sound are there, and anyone can take their awareness to that settled state where one is open to oneself. And one would hear those sounds, one would see those sounds. (1990)

In the next stage of the unfoldment of self-referral consciousness, Ṛishi, Devatā, and Chhandas interact with each other creating new values of each. These in turn interact with each other creating ever more elaborated relationships. Maharishi explains that this interaction takes place because each quality is awake, and thus each is awake to each other:

This is because it's a field of consciousness. It's a field of knowingness where one knows the other. When one Ṛishi knows the other, the Devatā, then this Ṛishi is no longer the same Ṛishi as it was when it was knowing itself. (1990)

Maharishi notes that different values of Ṛishi, different values of Devatā, and different values of Chhandas emerge as they interact with each other. Interaction, therefore, is simply a function of being awake, and being awake to a different quality of consciousness creates a new value that is neither of the previous; it is a new value of knower, known, or process of knowing. This process of transformation continues indefinitely, creating new values of consciousness.

Maharishi (1995c) points out that each of these qualities is associated with its own value of sound:

In its momentum of transformation, the interplay (self-referral dynamism) of Ṛishi, Devatā, Chhandas continues to create sound from sound—from one form of sound to the second more evolved form of sound to the next (third) more evolved form of sound (specific alphabets—vowels and consonants). (pp. 66–67)

Maharishi further explains that the entire physical universe emerges from this dynamic interaction between the qualities of consciousness: “The evolution of material form commences from the frequencies (vowels and consonants)—speech, through its structured forms, progresses to generate different frequencies and their corresponding material

forms” (p. 67). Maharishi’s description provides us with a remarkable picture of the sequential unfoldment of the self-interacting dynamics of consciousness into the Vedic Sounds—from the sounds of the total potential of Natural Law, to the different levels of mind, and finally to the material universe.

Maharishi terms this self-interacting dynamics of consciousness Veda, emphasizing that Veda does not refer to a collection of books—it is the dynamic interaction of self-referral consciousness with itself, constituting all of the unmanifest sounds that result from this interaction. Maharishi (1995a) refers to these sounds as *Shruti*, which he describes as

Vibrancy of intelligence in the form of sound generated by the self-referral dynamics of consciousness—those specific sounds that construct self-referral consciousness, which have been heard by the ancient seers in their own self-referral consciousness and are available to anyone at any time in one’s own self-referral consciousness. (p. 352)

Maharishi often refers to Veda as the Constitution of the Universe, for just as a nation’s constitution represents the most fundamental level of its legislative system, the sounds of Veda represent the most fundamental level of Natural Law, the source of all the Laws of Nature (1995a, p. 80). These unmanifest sounds *are* the Vedic Literature on its most fundamental level, and it is a more concrete, expressed value of them that is contained in the Vedic Texts. Maharishi has identified forty aspects of Veda and the Vedic Literature,² each of which expresses a specific quality of consciousness such as reverberating wholeness (Atharva Veda) and unifying (Yoga).

2 These forty aspects represent traditional branches of Vedic Literature—such as Ṛk Veda, Sāma Veda, Yajur Veda, Atharva Veda. They include the six Vedānga, the six Darshana, Itihāsa, Smṛiti, Purāṇ, Upa-Veda, Brāhmaṇa, and Prātishākhya. However, Maharishi distinguishes between those texts that embody the sounds of the self-interacting dynamics of consciousness and the commentaries and later works that are often included in their areas. For example, Maharishi holds the Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama as the authentic texts of Nyāya, but does not include subsequent Nyāya texts, such as Vātsyāyana’s *Nyāyabhāṣya*, Chandramati’s *Dashapadārthashāstra*, etc. as Vedic Literature, for they are the product of human intellect.

The Sequentially Unfolding “Uncreated Commentary” of the Veda: Maharishi’s *Apaurusheya Bhāshya*

One of Maharishi’s most important contributions to the understanding of the Vedic Literature is his *Apaurusheya Bhāshya*, the “uncreated commentary” of Veda. Maharishi explains that Veda provides its own commentary in the sequential unfoldment of its syllables and sounds: each expression of Ṛk Veda, for example, is elaborated upon in subsequent syllables or expressions, which provide a complete and concise commentary upon what has preceded. Maharishi (1996) explains that,

According to my *Apaurusheya Bhāshya*, the structure of the Veda provides its own commentary—a commentary which is contained in the sequential unfoldment of the Veda itself in its various stages of expression. (pp. 80–81)

For example, Maharishi explains that the complete knowledge of Veda is contained in अक् (Ak), the first syllable of Ṛk Veda, and also in a more elaborated version in the first *Pāda* (a metrical unit consisting here of the first eight syllables). The totality found in अक् (Ak) is further elaborated upon by the first *Ṛichā* (verse), and as well as by the first *Sūkta* (stanza). Thus Veda unfolds in its totality in अक् (Ak), in the first *Pāda*, the first *Ṛichā*, and the first *Sūkta*; each level contains total knowledge, but the subsequent expressions represent a more elaborated version (1995a, pp. 401–404). In the same way, the entire Vedic Literature expresses the complete elaboration of this same totality.

A highly significant and unprecedented feature of this analysis is Maharishi’s discussion of the gaps between the different phonetic structures of the Vedic Literature (syllables, *Pāda*,³ *Ṛichā*, *Sūkta*, and *Maṇḍala*). Maharishi (1995a) emphasizes that the dynamics of Natural Law’s unfoldment are not only embodied by the sounds and their sequence, but also by the gaps between the sounds, which embody the mechanics of transformation of one unmanifest sound into the next.

The words are the expressions of the dynamics of the gaps. The dynamics of the gaps (mechanics of transformation) we have understood in terms of four qualities of the unmanifest—four fundamental qualities of

3 Sanskrit does not pluralize its nouns with a final “s” as does English. Therefore, in this paper transliteration of plural Sanskrit nouns will not employ a final “s”.

Natural Law expressed in the Vedic Terminology as *Pradhvamsābhāva*, *Atyantābhāva*, *Anyonyābhāva*, and *Prāgabhāva*.

These four values constitute the process of evolution, and the fundamental mechanics of transformation of one quality to the other. (p. 423)

As we see in Figure 1, Maharishi describes four stages in the transformation of one sound—*Vṛitti*—to another: (1) The first stage is *Pradhvamsābhāva*, the dissolution of the first sound into the gap, which is composed of (2) *Atyantābhāva*, the silent value, the unmanifest state of self-referral consciousness (p. 423), and (3) *Anyonyābhāva*, the

The Fourfold Structure of the Gap

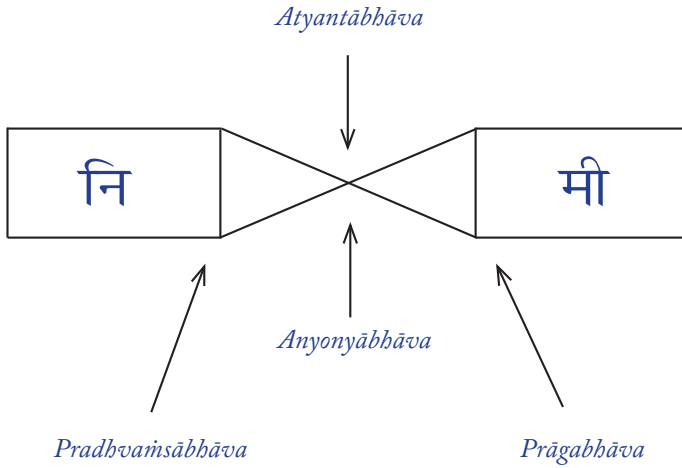


Figure 1. *Pradhvamsābhāva* is the collapse of the previous state, followed by the simultaneous existence of silence (*Atyantābhāva*) and dynamism (*Anyonyābhāva*). *Prāgabhāva* is the emergence of the new sound—the new structure of Natural Law.

dynamic structure of the gap, inherent in the nature of *Atyantābhāva* (p. 434). The final stage (4) is *Prāgabhāva*, the emergence of the new syllable.

The structure of the gap is a significant component of Maharishi's *Apaurusheya Bhāshya*, for we find that the transformations between

the syllables are also elaborated upon by subsequent expressions. For example, Maharishi explains that in Ṛk Veda, the transformations that take place between each of the twenty-four gaps between the syllables of its first *Ṛichā* are elaborated upon by the first twenty-four *Pāda* (p. 405). That is, the transformations that take place between each of these sounds have a more detailed description in subsequent expressions.

Vedic Study

Maharishi emphasizes that every individual is capable of experiencing Veda in their simplest state of awareness. In this he points to a critical concept for Vedic scholars: the knowledge and understanding of Veda does not come through intellectual analysis, but from identifying one's awareness with Veda—the self-interacting dynamics of pure, self-referral consciousness—and exploring it on its own level. Since Veda is a phenomenon of pure subjectivity, transcendental to the thinking processes, the intellect is incapable of comprehending it on its own level:

You know the Veda by being Veda. You cognize Veda by being Veda. Cognition of the Veda is on its own level, and that is that level in which we get into the details of wakefulness. Veda is the detailed structure of pure wakefulness, and there the intellect does not go. (1991)

Maharishi (1991) locates this theme of Vedic Study in two expressions that he cites together, which underscore the relationship between identifying one's awareness with Veda and knowing Veda:

वेदाहम् वेदोऽहम्

Vedāham Vedo 'ham

I know the Veda, I am the Veda.

This profound and important understanding removes Vedic Study from the intellectual interpretation of the Vedic Texts and their commentaries, and places it on a new foundation—the exploration of the fundamental reality of life, which is nothing other than one's own self-referral consciousness. Maharishi's description of Vedic Study provides a vital addition to the field of education, for it promises to develop complete

knowledge in the awareness of every student through exploring Veda and the Vedic Literature on its own level, and enlivening the fundamental impulses of Natural Law permanently in the student's awareness. This, Maharishi explains, is the supreme achievement of education, which can create a perfect individual and a perfect educational system.

Discovery of Veda in Human Physiology

Maharishi's analysis unfolds a new insight into the relationship between the Vedic Literature and the total potential of Nature's organizing power. Recently, Dr. Tony Nader, M.D., Ph.D., working closely with Maharishi, has provided new evidence of this relationship in his discovery that the holistic structure of Natural Law, as well as the diversified structures of the Laws of Nature, are the fundamental basis and essential ingredient of the human physiology. He has found in his research that every branch of the Vedic Literature expresses itself in human physiology, and that the relationship between the Vedic Literature and their corresponding expressions in the physiology can be analyzed in terms of the structure and function of each.

For example, Maharishi holds Vyākaraṇ to be the branch of the Vedic Literature corresponding to the expanding quality of self-referral consciousness. The quality of Veda that causes it to sequentially elongate itself—to unfold from the first syllable of Ṛk Veda to the forty branches of the Vedic Literature—is expressed by Vyākaraṇ. Correspondingly, Dr. Nader locates this expansive tendency in the function of the hypothalamus in the human physiology. The hypothalamus releases factors that activate the pituitary gland, neurohypophysis, and the autonomic nervous system. These releasing factors represent the expansion necessary for the evolution of the endocrine and autonomic response, which leads to biochemical and physiological responses that bring the system to a new state of balance (Nader, 2000, p. 105). Likewise, the *Ashtādhyāyī*—the principle text of Vyākaraṇ—is structurally comparable to the hypothalamus. The *Ashtādhyāyī* is comprised of eight *Adhyāya* (chapters) of four *Pāda* (subsections) each, totalling thirty-two *Pāda*. Similarly, the hypothalamus is composed of eight regions—anterior, posterior, middle, and lateral, right and left—with four nuclei each, adding up to thirty-two nuclei. These thirty-two nuclei correspond to the thirty-two *Pāda* of the *Ashtādhyāyī*. Dr. Nader has noted a corre-

spondence between each *Pāda* of the *Ashtādhyāyī* with specific anatomical functions.

A second example is Nyāya, the branch of the literature that Maharishi identifies with the distinguishing and deciding quality of consciousness. According to Dr. Nader, Nyāya corresponds to the thalamus, which relays sensory inputs to the primary sensory areas of the cerebral cortex, as well as information about motor behavior to the motor areas of the cortex (Nader, p. 131). Structurally, there are sixteen principle topics of the Nyāya Sūtra, elaborated in five chapters, and there are sixteen nuclei of the thalamus, grouped in five sections (p. 131).

Of the sixteen topics of the Nyāya Sūtra, the first, प्रमाण (pramāṇa), describes the means of valid knowledge. It has four divisions: प्रत्यक्ष (pratyakṣha), direct perception; अनुमान (anumāna), inference; उपमान (upamāna), comparison; and शब्द (śabda), verbal testimony. Similarly, the pulvinar corresponds to pramāṇa, and is divided into four parts: the pars inferior, the pars lateralis, the pars oralis, and the pars medialis. The pars inferior connects the superior colliculus with areas of the cortex and is responsible for higher order visual integration, or perception (pratyakṣha). The pars lateralis connects the superior colliculus and the temporal cortex with areas of the cortex and of the temporal cortex, which together are at the basis of the process of inference (anumāna). The pars oralis connects the parietal cortical areas back with other parietal cortical areas, and is responsible for polymodal sensory integration. According to Dr. Nader, it gives a “higher order perception about sensory inputs in relation to each other, allowing holistic perception and the perception of shape, motion, relative size and position” (Nader, p. 137). The pars oralis thus serves the function of comparison (upamāna). The pars medialis, which connects the temporal cortex with the superior temporal gyrus, is responsible for memory, language, and speech, the basis of verbal testimony—śabda (Nader, p. 137).

Maharishi (1995a) explains that the remarkable correspondence between the Vedic Literature and human physiology occurs because both are expressions of Natural Law, one in the form of sound (Veda) and the other in the form of physiology (p. 120). Thus, the forty clusters of Natural Law, along with their divisions at the basis of all processes of creation, are available in the Vedic Literature, and are also expressed in human physiology in both structure and function.

Dr. Nader's discovery serves not only to elucidate important understandings of human physiology and its relationship to fundamental principles of Nature, but also provides support for Maharishi's description of the Vedic Literature as the expressions of self-referral consciousness. The correlations in structure and function between human physiology and the Vedic Literature that Dr. Nader has located provide concrete examples of how the diversified structures of Natural Law, the impulses found in the texts of the Vedic Literature, are the fundamental basis and essential ingredient of human physiology (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995b, p. 138).

Reading the Vedic Literature to Unfold the Total Potential of Human Life

Maharishi (1995c) points out that the discovery of Veda and the Vedic Literature in human physiology has important practical implications. He describes how reading the Vedic Literature phonetically—without attending to meaning—accompanied by the practice of the Transcendental Meditation program restores the sequence of the unfoldment of Natural Law:

Every aspect of the Vedic Literature expresses a specific quality of consciousness. Reading every aspect of the Vedic Literature as it flows and progresses in perfect sequential order has the effect of regulating and balancing the functioning of the brain physiology and training consciousness, the mind, always to flow in perfect accordance with the evolutionary direction of Natural Law. (pp. 144–145)

Maharishi's point here is highly significant: the verses and *Sūtra* of the Vedic Literature embody the Vedic Sounds, containing in their sequence and phonetic structure all of the fundamental impulses of Natural Law. When they are read or recited with proper pronunciation, these same frequencies are structured in the awareness, enlivening them in the mind and correspondingly in the physiology (1994, pp. 327–334). On a practical level this means that reading an aspect of the Vedic Literature can restore perfect functioning to its associated part of the physiology. According to Dr. Nader (2000):

Maharishi explains that the recitation of the sounds of the Vedic Literature in their proper sequence will resonate with the same anatomic

structures to which they correspond. Their specific sequence will also enliven a specific sequence of neuronal, physiological activity. This will induce the physiology to function according to its original and perfect design. Any imperfections in the form of blocks, stress, lack or excess of activity, or abnormal connections between the various components of the physiology, will be disfavored by reading the specific aspect of Veda and Vedic Literature that corresponds to that area of the physiology which is dysfunctional. (p. 444)

Maharishi's program of reading the Vedic Literature is an important component of his Vedic Approach to Health, which aims at the establishment of perfect health through prevention-oriented health programs. Since reading the Vedic Literature brings balance and re-establishes the natural sequence through which every aspect of the physiology emerges from its source in self-referral consciousness, it contributes significantly to the promotion of perfect individual and collective health—disease-free life in accord with Natural Law. However, this technology promises more than merely improved health—it aids in the unfoldment of perfection in human life, the ability to think and act in complete accord with Natural Law:

Reading the Vedic Literature in sequence is the procedure to spontaneously train the brain physiology and the whole physiology of speech to function in the most orderly way so that every thought, speech, and action is spontaneously promoted in the evolutionary direction of Natural Law, and thereby spontaneously enjoys full support of the evolutionary quality of intelligence that upholds order and evolution in the entire universe. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1994, pp. 182–183)

Similarly, maintaining life in accord with Natural Law is a requirement for preventing suffering of any kind:

It is necessary that all these values of Natural Law always remain fully awake within the physiology of everyone so that all thought, speech, and action can always be according to Natural Law, so that no one violates Natural Law and no one creates the ground for suffering. (1995a, p. 120)

In these quotes, Maharishi emphasizes an important consideration: when one enlivens Veda in the physiology, one enlivens the same organizing power responsible for the smooth and effortless functioning of the entire universe. When the physiology functions in accord with the

Laws of Nature that govern the universe, the entire nervous system will be maintained in its proper functioning without any imbalance. This is life in enlightenment—higher states of consciousness—in which every thought and action is always in accord with Natural Law. An individual established in enlightenment does not create suffering either for himself or for others.

Maharishi's program of reading the Vedic Literature has become a significant component of the educational programs at Maharishi University of Management in Fairfield, Iowa. In addition to the practice of the technologies of Maharishi Vedic Science, the students at this university study the traditional academic disciplines in the light of Maharishi Science of Creative Intelligencesm, a new discipline that connects the knowledge of every discipline to its source in the Unified Field of Natural Law, and the Unified Field of Natural Law to the Self of the student. Recently the university has established a new track in the doctoral program in the Science of Creative Intelligence, in which students read from the Vedic Literature for several hours a day in Sanskrit, and then document their experience in a traditional dissertation. The primary objective of this program is to bring the students to higher states of consciousness while pursuing their academic degree. Students in this program have recorded hundreds of experiences of higher states of consciousness, such as the following from a student reading the *Brahm Sūtras*, which represents the holistic quality of self-referral consciousness, the total unfoldment of the Self:

There was still this small body [I knew as mine,] but the reality at the same time was that there were no boundaries [at all] containing me—what was my Self went on forever—and there was a very concrete knowingness that I had always been that, had reached what I really was, [that I could finally be truly at rest, that I] had come *home*. Everything rested within and was supported by me, and so I knew everything there was to know. I had the perception of being a gigantic mother eagle, whose wings encircled and sheltered the whole universe—so that I felt responsible [for keeping everything alive and growing. The impression of that final experience was one of] complete freedom and mastery, sublime bliss, lively silence, and absolute, [almost-ridiculously] utter simplicity—all on the surface of my being. Every fiber of my being seemed alive with realizations—'I really *am* the Veda,' 'I truly *am* the Totality.' (brackets in original, Freeman, 1996)

And from a student, who reported the following experience in activity, outside of the reading program:

I began feeling more and more blissful and self-referral. I sensed that the Veda was very lively in the room and was marveling at how strong this sense was. Then I ‘heard’ a murmur or hum that I recall was indistinct, but very lively, Vedic Sound. I felt very alert inside but very inward—whether my eyes were open or closed I do not recall, though I think they were closed—and I simultaneously ‘saw’ in my mind’s eye *Devanāgarī* script moving in a stop and go fashion. (Kleinschnitz, 1996)

This experience may reflect Maharishi’s description of the sequential unfoldment of the Veda in terms of *Shruti*, that which is heard by self-referral consciousness, and *Darshan*, that which is seen by self-referral consciousness (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1994, p. 317).

Maharishi’s program of reading the Vedic Literature is on the forefront of education for it unfolds what Maharishi calls “the fruit of all knowledge,” the “ability to live mistake-free life in higher states of consciousness, daily life in full accord with all the Laws of Nature, with the spontaneous ability to do everything right and achieve anything” (pp. 11–12). It is a program that employs the most fundamental understanding of Natural Law, and enables a student to apply the same intelligence that administers the vast creation to everyday life.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper has examined Maharishi’s unique description of the origin and nature of the Vedic Literature. We have seen Maharishi’s explanation of the Vedic Literature as the self-interacting dynamics of a unified field of pure, self-referral consciousness, which moves within itself and expresses itself as unmanifest sounds. These sounds are the Laws of Nature that administer the universe, and are recorded in the forty branches of the Vedic Literature.

We have further seen that the forty aspects of the Vedic Literature express themselves in the structure and function of the human physiology. Dr. Tony Nader’s remarkable research describes the structural relationship between human physiology and the Vedic Literature. A significant implication of this research is that an individual can restore proper balance to every aspect of the physiology—as well as to its holistic functioning—by reading the Vedic Literature in its original San-

skrit sounds.

Maharishi's description of the nature of Veda and the Vedic Literature has raised Vedic Study from an arcane academic field to an important component of the life of every individual, for it bears practical consequences that must not be ignored. Maharishi has demonstrated first that the Vedic Literature is not merely a collection of books—the remnants of an ancient culture—but the expressions of the very fabric of life; and they are expressions that hold the key to health, happiness, and success. And most significantly, these expressions can be located in the Self of every individual. Maharishi (1995a) points out that:

These sounds are the sounds that are available to us in the Veda and Vedic Literature. Through proper use of these sounds, the entire Vedic Technology—the whole engineering of creation, all the secrets of Nature's silent functioning—is available to us. (p. 352)

As a result, it is now possible to fulfill the long-held aspiration to create an ideal world, in which every individual enjoys the total potential of human life, and society lives in peace, prosperity, and lasting fulfillment.

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