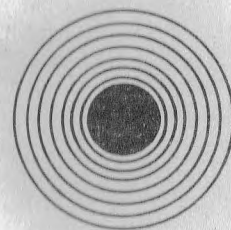


Contact

with
Vimala Thakar



In this number:

Two talks held by Vimala Thakar in the Netherlands, in the Theosophical Centre at Huizen on the 3rd and the 10th of June, 1976

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Editor's note

"Contact" has been received with enthusiasm. Every day there are new subscriptions, and trusting that the number will still increase, we have decided to publish the two evening talks given by Vimala Thakar in Huizen, Holland on June 3rd and June 10th, 1976 in this number.

In "Contact" no. 3 (March 1978) we will publish the answers given to the questions following the talks in Huizen, and we also will include the talk held in Rijkevorsel, Belgium in 1976, and the last news about the 1978 gatherings.

This number has been edited by Mr. Gosse Taekema.

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VOYAGE INTO ONESELF, I

First talk held by Vimala Thakar in the International Theosophical Society at Huizen, Holland, on June 3rd, 1976.

I'm grateful to all those who have created this opportunity for you and me to come together this evening and also next week. We shall be meeting here for some verbal communication, to share our concern about our lives as we are living them, to share the concern verbally as well as commune with one another on a non-verbal level, to show the affection that we feel for one another, the tender care for one another's welfare, peace and harmony. So these meetings have a dual purpose: verbal communication, investigation, exploration, and a non-verbal communion and sharing the togetherness. Rare are such opportunities where we can meet without yielding to any sectarian, dogmatic, theoretical or ideological approach.

I have been told that we should go into the issue of voyage into oneself, with special reference to fear, aggression, greed and freedom. Before we talk about a voyage into oneself, shouldn't we ask ourselves: why such a voyage? Why take a plunge into oneself? Is there any necessity in the world situation, in the society in which I live? Do I feel that urge in my life without anyone asking me to do it? And I wonder if you have noticed as I have, that the world and the world view, the concept of the world, that man had put together in many bygone centuries are tumbling down. The last part of the twentieth century that we are living in today is going to witness the total disintegration, collapsing and tumbling down, not only of the institutions and organizations created by man, but also of the concepts, the perspectives, the views about world, matter, space, time, all that man had put together very carefully, bit by bit, the thought structure that man had created. The thought structure within the psyche is collapsing on one hand, and on the other hand the collective structures that man had put together are also collapsing.

It's not only a question of inflation and the growing number of jobless young people in Holland, the Netherlands, or the pound, the sterling losing its value in England, it's not only the question of violence in North Ireland, Syria, Jordan, Israel, or the apparent disorder and tendency

towards dictatorship in India, but one may look at the East and the West: one would notice that the social, the economic, the political structures and the ideologies behind them, which were terribly respected and valued in the nineteenth century or even the first half of the twentieth century, are losing their meaning, their relevance to the facts of life.

International institutions and organizations are realizing their helplessness in face of staggering problems. So you and I are meeting today in a situation where the advance in physics, natural science and technology are questioning the validity of the very thought structure and the world view that we had. Advance in not only natural sciences, but medicine, biology, psychology- they are questioning our concepts of birth and death, of time and space, of matter and energy. The very definitions of these concepts are changing. The validity of those definitions is challenged today. So a person who would like to live, in whichever corner of the world he is living, wants to find out if there is something within that shall not be swept off, uprooted, destroyed by the storm of radical changes that is gathering around the person, to find out the roots where one could stand, from where one could move and live, the roots that shall not be damaged, molested by the violent changes that are taking place around us - is there anything in life? This question is very natural to any alert and sensitive person.

So to turn the focus of attention upon oneself, to turn inward and to be willing to take an inward voyage is a very healthy and natural response to the crisis through which we are passing. It is not a selfcentered activity of finding out a refuge or a shelter in a new way of acquiring experiences or acquiring new thoughts. We have seen very clearly that thought structure itself is losing its ground, its foundation. Experiences and knowledge, erudition and scholarship are becoming very tiny, very petty things, very trivial things; though very necessary for certain aspects of life they are very trivial when one looks at the fundamental problems like peace, like freedom, like harmony, like homogeneity of one's life. So we are questioning here today the possibility of a voyage into oneself, not to run away from the problems around us, not to ignore them, but to understand the implications of the storm of change, violent, forcible change that is taking place around us, to understand that much better in a deeper way.

One who turns inward with an acquisitive tendency and wants to acquire something on the psychological or the psychical level will be isolating from the rest of life.

This voyage cannot have a negative motivation, an escapist attitude, because any action, any movement based on negativity, escapism, fear, the desire to dodge the problems of life, will not yield any creative perception. The action to be unmolested by frustration, despair, the action to be creative requires a very sane and healthy approach. So for the last few minutes we have been seeing why there is the necessity of a voyage into oneself, to understand if there is something which is non-mental, non-verbal, non-conceptual, where there is any source of freedom, where there is any dimension untouched by fear. Is there such a healthy and sane approach, the approach to find out, to learn, to discover? Is there any dimension free of fear, greed, aggression, vibrating with freedom within us, which could give us the strength to withstand the storm that is gathering around us, which will give us the strength to be sane while the economic, the political arrangements are getting neurotic, losing their stability? Or is man doomed to lose his sanity, equilibrium, peace, and to suffer the agony of imbalances in his personal life? Is there any way out of this? One would like to say to one's fellow human beings that there are resources deep within oneself untouched by human mind, there are resources free from fear and aggression.

And let us find out if everyone can take that inward voyage. If one had not seen those resources within one would not be sitting here to talk to the people, one would not dare to come here to talk out of books and theories and nourish theories and conclusions. So the voyage into oneself is a movement in a new direction that an enquirer will take on behalf of himself as the member of the human family.

The person says: we have tried thought, we have tried mind, we have tried all the varieties of mental movement, and we have not discovered how to live, as a human being, in harmony with oneself, with others, with nature and so on. We have tried all that, let us explore that which has not been tapped. This is the desire to learn and discover and not the temptation to escape into isolation.

Now such a voyage will have to be taken by the individual personally, no one else can do it for the individual. This inward voyage into something that we do not know about, something that thought has not touched and experience has not interpreted, in the very beginning, requires the willingness to expose

oneself to a kind of insecurity. That which was known, that which has been manifested into forms, organizations, institutions, concepts, ideas, ideologies, that is breaking down. That which I am going to explore may not have any form, may not have any language, so I will be entering into a world that has no form, no verbalization, no time sense; it will be something entirely new. So the voyage requires the humility to say to oneself: the known has failed, the known, the experienced has failed man when it comes to the inner peace and harmony; we are going to enter into the unknown, which has not been captured in a concept, an idea. So the desire for a voyage is there, and the willingness to understand that there will be no security of everything mapped out for me, inside me; nobody else is going to map it out for me. So I will be alone. In that voyage I would be alone. The willingness to be alone is the only requirement for an inward voyage.

If that willingness is there then I turn inward, and the first confrontation takes place with the mind as it is, the cerebral organ and its movement. The first confrontation with the invisible is with the cerebral, the psychological, and its movement, the movement of thought, the movement of feelings, sentiments. While we are busy with material things, taking care of the house, doing the job, looking after the family, cultivating talents and capacities, reading books, travelling around, while we are busy doing something, acquiring something, experiencing something, we are confronted with the tangible, the visible, the audible, that which has a form, a colour, a shape, a size. Now when we turn inward we enter into a world that has no visibility, audibility; so this is an invisible world, the world of thought structure, intangible. And the confrontation takes place, the movement of the mind becomes highlighted, and I see there the mind, the thought moving. And the first thing I notice is fear. If I am honest to myself I notice that I have been living in fear, fear of relationship with others, fear of losing which is dear to me, whether it's the possession of a thing or a being, fear of sickness, illness, fear of death, but the fear was there. One notices that everything that one has been doing in life was inhibited by this fear. The fear was always there, like the dark shadow hanging over whatever I did. And this fear sometimes made me aggressive, made me impatient, and pushed me into saying things and doing things aggressively. I did not want to be aggressive, but fear made a coward of me, and cowardice leads to impatience, a great

sense of hurry, and in the excitement of impatience I went on imposing things. I was afraid to lose something, so I thought the best defense would be to be aggressive and impose, project the results already and hang on to them. So sometimes fear and cowardice lead to aggression and sometimes the fear made me withdraw completely from relationships. For all outward appearance I was there, using words, making gestures, but internally I was not there, I was not there, I had withdrawn. I was discharging the responsibility, the duty, but I was not there. Fear always leads either to withdrawal, or to aggression. Either it makes you aggressive or it makes you shrink away and pretend that you were there till the situation changes, till the challenge subsides, till the call of life fades away; you keep yourself shrinking and withdrawn. So one notices fear and how such withdrawals or aggressions, impositions or shrinking away, had taken place. This is not a piece of information, but this is what one can discover within oneself. To read that there is fear in the mind is one thing and to come across the fear as it is within me is another; to find it out: how it had twisted my verbal expression, how it had twisted and distorted my physical gestures, how it had made me say yes when I meant no and made me say no when I meant yes; and so many things become very glaringly evident.

The confrontation with what is called greed comes later on. It is very subtle to discriminate between the needs of life and the greed that is existing there. The culture and civilization in which we are growing, have been born and brought up, has so many theories in economic, social and political life that greed and ambition have become terribly respectable. If you teach a person that profit motive is the incentive to production, and that person goes on craving for earning more and more, he won't feel that there is anything wrong in such an acquisitive, competitive tendency. The essence of competition is greed, but this greed has been taken up by civilization and culture and been converted into something very decent, something very respectable. It has been given a status of an economical or a political value. Collectively we can become greedy and ambitious, or individually we can live that way.

So first of all we'll have to discriminate needs and greed, to find out if one has spent life in satisfying the physical necessities that are inevitable, like food, like clothing, like

shelter, like education, like health and means to provide health, to find out how much energy one has spent providing the necessities of life to oneself and one's family and how much one has given in to the definition of progress, standard of life, progressive economy and how one has been floating on the foam of fashions and modes. One is trained to cultivate a taste for these things, so one says: let me acquire this, I'm not satisfied with one variety, let me sell that which has become old, let me acquire something new. One goes on from one model to another, from one variety to another, and the production of consumer goods that has been going on in the world (very much respected) has been creating this tendency. In the name of civilization, culture, progress, technological advance, man has been trained and conditioned in the last hundred and fifty years, but mostly in the last fifty years, to acquire more, to possess more, to own. And this greediness for acquisition and storing, owning and possessing contaminates the mind to such an extent that you cannot look at yourself non-comparatively, you cannot look at the needs of life non-comparatively: you look at the society, the status, the standard of life around you and you would like to have those things, not because you require them, but because it is done that way in society. So a new standard, a new taste, a new acquisitiveness - a cultural acquisitiveness - is encouraged. One goes on comparing oneself in all the things. So providing the needs and acquiring out of greed get mixed up together in such a complicated way that man spends three fourth of his life in acquiring means of physical comfort and luxury at home or in spending vacations or having organized leisure; he doesn't realize that he has been depending upon something created by society and that he has been spending his time, energy, money to acquire that, to change it, to acquire something else; and that keeps him in a vicious circle out of which he can't come. So greed is something not natural to human mind. The desire to provide the necessities of life in a decent way, in a healthy way, is one thing, and to train your children to go on increasing the variety of consumer goods, producing them, acquiring them, owning them, possessing them, competing for them is another thing. As we have taught our children in the name of defense the art of fighting, as we are equipping them for fighting, in the same way mankind has been equipped for becoming

greedy, for becoming ambitious. So there is the confrontation, after fear, with this terrible quality of ambition and greed. It is a personal expression of something organized and standardized by collective society. If it had not been standardized, organized or respected by society then there would be simplicity. I cannot go into the details how the collective society has encouraged this. Look at the economic theories on which the structures have been based. Look at the ambitions of nations in the name of commerce, trade, and their desire for surplus production, for earning foreign exchange, exporting things and so on; it is a big structure. So the economic structure, the political structure have conferred value upon ambition, greed, sense of ownership, possession, and when they find that individuals get wild with this sense of ownership, possession, greed and ambition then they create administrative restraints to control the external behaviour of man. So in so-called democratic countries we have one kind, one variety of social, economic, political, administrative restraints and in socialist countries another kind. It is a restraint on the external behaviour, not touching the inner structure; the structure remains intact. There is a confrontation with this, which has taught us a comparative approach: one cannot look at oneself without comparing oneself with someone else. You look into the mirror and even there in the privacy of your own room the mind compares your nose to someone else's, your eyes to someone else's, your figure, the colour of your skin and hair to someone else's: "I wish I had that, I wish I had not that," that is how the reaction comes. The simplicity of a non-comparative approach to oneself - to see one as one is, to reconcile with the fact of what one is and how one is - that becomes terribly difficult. In wakefulness and in dream consciousness the comparison goes on, and comparison leads towards the process of becoming which begins with ambition, develops with greed and ends in aggression. The confrontation takes place with that, and how aggression or ambition leads to violence is not a very difficult story to understand. The moment you compare you become violent because you want to become something else than what you are. You would like to become according to some theory, like someone else, so you begin to approximate yourself, to find out the way of conformity, find out the methods of approximation; so you are forcing things upon yourself, you are committing violence against yourself, and one who commits violence against his

own person can commit violence against others very easily. So what we are saying this evening, what I would like to draw your attention to, is: when we turn inward the first confrontation is with the thought structure and the movement of the mind. The movement of the mind exposes all this; many other things, but as these feelings have been mentioned in the theme given to the speaker one mentioned this fear and greed and aggression. Now when one finds this within oneself, does one become depressed? Does that shatter oneself? It is a crucial question because the voyage has not yet begun. We have turned inward and immediately there is the confrontation. The door to the beyond is yet to be opened. We are with the known, but that which was invisible. We are with ourselves, the content of our being. The equipment for the voyage is taking place through such a confrontation. So when I see the aggression, the fear, the greed within myself, do I become depressed? When there is an encounter with the inner world, how do I take it? Most often the encounter does not seem to be pleasing or pleasant, not because what we come across is very ugly, not because what we come across is something very hurting - it has been there, with us, within us, all this life - but it is the breaking down of our image that we had that becomes painful. We notice our fear while being with people, but immediately the ego brings up a justification. I am sitting with you and supposing one of us feels self-conscious and feels fear of being with people then immediately my mind brings up a justification: that I am nervous, I become sensitive to the people, I have not done it before, my system cannot take it. The moment I notice the fear I bring up a justification. So the encounter with the fear does not remain direct. It does not give me any pain, any agony, it does not teach me anything because I have brought up a defense. Supposing I sit here and some colours or some dresses annoy me, irritate me, hurt the sense of blending of colours - something hurts me, and my intelligence says: you have no business to react, people are what they are, they are not going to ask you what to wear, why do you feel hurt? Then my mind brings up again another defense, another justification. Whenever in actual relationship we notice the content of our mind we put up the defense mechanism against the exposure of our contents of being, against our own distortions or

twistings. We put up the defense. When we are sitting silently with ourselves there is no need to put up a defense, there is no justification and therefore the image that I had projected up till now breaks down. That is what hurts. Do I have the willingness and the humility to see that images are going to get shattered and break down? I had constructed the images, I had put my images together. Now it breaks down. The reality breaks it down, the touch of reality shatters the images, and that is what most of us cannot stand. We live in a make-believe world. We tell ourselves - it doesn't matter how we get reflected in our relationships with others - we go on telling ourselves: look, you are not angry, you do not suffer from anger, you do not suffer from fear, it is the others who make you do that. Always the defense, the justification, so the things continue, they hang on, they cling to us. Now when you turn inward with honesty and integrity of purpose the defense mechanism is not there, justification is not there, so the images collapse. You appear to your own intelligence as you factually are, as you actually are. So to reconcile to oneself as one is is absolutely necessary, to have the humility to reconcile to oneself. I am not saying one should accept oneself, but to reconcile is to look at it without a friction, to reconcile is to look at it without feeling guilty, without feeling ashamed, without being impatient to change it. The moment I am impatient to change it I have reacted. Why do I want to change it? Because I had evaluated it, I don't like it, so I want to change. Again a comparative approach, a competitive approach. How can I feel ashamed of something if I have not evaluated it, if I have not compared it, if I have not measured it by some theory, some ideology? So feeling ashamed, getting hurt, feeling frustrated or depressed is an indication that I was not looking at it, I was not seeing it, I was busy comparing it, measuring it. Where did I get the measurement from? I got the measurement from society and I was using it. In the external world I have been using measurements, calculating my behaviour, manipulating my behaviour; now in the inward, mental structure, the invisible, I cannot manipulate anything, I cannot control anything: it has its own momentum. So a person has to have the humility to reconcile to the facts of one's inner life, to look at it without a grudge, without feeling self-pity, because you can feel self-pity, depression only when you are using the measurements of society, from which you have turned away

for exploring something new. You cannot have the two together. If one wants to use the measurements of society of good and bad, honourable and humiliating, ugly and beautiful, then one cannot turn inward and take a voyage. If I would like to take a voyage and go by sea I cannot keep one foot on the shore of the sea and one on board the ship and say: I would like to sail. I cannot have both. If the authority of the known is accepted the inward voyage is impossible. If the authority of all the measurements, concepts, ideas and yard-sticks is accepted then I have to be with the known as it is and go with the contradictions, conflicts and so on. If I have gone through such a confrontation without a feeling of self-pity or depression and seen the contents as they are - the contents being finite: the conditionings of man, the knowledge, the experience of the total human race is not infinite, it is finite, it is something that had a beginning, something that has a frame-work, it is something that has come to life within the frame-work of time - so if it has exposed itself to my observation while I was looking innocently at it, then in that exposure it has exhausted its momentum. If I react to it then the momentum does not get exhausted, I add to that momentum. I enrich the momentum of the past every time I react to it. I cannot react to it unless I use the past, the known, its concepts, its ideas. If I do not use them, if I look at it in an austere way of just observing, just seeing, just looking, then the exposure of the contents does take place, the contents are exposed, and there is nothing more to be exposed; the observer along with that which was observed withers away. I had voluntarily taken up the role of observer and was looking at the invisible structure, my inner being, the psychological structure. I had taken it up as a functional role as you take a tennis racket or, if you are playing cricket, you take a bat - you enter the field and you are called a batsman - it is a functional role; in the same way, to be an observer is a functional role voluntarily taken up. So the observer and the observed, the division that I had voluntarily created between the me as the observer and the content of me as that which was being observed, comes to an end. Up till now there was the centre. The me was observing. It was not doing something, experiencing or analysing, but still it was observing. There was a centre from which the movement of observation was taking place. There was

freedom from the past, but in the present there was a movement from the centre. There was the centre, the I-consciousness as an observer was functioning. The individual consciousness was functioning. When the observer with the observed withers away or melts away, when it becomes irrelevant for further exploration, then in that withering away there is only an ocean of energy having no centre and no circumference. There is only vibration of energy having no centre in the head, in the body, it is not located in you, the centre. And it is a movement having no frontiers in your body; as it has no centre located in your body, it has no circumference located in the body. At best one calls it an energy or a sensitivity, there are no other words that one could use. There is a movement without a centre, a movement that has had no past, and a movement that will have no continuity in the future. It is a vibratory movement that takes place.

We are not going to go into the nature of that movement this evening, I would like only to point out that when this silence as a dimension descends upon you as the observer and the observed melt away, then there is a sense of tremendous freedom.

We had looked at fear, aggression and greed, and we were going to look at freedom this evening. It is a sense of freedom from the I-consciousness. There is no more the consciousness that I am observing, that I am in a non-reactional attention. There is no sense of the "I-ness" left any more. That energy had no rigid centre as an entity separate from the rest of life. The I-consciousness was an amalgamation of all knowing and experiencing, knowledge and experiences. It had an appearance of an entity separate from the rest of life, it had an appearance of an individuality, identity. When that centre is not there, not functioning, has gone into non-action or has relaxed into abeyance, then there is a movement, without a centre. When you say there is a movement without a centre you imply, do you not, that there is a freedom from the previous centre, the centre of the me, the self, the ego, which was rooted in the past. Freedom is not something mysterious, it is not something that is terribly difficult to come by, it is something as a fact, as it is a fact that you and I are sitting here in the room, as the lights that you see, that have beautifully lighted this room, are a fact. In the same way, in that

movement of a new, non-cerebral energy, in the movement of that unknown and unconditioned energy, there is the freedom from the I-consciousness, the me, the self, the ego. Freedom is not an idea, it is not a theory. Freedom is freedom from the past. Future is only an extension of the past, so when one says there is freedom from the past, the past includes the future. So there is no experiencer, no doer, no observer, no entity of measure, to calculate, only a movement. There is an intelligence without an entity that is intelligent, intelligence as the movement of life, intelligence as the sensitivity permeating the whole universe, and you being organically a part of the universe, it vibrates in you. It does not belong to you, it cannot be owned by you. It was there even before, but it was not activated as we were busy with something else. The moment our business with the known, the conditioned, the limited, comes to an end the other gets activated and begins to move.

Now this evening, with your co-operation, one has tried to go into certain fundamental issues. Why is a voyage into oneself necessary? If one does not discover a source of equilibrium within, a source of sanity and orderliness within, if one does not discover a source of harmony within oneself, one will not be able to live in the crisis that is gathering like a storm around each one of us in the world. When one uses the term crisis the crisis is material, economic as well as psychological. The crisis is in the psyche as well as in the collective life, in the individual as well as in the collective. In the collective it is a crisis in the structures, the structural pattern of collective life, social, economic, cultural, educational, political, national, international - the whole. And that crisis is there because the concepts on which the structures were based are challenged by the advance in physics, psychology, nuclear physics, biology, medicine and so on. The fundamental concepts like time and space are challenged, the fundamental concepts like birth and death. The fundamental concept like a body is challenged: a few years ago you could talk about your body very easily, today you will be hesitating because you don't know how many bodies you have inside you (the so-called you), their inter-relationship with one another, the energies and the waves of energy that are operating in those bodies, their relationship with one another, their relationship with the energy existing around you; we don't

know the relationship. So today the inner structure, the conceptual, ideational is collapsing on one hand, not because somebody is destroying them - look at the beauty -, not because somebody is destroying them and wants to destroy, but because the advance in physics, chemistry and other sciences and in technology is resulting in the destruction. You do not need to destroy organized religion and the expressions of organized religion, their validity is being questioned by something deeper that is coming up. When both things are collapsing, where does the individual stand, how does the individual stand? And one says: one can look inward; instead of looking at the form let the individual get acquainted with the formless, let him find out the substance of life that is formless. He has been living with the sound, let him explore the soundlessness of life. He has been busy with relationships and developing their dynamics, let him discover the beauty of solitude and aloneness that also is the substance of life. A voyage into oneself is not an escape, not a self-centred activity, but it can be a way out of a crisis to save the seeds of sanity in oneself.

And we went into the confrontation with the invisible, the confrontation with the thought structure containing fear; we looked into the issue of what fear is, what greed or aggression are; and in the end we just had a glimpse of what happens when the observation of the known comes to an end. As it is time I think I should conclude the talk here. Thank you.

VOYAGE INTO ONESELF, II

Second talk held by Vimala Thakar in the International Theosophical Society at Huizen, Holland, on June 10th, 1976

For the year 1976 this is the last meeting in this beautiful and serene place. To enter the premises here is to breathe in seriousness and peacefulness. It has been a very great joy to come here, be here and also to have the opportunity to communicate with people. What will be said today will be understood by those who had been here last Thursday. We were talking about a voyage into oneself with special reference to feelings like fear, greed, violence or aggression and freedom, a voyage into oneself to understand the mechanism of mind and its way of functioning, to investigate and to understand its nature; its

strength, its frontiers, to be able to see the whole mind as it is. And we had gone into the issue of why it is urgently necessary to get acquainted with the mind as it is, the conditioned mind, the conditioned energy through which we move and live most of the time of our life. We had seen how it is impossible that anyone else could do it for us. It is something into which you have to go yourself. So the necessity of such a voyage was gone into, the nature of enquiry and the encounter with the contents of the mind. This was the area we had trodded upon very carefully, looked at in the minutest details. One would like to go into the issue of freedom this evening, the expanse of silence that comes to life when the conditioned mind relaxes, when the centre, the I-consciousness goes into non-action. So we will look at the expanse of silence today, the happenings that take place there, and freedom as it begins to vibrate while one is in that silence. I wonder if you recollect that the implication of the word freedom is freedom from the past, freedom from the clutches of the known, freedom from the clutches of the word, the verbalization, the clutches of concepts and ideation. There is no other freedom than this unconditional total freedom from the known and the experienced that is the past, the individual and the collective, which is constituted of words; whether it is knowledge, inheritance or experience. Verbalization has been applied to the known and with the help of imagination, feelings it has been applied to the area of the unknown. The activity of experiencing has probed into the depth of the invisible, the unknown, the occult, the astral. Experiences in the astral and the occult have been verbalized. And I wonder if you are aware as I am, that this verbalization about the existence of the occult and the astral and the mystery in which it is enwrapped was pointed out to the world by the founder of the Theosophical Society - a great woman unequalled in intelligence, you know, I'm referring to Mme Blavatsky. She was much ahead of time, but the world would have been poorer without her contribution. It was she who pointed out to the human race that was getting carried away by the methods of investigation that science was offering, the human race that was getting carried away by the charm of the intellect and intellection; it was she who pointed out about the existence of the other, pointed out how the invisible is as real as the visible. Of course the human race has been twisting,

distorting things that have been put into its hand and there have been many a distortion. That's a different story. What I'm trying to put across is that the unknown, the invisible, the inaudible, that which is formless should not be confused with infinity or eternity. The unknown is as finite as the known. The invisible is finite, limited, circumscribed by frontiers as well as the visible, the audible, that which has a form, a colour, a shape, a movement and so on. Verbalization and the art of experiencing have touched the unknown, imagination and ideation have taken into their fold the unknown. So many things have been written about it, techniques and methods have been developed in the East and in the West. And it is possible to enable oneself to travel into that romantic hidden world, but it is still a psychological world. It's a world where you move around from the centre of the I - the I-consciousness probing through the gross to the subtle, probing through the sensual to the transsensual world, probing through sensory perception to extrasensory perceptions and from sensual experiences to psychic experiences; but the experiencer is there at the centre out of which the activity is born. The movement is from the centre to the periphery. One can even acquire methods, techniques and formula about the wanderings in the hidden world and what such experiences give you and how the powers are developed, and what they do to your personality and so on. It has its own romance, it has its own intoxication, it has its own powers to offer; but that is not freedom. Freedom implies the melting away of the centre altogether. Freedom implies unconditional wiping out of words, of verbalization. It is the word that carries the past, and it is the centre, the I-consciousness that carries all the raw materials for bondage. So freedom implies the unconditional non-action of the I, the me, the ego on one hand and utter melting away, total melting away, fading away of the word, the verbalization, the total melting away of the thought and what it has put together about the known and the unknown. In other words, freedom implies the non-action of all movement, it implies motionlessness of all the energy. Please do see this, because we will have to ask ourselves if we really are willing to take a voyage into ourselves through the tunnel of I-consciousness, through the dark recesses of the past. Are we willing to go any further to a land which has light but no shadows; which has

facts and essence of existence, which defies verbalization, conceptualization, ideation; which defies catching it into any activity of the mind. If we have taken this journey together and if we have seen that the known as well as the unknown do not give the essence of freedom, that the known and the unknown, the visible and the invisible are still timebound, that that which has been reached by the word is already inside the realm of time, that that which has been captured by thought and has become a part of the thought-structure is timebound and that there is no freedom in time, that freedom is not a flower that is born of time-consciousness, thought-consciousness or I-consciousness, and that if we have seen that there is no freedom with the known as well as the unknown, with the visible as well as the invisible, then we have really taken a very important journey together.

And it is not pleasant to realize that there is no freedom in the known and the unknown. The world of the known - that which has a form, a shape, a size, a colour, a movement; that which has been captured in concepts, symbols - that is the world of relationship. To live in the world is to be related and relationship implies, does it not, curtailment of freedom. There is no absolute freedom there. It's a voluntary acceptance of restraint, curtailment of freedom. We have to be in the known, understanding its limitations, its nature, and live in and through relationship. That is a responsibility. One likes to imagine that in the outer world, in the collective maybe if we change the pattern of collective behaviour, we could arrive at freedom. We have been carrying this illusion, but it seems to me that with the known there is no freedom. In the form you can be aware of the formlessness, and the awareness that gives you the sense of freedom can be there, but the actual living of freedom is something qualitatively different from a mere awareness of its factual existence. So people like you and me like to carry the illusion that through the mind, with the help of imagination, with the heightening of sensitivity and experiences we might arrive at freedom. Freedom cannot be experienced. Freedom is not something that shall ever be experienced by the mind or the senses. The very nature of the senses, the biological organism, the psychological structure have their limitations. To be aware of the limitations is the beginning of understanding. Ignorance carries illusions and understanding liberates from illusion as well as imagination. Understanding stimulates the

austerity of the awareness of facts as they are.

Now if we have taken the journey together we have seen that there is no freedom as long as our activities are rooted in the past. We are talking about the essential freedom of life, and not talking about the political, the economic, the social, the cultural, more freedom, less freedom, arrangements, managements, administration - please do not mistake the word freedom which is being communicated, to indicate something of that. That's a different issue altogether. In the world of relationships how can you minimize the area of stress and strain, conflicts and contradictions and how can you make life more comfortable, less violent and so on? That is a different issue. We are talking about the absolute freedom, the fact of freedom, which is the essence of your and my being. Therefore the voyage into oneself has a relevance to realize that source of freedom within us, freedom beyond the mind, beyond time, beyond the word. That has been the subject taken up for communication last Thursday and this Thursday.

I'm saying this in anticipation that some question might come up: Why do you say there is no freedom in the known? One is trying to say that there is no freedom with the known and the unknown because the movements are tied down to the centre of the I, and the movements are tied down to the word, the thought structure, the movements are tied down to time-consciousness. The subject is very serious and deals with a subtle realm and I do not know whether I'm doing or I can do full justice to it. So if that journey is taken together one sees that with the known and the unknown - the visible and the invisible - as long as there is the movement of the thought structure there is no freedom, but there will be fear, there will be comparison, there will be aggression, violence as long as activities are born of the I-consciousness, of the thought structure rooted in the past.

Supposing one has seen all this, one has understood all this, the first thing that the understanding stimulates is a very deep sorrow and compassion. Ignorance has only self-suffering, ignorance knows no sorrow. Understanding stimulates sorrow, one has to live and move in the past and with the past with so many limitations. One cannot escape it. You cannot escape the words, the ideas, the thoughts, the symbols, the human beings around you. You cannot escape the ugliness, the beauty, the pain, the pleasure; because in isolation there is no life. There is a tremendous upsurge of sorrow, sharp

penetrating sorrow, that to live is to be in and with all these limitations. So there is compassion for the whole human race, also compassion for oneself. Sorrow and compassion are two names for the same thing. If you are concerned with your own personal suffering it makes you callous, but when the awareness of the totality of facts dawns upon you it stimulates sorrow which results in compassion. Then when people misbehave, they do something wrong unto you, misinterpret you, misunderstand you, you do not have hatred for them. There is pain that you have to go through. You may not rise to the stature and say: "Father forgive them, they don't know what they do", that may not be possible, but still the depth of understanding makes you incapable of hating anyone, makes you incapable of wanting to pay back the person in retaliation, in revenge. The old motivations and defense mechanisms become meaningless and futile when the light of understanding floods your inner being. So understanding stimulates a very sharp and penetrating sorrow and when that sorrow moves in daily relationship there is compassion. It may be crude with some, very sophisticated in the lives of others, but the texture of relationships begins to change with understanding. So the rigidity on the mental level, the callousness, the indifference, the isolation of self-centredness, these things begin to disappear. This voyage into oneself is not something antisocial or an isolating activity; it changes the texture of your being and begins to get reflected in your daily relationship. If religion does not get reflected and does not change the quality of relationships it is no use. The human race is tortured with so much suffering we require a new dynamics of relationship, a new dimension of relationship. So I would like to point out and draw your attention to this simple fact, that understanding of the mechanism of mind, the limitations of symbolology, the limitations and frontiers of concepts and ideas, enriches your being with that penetrating and sharp sorrow. Blessed is he whose heart is visited by these sharp pangs of sorrow that melt down the rigid ego, melting down into compassion, expressing itself in the tiniest things that you do. When the voyage into oneself has arrived at the threshold of this understanding, the second thing that happens is that one is not enamoured of the movement of verbalization, of the movement of the thought structure. There is no more ambition to see God with the petty little mind, to experience the Divine with the petty little

I-consciousness, to experience Nirwana, Satori, Samadhi with this circumscribed mind, the structure. That temptation withers away, that ambition fades away. So one is now equipped for the non-cerebral movement, non-mental or non-psychological movement. Up till now there was a struggle. One was trying to seek, to search with the help of the mind. One was trying to seek even into the unknown with the help of the thought structure, with the help of the word, with the help of idea. Now that struggle, the tension of seeking, searching, obtaining, acquiring, experiencing, is no more there. The futility of all that struggle dawns upon the individual, so the struggle with the mind and through the mind is over. What a tremendous event it is when this searching and seeking and wandering around with the mind and carrying the burden of the past is over. Then the looking around that someone might transmit power into your mind, transmit something into you and then you will experience, all that juvenile, immature business of seeking, searching - the whole thing is over. This being the last meeting one is terribly cautious with the use of the words and hesitatingly, haltingly one is proceeding, looking around for the words, you know, to convey the faintest nuance of the meaning one would like to convey to communicate. That tension of searching and seeking is over. If understanding does not release you from the tension of searching, seeking, experiencing and so on, then it is no understanding, it is wishful thinking. It is only the words that are acquired with their dictionary meaning, but the meaning has not been allowed to sink deep into all the layers of the being. If understanding of the nature of falsity does not release you from the grip of the false it is no understanding, it's very obvious, isn't it? So when the seeking and searching and the tension of looking around acquisitively is over and the word moves no more and therefore time comes to a standstill, there is the first touch of the unknowable or the immeasurable reality which has no movement, there is the first touch of the immensity of reality, there is the first touch of the essence of life as it is. It has no movement in itself and it does not stimulate any movement in you; you become part of that immense stillness, you become one with that motionlessness. There is not even the movement of awareness, there is just the expanse of silence, the infinity, the immensity which has taken you in its embrace.

It does not allow the isolated individual consciousness to work any more within you. It has taken the individual psyche, the I-consciousness in its own embrace. And may I say with all humility, this is no poetry, these are not descriptive words. When the whole of your being is bathed in that silence, there comes out a being entirely new inside; the form is the same, the features are the same, the person has to use the sense-organs, move through the sense-organs, feed the body, clothe the body, but inside a change takes place, a radical, a fundamental change takes place that the time-bound, isolated I-consciousness is replaced by a consciousness that is free of time, it's an it-consciousness, not the I-consciousness if I may use the term. So one becomes an organic part of that emptiness of the space, the emptiness of silence where there is nothing to hold on to, to cling to and there is nothing that will own you. You just become that silence, that reality. That is the essence of our being.

So the encounter with that silence refreshes, rejuvenates the being. Then the eyes see whatever is existing around you - the particular, the partial, the fragmentary - the eyes see all this in relation to the total. The voyage into oneself has given now a new quality to the perception, that you never look at a particular only as an isolated particular, you see it as the part of the total. The particular is placed in its relationship to the total; you see the fragment within the whole, within the total. You do not have to use a theory or an ideology and deduce the connection between the particular and the total, for you now it becomes one whole movement. Then you see the earth in its relationship with other planets while you are moving in a small street or a by-lane, in a small village where you live. You are aware of the by-lane, the street or the village, you are aware of that village in relation to the earth, and the earth in relation to the total. So when you walk on such a quiet evening through a small street somewhere, your feet touch the ground under them, but you are not touching a street in that particular village; you are touching the infinity of space at that particular point. I wish I were capable of conveying something fascinating that I see. When you meet an individual with his good qualities or bad qualities, with his limitations or his talents and gifts, when you see the individual moving, you are not seeing only one particular, you see the growth of the whole

human race expressed through that individual, you see the limitations of the human mind expressed through that individual mind. You are touching the infinity of life with your eyes, with your ears, with your mind, with your senses, wherever you move, the particular becomes an expression of that eternity, that infinity, all the measures then become the expression of that which is immeasurable. Every moment which has been measured and is called as the present, that every moment then carries in its womb the fragrance of eternity. In the birth of every child you see the human race being born again and in the event of death, sicknesses you see the travail of human life circumscribed by growth, decay, death etc. This is a new human being born out of the ashes of the old. Nothing is lost, nothing is destroyed, nothing has been killed, mutilated or damaged; this voyage into oneself does not commit violence upon the body or the mind, you do not suppress, you do not deny, you do not torture the body or the mind, but you understand them and every step of understanding goes on liberating you. If there is no liberation at the first step taken toward this voyage, there will be no liberation in the end because the first step contains in it the breath of the last. So from the cerebral and the mental to the non-cerebral and the non-mental is the voyage. This voyage is taken in the sanctity of aloneness. Through the thick woods of the unknown and the mapped-out reality of the known, one crosses over to the non-verbal existence, the existence as it is, where there is freedom from the word and the contact with the thing as it is. This is meditation. This is a new way of living. After having taken this voyage you have to come back, be with the senses, be in the cerebral world, use the thought. You have to do all that. You come back, but you are no more lonely, because the Beloved, the reality, the essence of life is with you, the I-consciousness is always in the embrace of the "it". There is no separation possible any more, it's not an achievement, so there is no fear of losing it. Within the body then there is the individual consciousness used by the "is-ness" of life.

I hope that you have seen with me that through such a voyage into oneself there is a release from fear, ambition and aggression. There is no more the desire to compare oneself with anyone else in the world. There is the serene joy of being alone with life as it is, having the opportunity to move in the outer expressions that have been constructed by man.

The beauties of the two worlds are different. There are two worlds as it were; the outer, the objective - the one constructed by man in which one has to live and move - and the other universe, untouched by man, and you are living simultaneously in them both. You move from one to the other gracefully, easily. Whenever a relationship is necessary, whenever there is a challenge, there is a situation, you come out and meet it with the help of memory, of thought, of the word, you meet; and when there is no situation, no challenge, no relationship knocking at your door you are in the solitude of aloneness with life as it is. You are not with the word, not with the memory, not with the tortures of brooding, anxieties, worrying, yesterdays, tomorrows, you don't live there suffocated and imprisoned, restless and so on, but you are back in the freedom of the timeless reality. So with the Divine in the heart, with the immeasurable, the unnameable in the heart, with the strength, the purity and the passion of that strength one lives and moves wherever life brings one, meets the situation, meets the challenges and goes through the pain and pleasure and the whole dance of duality that life has to offer without getting stuck up in either points of duality.

Only such human beings who are then born anew, the twiceborn, will be able to think about a new basis for social, economic or political structures. They will be capable of finding out collective ways of behaviour which will not make it necessary to be aggressive, competitive and violent any more. Whether we do it today or a hundred years afterwards, there is no other way. Choicelessly it is our responsibility to probe into the depths of our being and let that non-verbalized essence of our being manifest through our behaviour.

Last Thursday and today we have communicated verbally about the challenge of this voyage into oneself. We along with the human race are passing through a critical period of human history when the old patterns of behaviour are collapsing, tumbling down everywhere. The patterns are crumbling under our feet externally, and internally the psychological structure consisting of old ideas, theories, norms, values, concepts, symbols also are crumbling down. This crumbling down is taking place due to the advance in science and technology and the

blending of cultures that science and technology have brought into existence. Different races, cultures, religions have been mingling together, sharing the riches and the starvation, sharing the violence of wars and the tortures of cruelties together and also sharing affluence together. So this mingling in the last half a century has heightened the contradictions and the inherent defects and shortcomings contained in the way of living, so the way of living psychologically, subjectively and objectively, is collapsing.

One who is interested in saving oneself, saving one's sanity, equilibrium, will have to do it immediately. Seeing the urgency of the situation, the urgency of the challenge, one will have to do it oneself. For doing that confrontation with oneself is necessary, the confrontation beginning with the physical and the psychological. Confrontation can take place if we learn to observe and watch, to look, to listen. This is the only way of arriving at a direct, immediate and intimate encounter with the actualities of our life.

We had talked about observation, we had talked about the contents of the mind getting exposed to the state of observation, we had talked about the contents being finite and so the division between the observer and the observed coming to an end. And this evening we have talked about that which is beyond the word, beyond the possibility of verbalization. Life is worth living because there are the aspects like silence, like beauty, like love which defy verbalization. If the essence of existence had been polluted or limited by verbalization (you know, pollution does not have any religious or ethical significance - getting limited is to be polluted; that is the only meaning I have in mind) so if all the existence of life had been limited by words, then there would have been no joy in life. When love dawns upon you it is not stale, is it? Maybe innumerable human beings born before you and me had gone through that state of love and yet the state of love in which you suddenly find yourself is like a fresh rose blooming outside your window. That rose is not a repetition of the other roses. Love has its own freshness. When you see a child born, that is not a repetition of other children, there is a virgin beauty about birth, about death, about love, about beauty. These are the things that cannot be repeated. Thought can be repeated, symbols can be repeated. How can innocence and humility ever be repeated?

Life is worth living because there is that "is-ness" of life which has never been and shall never be limited by the spoken word. Leave aside the word, it cannot be captured even in a sound, because sound is a motion and the infinity of "is-ness" has no motion, no movement, there is no time and space, there are no points here and there. When it is "all-ness", all-inclusiveness, the very concept of motion born of the human mind becomes irrelevant.

We have been saying this evening that when the I-consciousness relaxes, when with the movement of thought time comes to a standstill, then it is there, the essence is there. The veil that the screen of words had put around it is no more there and the naked essence of reality is there taking your whole being into its embrace. This is a happening. I have not achieved the reality, I have not experienced it, there is no experiencer. You can experience the particular. With the total, experiencing is not possible. So, you are taken into its fold, its embrace, that is freedom, and in that freedom it is possible to live, to move from that freedom and come back to your daily relationships, daily responsibilities and tasks that life has brought to you, to go through them with a new passion, a new intensity, a new efficiency and elegance.

Well my friends, thank you very much for co-operating with me. One has tried to share one's life, and it is a privilege to have an audience that co-operates with such intensity.



THE URGENCY OF SELF-DISCOVERY

3 talks and 1 discussion, held in "De Hoorneboeg", Holland, in 1974

Why not be serious? Serious, not weighty. Why not live with a perseverance in our attention, an intensity in our awareness and with a freshness in our learning? What are the hindrances to live in full blossoming, unfolding of our being, growing in strength, in depth and widening of all our functioning? This booklet with the talks of Vimala in "De Hoorneboeg", 1974, can work as a mirror that shows us a panorama of our motives, inner and outer movements, which are a hindrance to an is-ness, in which freedom, love, beauty is realised.

Some sentences out of these talks:

"Man has become so used to living absent-mindedly, half-heartedly, in a dull mediocre way, that he does not feel disturbed, when he notices that there is a lack of intensity and the depth of passion in his day-to-day relationships. You and I as human beings have become so accustomed to having conflicts and contradictions, the tensions thereof, carrying them from day to day over years, from youth to old age, that it does not much upset us, perturb us when we notice that we hardly ever live in the state of relaxation."

"The first thing is to learn to be with oneself, not because one is depressed or one wants to chew back into memory, not that way, but only for the fun of being with oneself, in a relaxed way."

"In the relaxation of the past, in the relaxation of the knowledge and experience, the sensitivity, the intelligence of the whole being, begins to move. Intelligence is the sensitivity of the whole being."

THE MYSTERY OF SILENCE

talks held in "De Hoorneboeg", Holland, in 1976

The Whitsun weekend 1976 in "De Hoorneboeg", Holland brought 70 persons together. In the beautiful surroundings of this old park we have listened to the talks by Vimala Thakar on Silence and also each day we sat some time together in silence. The talks take us along all the hindrances and repetitive movements in our mind and let us realize the character of our doing and the realizing brought rest. To be in Silence is a happening; the awareness of Silence is in the bathing of your nerves, your mind in Silence.

Some parts out of the talks:

"There is a possibility for this human brain, either to repeat that which has been fed into it, or to see the nature of repetitive mechanistic action and to hold back, without being whipped into it, without being forced into stillness, without being mutilated, destroyed. Beautifully, gracefully, charmingly it can go into abeyance, non-action."

"When the contents have been looked at in humility, the looking, the observing comes to an end, the observer and

the observed come to an end. One arrives at awareness, awareness of the whole mechanism of mind, the movement of mind, an awareness of that which is free of the mind. " In Silence is not the duality of the known and the unknown; but it is the unknowable, it is a realm where knowing and experiencing become irrelevant. "

" Being with the solitude of Silence, with the limitless, nameless, measureless reality creates a new balance, it refreshes the worn-out mind, and washes you clean of every manner of fear. "

These talks have now been published; you will find more details about the new books in the booklist on the last page.



FROM THE ADMINISTRATION OF "CONTACT"

Please take note that:

- A. Our postgironumber 3819281 is only for "Contact" and not for the ordering of books from the Travel and Book Fund. These are two separate administrations.
- B. Our bank account is with the AMRO-Bank, IJmuiden (see page 1).
- C. We would appreciate your payment for a subscription 1978 before the first of February, 1978. The subscription fee for 1978 is f 9, -- which is equivalent to \$ 4. -- according to the dollar rate on Sept. 1st, 1977. Extra copies of no.2 will cost f 4,50 for subscribers and f 5,50 for others.
- D. You are requested to write your name and address clearly. We have had some problems with illegible addresses.

PROGRAMME OF THE GATHERINGS IN THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM WITH VIMALA THAKAR IN 1978

The tentative programme published in number 1 of "Contact" is totally changed !!!

DAY-SCHEDULE OF MOST OF THE GATHERINGS

First day:

till 15.00 o'clock	Please contact the administration
15.00 o'clock	Tea
16.15 o'clock	Gathering with talk by Vimala Thakar
18.00 o'clock	Meal
19.30 o'clock	Tea
20.30 o'clock	Gathering with half an hour Silence

Other days:

7.00 - 8.00 o'clock	Yoga exercises
8.30 o'clock	Breakfast
9.45 o'clock	Coffee
10.20 o'clock	Gathering; after half an hour Silence at 11.00 o'clock talk or discussion
12.30 o'clock	Meal
13.30 o'clock	Tea
16.00 o'clock	Dutch translation of yesterday's talk (only in gathering VI)
18.00 o'clock	Meal
19.30 o'clock	Tea
20.30 o'clock	Gathering with half an hour Silence

See information board (blackboard) for changes and about special activities.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Please do not smoke during the gatherings and meals!
- Meals are vegetarian.
- Domestic animals are not permitted.
- Those who want to participate in the yoga exercises are requested to bring their own mat or rug to lie on.
- Please mention in your letter: male or female, age, address and phone-number, if you want to participate

in the yoga exercises in the morning, which musical instrument you could bring with you (gathering VI).

- For gatherings III and VI in Woudschoten, please send your letter to: Mrs. Joke Groot, Wagenaarlaan 60, Ede; phone-number 08380 - 13700, postgiro (postal transfer account) 2557893.
- For gatherings IV and V please send your letter to: Mrs. Nora Houtman - de Graaf, Spoorlaan 46, Bilthoven; phone-number 030 - 783369, postgiro (postal transfer account) 521469.
- The registration has to reach us as soon as possible, but in any case together with the payment of registration charges; the payment for the board and lodging has to reach us before March 1st, 1978.

We would like to receive the payment from foreign countries - if not possible via the postal transfer account as in America and England - via a postal money order. From America you can only send the money in \$ so you have to know before going to the post office how much the exchange is at the moment of payment. In August 1977 the \$ was worth Dutch f 2,40 and the exchange from an amount of let us say f 40,- + f 50,- is f 90,- was in August f 90,- : 2,40 = \$ 37,50.

So you have to ask what the currency is. To save extra charges you may in this case send the amount for more than 1 gathering to one of the 2 addresses mentioned.

THE GATHERINGS

I. This gathering has been cancelled.

II. Long Whitsun week-end for Self-education in Belgium

Saturday, May 13th, Sunday, May 14th and Monday, May 15th. It will be held in the Provinciaal Vormingscentrum, Smekenstraat 59, Oostmalle.

It can be reached by car: follow the (national) highway (rijksweg) Antwerp - Oostmalle - Turnhout. Highway E 3, leave the road at Zoersel. Highway E 39, leave the road at Massenhoven. From the centre of Oostmalle circa 1 km direction Turnhout and then to the left about 200 m.

Bus: 41 N.M.B.V. via Antwerp or Turnhout. Bus stop "Vormingscentrum".

Day-schedules

Saturday, May 13th:

- till 15.00 o'clock Please contact the administration
- 16.00 o'clock Coffee etc. ("vieruurtje") in the restaurant
- 16.30 o'clock Please be seated in the room upstairs
- 16.45 o'clock Talk by Vimala Thakar
- 18.30 o'clock Bread-meal in the restaurant
- 20.30 o'clock Gathering with half an hour Silence

Sunday, May 14th and Monday, May 15th:

- 7.00 - 8.00 o'clock Yoga exercises
- 8.30 o'clock Breakfast in the restaurant
- 9.45 o'clock Coffee in the restaurant
- 10.20 o'clock Gathering; after half an hour Silence at 11.00 o'clock talk or discussion
- 12.30 o'clock Warm meal in the restaurant
- 16.00 o'clock Coffee etc. ("vieruurtje") in the restaurant
- 18.30 o'clock Bread-meal in the restaurant
- 20.30 o'clock Gathering with half an hour Silence
- Monday, May 15th departure after warm meal around 14.00 o'clock.

You can choose between a vegetarian or a non-vegetarian meal. There are rooms available for 1, 2 and 6 persons. Registration as soon as possible, but in any case together with payment of BF (Belgian Francs) 100,- for registration charges and BF 900,- for the board and lodging, before March 1st, 1978. At the office of the Centre sheets and a pillow-case are available for use for the price of BF 80,-. Please bring your own towels. Registration address: fam. H. Helsen, Missiehuislei 10A, B 2180 Kalmthout, Belgium; phone-number 31-667435, postcheque-number 000-0092937-11.

III. Week-end at Zeist

Saturday, May 20th and Sunday, May 21st. Address: "Woudschoten", Woudenbergseweg 54, Zeist, Holland. You can find all details about "Woudschoten" under gathering VI.

See "Day-schedule", with the following exception for Sunday:

- 14.45 o'clock Gathering for half an hour Silence
- 15.30 o'clock Tea and then departure
- Registration for this week-end by Mrs. Joke Groot.

Registration charges f 7,- per person. Lodging with full board, including coffee and tea, f 41,-. See also "General information".

IV. Intensive Self-education course A (35 participants)

Friday, May 26th - Friday, June 2nd. Address: 'De Tiltenberg', Zilkerduinweg 375, Vogelenzang, near Haarlem, Holland.

To be reached by bus number 90 from the railway stations Haarlem (25 minutes) or Heemstede (16 minutes); stop "Tiltenberg". By car: Haarlem-Heemstede-Vogelenzang and then direction Noordwijkerhout; or The Hague-Sassenheim-Noordwijkerhout and then direction Vogelenzang.

Please do not come before 15.00 o'clock.

Friday, May 26th:

15.00 - 16.00 o'clock Administration

18.00 o'clock Bread-meal

19.30 o'clock Tea

20.00 o'clock Gathering; introductory talk by Vimala Thakar and Silence in the meditation hall

The day-schedule will be generally the same as that of the other gatherings, only the programme will be more intensified. Friday, June 2nd departure after warm midday meal.

Walks in the dunes to the North Sea are possible. See the information board in the hall.

Registration by Mrs. Nora Houtman-de Graaf.

Registration charges f 35,-. Board and lodging (inclusive coffee and tea) f 240,- (6 full days).

Plenty of rooms for 1 or 2 persons. You can hire sheets, a pillow-case and a towel for f 5,- in case you don't bring your own with you.

V. Intensive Self-education course B (35 participants)

Monday, June 5th - Tuesday, June 13th. It will be held in 'De Hoorneboeg' situated in the Goois Nature Reservation, near Hilversum. This private area of 13 ha. surrounded by an old beach lane is a beautiful spot. You can reach 'De Hoorneboeg' by NBM-bus 37 or 38 from stations Utrecht or Hilversum; bus stop 'De Hoorneboeg'; 15 minutes walking distance to the house.

For those who come by car: don't take the new highway but keep the old road Utrecht-Hilversum.

Administration, yoga exercises, tea and coffee in pavilion "Stalheim".

Gatherings in "Lezingzaal". Meals in dining-room.

See general day-schedule, which will be intensified.

Tuesday departure after warm midday-meal.

Registration address: Mrs. Nora Houtman-de Graaf.

Registration charges f 40,-. Board and lodging f 320,- (8 full days).

Plenty of rooms for 1 person, but also for 2 or 3 persons.

If you don't bring your own sheets, pillow-case and towel, these articles are available at the rate of f 5,-.

Due to the fact that the Intensive Self-education course B precedes the International gathering (VI) the course B will be reserved for participants outside of Holland and Belgium.

It will be possible only to follow course A or B - not both - as there are so many people interested. For this very reason the 2nd course has been added.

VI. International gathering at Zeist

Saturday, June 17th - Saturday, July 1st. It is held in the conference centre "Woudschoten", Woudenbergseweg 54, Zeist (near Utrecht), in the centre of the Netherlands.

"Woudschoten" has a ground of 45 ha with several signed walking routes. Here you can hear the silence and meet deer and other animals.

It can be reached by buses from the railway stations Utrecht or Amersfoort (bus stop "Woudschoten").

There is a large parking-place near the house.

See "Day-schedule"; at 16.00 o'clock translation in Dutch.

Saturday, July 1st, departure after the warm midday meal.

Tea and coffee is served in the hall with the bar. Gatherings, also yoga exercises in the big room number 3. Vegetarian warm meal in the evening, but during the week-ends at noon. All meals in the dining-rooms 9 and 7.

After the midday meal: sale of books and cassettes (possibly with the talk of the day before) in room 6, where you can also read quietly.

We do the washing of dishes etc., laying the table, preparing for next meals, also tea and coffee, together. So we will ask at each meal volunteers to form a duty party of 6 or 8 friends (half an hour work). Each

participant has to make his own bed. We hope that beautiful weather will allow us to have the gatherings in the open-air theatre, to take walks together, or go on a picnic. We hope to organize some excursions, have an afternoon or evening with Indian music, etc. Please inform us which musical instrument you play and could bring along with you. Each year participants of the week-gatherings have asked for a longer gathering of 2 weeks. It is very important to register for 2 weeks, so that we may have the opportunity to grow together and come to a sustained attention out of which may flow a deeper understanding.

Registration by Mrs. Joke Groot. Registration charges for these 15 days: f 50,-.

Lodging and full board, including coffee and tea, for 15 days: f 560,-.

You can hire sheets, a pillow-case and a towel for f 8,- a week, in case you can't bring your own with you.

There are rooms with warm and cold water for 2 and for 3 persons, and some for 1 person (very limited).

Showers and toilets near by in the corridors.

If you wish to participate in this gathering and it is impossible for you to pay the full amount, please let us know what you can pay and we will try to solve the problem.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Foundation is responsible for more than f 60.000 by hiring the conference halls, including board and lodging. It is clear that every reservation according to your subscription has to be fulfilled by the subscriber as the Foundation is responsible also for the rooms which are not occupied. This implies that every subscriber is responsible for the full amount even if he is not able to participate at that time (unless we are able to fill up this vacancy). It is clear that we can only accept those subscriptions which include board and lodging and for the stay or the total duration of the course for which he or she has subscribed.

Vimala Thakar's publications

	price in Dutch f	total price (dispatch costs incl.)
Mutation of Mind (7 talks and 7 discussions) 3rd printing	12, --	14, 65
On an eternal voyage, 4th printing	6, 75	8, 45
Silence in action, 3rd printing	6, 75	8, 45
Voyage into oneself, 1970, 8 talks in U.S.A., 2nd printing	8, 50	10, 20
Towards Total Transformation, 1970, 76 pages with talks in U.S.A.	8, 25	9, 95
Nijmegen University Talks, 1970	3, 50	5, 20
2nd Nijmegen University Talks, 1972	6, 50	8, 20
Banaras University Talks, 1972	2, 75	4, 45
Meditation - A way of life	5, --	6, 70

A Challenge to Youth (Youth Camp-Holland 1972)	12, --	14, 65
Blossoms of Friendship (Mt. Abu-India talks 1973)	6, 90	8, 60
From Intellect to Intelligence (Huizen-Holland talks 1974)	12, --	14, 65
Five Talks given at Claremont, California 1974	6, 90	8, 60
Beyond Awareness (Bilthoven-Holland 1974)	3, 90	4, 90
NEW: The urgency of self-discovery (De Hoorneboeg 1974)	7, 75	9, 45
NEW: The Mystery of Silence (De Hoorneboeg 1976)	7, 75	9, 45
NEW: Life as Yoga, 13 discourses and 7 discussions at Chorwad, India, 286 pages	Paperback Clothbound	25, -- 35, --
Toespraken Nijmeegse Universiteit (Dutch language) 1970	3, 50	5, 20
Toespraken Nijmeegse Universiteit II (Dutch language) 1972	4, 50	6, 20
Dynamische Stilte (Dutch language) 1974	8, 75	10, 45
La Méditation, un mode de vie (French language)	6, --	8, --

Un éternel voyage (French language)

6, 50

8, 50

Die Kraft der Stille (German language)

9, 75

11, 45

Meditation, eine Lebensweise (German language)

6, --

8, --

We have been asked during the last years to produce cassettes with the talks of Vimala Thakar. We now have purchased a high speed cassette desktop duplicator: a big investment, but due to the great demand for cassettes we have taken this step.
Available are:

Two cassettes of the evening talks given in the Annie Besant Hall of the International Theosophical Centre at Huizen/Naarden (Holland) 3rd June 1976 and 10th June 1976 à f 15, --. Both f 28, 50.

Six cassettes of the talks and discussions given during the Study-week 1976 also in Huizen/Naarden (Holland) 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th of May 1976 à f 15, -- Six f 80, --

Four cassettes of the talks given during the two week-ends in the Yoga and Vedanta Centre in Baarn (Holland) 12th, 13th, 19th and 20th of June 1976 à f 15, -- Four f 40, --

Please order by payment on: -Postal Money Order;/ -or Postgiro number 134788;/ -or AMRO-Bank no. 40.10.75.419, Blaricum, Holland; from "Travel and Book Fund Vimala Thakar", Huizerweg 46, Blaricum, Holland.

Note: As Bank charges are high, we prefer - if possible - payment by Postal Money Order or by Postgiro.

For U.S.A. : The Rainbow Bridge, 3548 22nd Street, San Francisco, Cal. 94114.

For Italy : Alfa Plus, Via degli Orefici 2, Milano.