

CHAPTER II PERSAUD'S VIEWS ON "YOGIC REALISM"

I. INDIANNESS AND INDIAN MIND:

As discussed in the previous chapter, the psychology of the Indo-Caribbean response to the Canadian experience carries a legacy of double origins, the Caribbean and the Indian. Despite its impact, it stands for a testimony of the Indian mind responding to the reality. The ties with India are remote and, of course, invisible. Yet their association with India is well established through links with the ancestral past. It is concrete enough to contribute significantly, and yet invisibly, to the shaping and reshaping of their mind, psyche and responses. An Indian immigrant's responses get due reflections in their expressions, literary or non-literary. The nature of responses is very much Indian. It counts for a clear reflection of the Indian mind, i.e. the Indian way of perceiving reality and responding to it. In order to explain Indianness of the Indo-Caribbean response, it would be useful to have an elaborate view of the Indian mind as explained by yoga and India's mystical and spiritual traditions. More particularly, it would support the present study of Sasenarine Persaud's works written with strong base in India's yogic and aesthetic traditions.

The concept of Indian mind is explored and explained elaborately in the Scriptures and religious writing of Hinduism. Particularly, Patanjali's theory of Yoga and the *Shrimad Bhagavadgita* establish a more authentic theory on the concept with scientific and practical perception. The present explanation is derived from commentaries written on these two ancient texts. Swami Vishnu-Devananda's commentary on the Hatha Yoga in his, *Hath Yoga Pradipika* (1987), explains the Indian mind as different from the western mind. He explains the process

how the prana or the bio-energy moves inside the human body. The prana moves in the body through three nerve channels, the nadis called the Ida channel, the Pingala channel and the Sushumna channel. In most cases, the prana moves through either the Ida channel or the Pingala channel. The Ida channel forms the right hemisphere, while the Pingala channel forms the left hemisphere in the body. The Sushumna channel is the middle one lying in between them at the centre of the body. All these nerve channels go upward in the body along the spinal cord. When the prana moves in the body through the Ida channel, it generates waves. They are the kind of philosophical, devotional, compassionate and peaceful nature. These waves bear inertia for emotional responses, as is the case with most Indians or Asians. As against it, when the prana moves through the Pingala channel, it generates waves that are the kind of analytical, mathematical, scientific and rational nature. These waves bear inertia for non-emotional and down-to-earth concrete realism, as is the case with most western (Chap. I, no page number). Sentimental response is typical of an Indian mind, while fact-based response is natural with a western mind. This marks an Indian mind different from a western mind. Responses may get converted into perception which again is distinctly different. Instinct of faith may be termed as distinct feature of an Indian mind, while instinct of skepticism, suspicion, inquiry or questioning goes to qualify a western mind.

The Indian philosophical tradition presents an elaborate explanation of the concept of Indian mind. The concept has been conceived, contemplated and cultivated for ages by sages and seers in India since the Vedic period. Their intense contemplation and pondering over the concept has developed an elaborate science that defines the human self, its nature, its relation with the Universal Self and an exquisite process of evolution through which the human self attains true knowledge about itself and also reach the stage of realization of the Complete Self.

This science clearly indicates that one has to engage him in the search to know his true form and his existence on the earth. When one is engaged in the search, his self attains evolution and elevation in the process with increases awareness about the world and him. The science also establishes that the human existence is the basic context in this process. Indian scriptures to include Patanjali's *Yoga Sutram*, *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* and many others, name this process as "Yoga".

The word 'yoga' is derived from a Sanskrit root verb 'yuj' which means 'to engage one in efforts', or 'to meet', or 'to attain', or 'to unite'. In this system of thought, the context of the process is the human self, i.e. *jiva*. Its aim is to attain the form of the Universal Self or the Complete Self, i.e. *Shiva*. *Jiva* has to have union with *Shiva*. It is the final stage at which the process of evolution of human self gets accomplished, and, as a result, one knows his true form. It is the realization. It remains the goal of human existence. One knows his soul as a part of the Truth, the Complete and Ultimate form of Reality. Indian scriptures call this ultimate form, "*Satchidananda*" – Truth, Mind and Bliss, i.e. The True mind with the Eternal Bliss.

The process of yoga can be initiated from human existence on the great cycle of life comprising many lives in the animal, plants and other kingdoms. Human existence is the launching pad from where the human soul elevates it to take a flight. It soars high in the psychosphere. It is a stage at which scientific explorations and theories on the evolution come to a standstill. Darwin's theory of evolution and other eminent scientific research could not go beyond the physical reality. Accordingly, the western scientific thinking too has not been able to go beyond the physical stage of the existence, although it has been able to draw a clear line of evolution from the primitive stage to the present stage of civilized human existence. It has not been able to trace any further evolution beyond this stage. The reasons for the inability may be

located in the supremacy of rationality in the western mind that is skeptical of spirituality as it is not empirically evident.

Under the strong influence of the western thinking, the modern intelligentsia and scientific explorations give out a strong resentment to accept anything that lacks factual support and concrete evidence. Such resentment seems to have limited or blocked the vision of man today to look beyond the physical. They, therefore, resent accepting what the Indian sages and seers could see long ago and have codified in the scriptures. They are unable to comprehend that there lies beyond the physical reality a kind of reality. As opposed to the western psyche of scientific mind and modern intelligentsia, Indian mind possesses an element of faith that believes that there is a reality beyond the physical that is mysterious, metaphysical and spiritual. It embarks upon one's mind the Knowledge and Truth of the Ultimate Reality. It is the Cosmic Consciousness.

The Indian philosophical tradition of yoga envisages the world beyond the physical as divided in to different spheres like the mental sphere, the metaphysical sphere, the spiritual sphere and the psychosphere. With practice of yoga, soul ascends from the physical level to eventually reach the psychosphere. Patanjali says, *jatyantaraparinamah prakriyapoorat* (IV. 2), that is changes occurs in one's body through transformation of body, senses and mind due to emergence of divine powers. Bhim Sen Gupta explains in his *Divya Chakshu Yoga* (1991) that meditation in Patanjali's yoga system is not "abstract", but "a psycho-logically planned creative process that leads to enlightenment" (7). Yoga offers an effective method of psychologically well-planned meditation that brings "an applied illuminating meditation" or "creative meditation". He further says that meditation is not zero of mind or isolation of samskaras or the physical world, but "a release from limited awareness into higher perception". Yogic perception

thus is one's expansion into a new awareness of being related to the universe. It is a new dimension of man's personality that brings larger and higher awareness. It is characterized by "inward illumination and inner refinement", and it contributes to "higher rationality", "flowering of inwardness", "sublimation of will and vision" and "elevation of outlook and awareness", that is "Enlightenment". He spells out stage leading to yogic salvation or "Keivalya" as "self-education", "self-enlargement" and "self-enlightenment" that seem to correspond respectively to mental sphere, metaphysical sphere and spiritual sphere. Yoga orients man to higher values to become a perfect individual, also a cosmopolitan citizen. Gupta says that "Yogic Trance" is not a blank mind state, but "a definite psychological condition of conscious-enlightenment" and it is marked by a change in consciousness" (13-19). It is a stage of realization of the Truth of Life, i.e. the meaning of human existence in this world.

The human existence can never be conceived without the presence of mind. Mind or 'Manā' (in Sanskrit), therefore, forms the base of human existence. It may be reason or coincidence that the word mind or 'mana' has been incorporated in words that signify the human existence. All Indian languages with a base in Sanskrit give words like 'manas', 'manav', 'manavi', or 'manushya'. Further, it is an established fact that mind is inevitable for human existence. Mind marks man different from other beings on the earth and also superior to all of them. Mind attributes thinking faculty to man to enable him to evolve from the savagery or primitive stage to a civilized or cultured stage of being. The Indian philosophical tradition attaches great significance to mind as a means to attain evolution and liberation, "*Mana eva manushyanam karanam bandhmokshayoho*", means mind is the cause of one's binding as well as his liberation from binding.

Mind acquires the central focus in the discussion of the process of yoga. Patanjali, an exponent on yoga defines yoga, '*Yogachittavrittinirodhah*' (*Yoga*. I.2). Bhim Sen Gupta translates the definition, "Yoga is controlled transformation (evolution) of mind". He identifies four stages of yoga as: I. Transformation of mind through will and energy of focused mind, II. Creative meditation, III. Transparent consciousness, and IV. Height of illumined awareness, "*satchitananda*". He says that mind is a storehouse of energy that generates in man capacity to evolve and acquire the yogic perception to view him finally as "Complete Man" (9-13).

Mind, being abstract and invisible, is most difficult to explain in the manner any scientific theory would try. It is too mysterious for a common man to comprehend. However, the Indian yogic tradition attempts to give an elaborate explanation on mind. The available explanation is an outcome of yogic efforts put in by a number of yogis. It springs from a yogi's experiences in yoga. Yoga is mysterious and, therefore, it is incomprehensible with human intelligence, logic or reasoning. It is a matter of faith in what a yogi says or does. It is selfless and looks to the benefit of mankind in general. A yogi's selfless living carries an implication of faith. An Indian mind values his experiences and aspires to practice yoga under his guidance with total faith and devotion. His faith is like Arjun's faith in Krishna, "*Karishye vachanam tava*"- I will follow thy words (*Gita*, XVIII. 73). Faith is an axis on which yogic mind revolves.

Yoga conceptualises mind as a storehouse of energy. It calls this energy as 'Prana' or 'Kundalini'. The modern biosciences call it bio-energy. It is produced inside body every moment from food we eat water, we drink and air we inhale. This energy is stored in the mind. Body utilizes it to carry out different operations through the senses and the mind. These operations usually pertain to common biological needs like hunger, thirst, sex and comfort. They also pertain to social need to commune and communicate to form a human community. They also

pertain to nourish the needs of the mind by acquiring knowledge about the world and to enrich it. All these contribute significantly to human survival and its growth and evolution on this planet. The mind manages all these operations through a complex network of nerves spread inside the body in each of its nook and corner. This network is called the nervous system. Through the nervous system and five senses the mind establishes contacts with the outside world and manages to satisfy the need of the body. It explores contacts with other living beings on the earth and acquires new knowledge about the world that is constantly changing. This knowledge generates in him various sentiments, desires, expectations and curiosity. Mind always looks forward to satisfying them through senses. In order to do this, the prana or energy flows out constantly through senses of touch, seeing, taste, hearing and smelling. Thus, in a normal human being the bio-energy is consumed mostly to satisfy his earthly needs and sentiments.

The Yogic tradition views that one has to rise above these worldly affairs to liberate his soul. To help it, yogis and sages of India have conceived and evolved a system and imparted it to their disciples from time to time. The chief among these systems are Hatha Yoga or Kundalini Yoga and Raj Yoga. The first system was conceived and evolved by the Siddhas like Matsyendranath, Gorakhnath and others. The second was conceived and evolved by Patanjali (500-700 B. C.). His *Yoga Sutram* is a well-defined treatise on Yoga. Patanjali expands the theory and practice of Raj Yoga. Though these two systems look different they are interrelated to each other. In the *Yoga Sutram*, Patanjali seems to continue in the line of the Hatha Yoga. The Hatha Yoga expounds five constituents or limbs of yoga like *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama* and *pratyahara*, Patanjali's Raja Yoga adds three more constituents like *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi* to make eight constituents in the system of yoga. Patanjali, therefore, describes yoga as the *astangayoga*: "*yamanyamapranayama pratyahara- dharanadhyanasamadhyoashtangan*"

(*Yoga*. II.29). Zubin Zorthoshtimanesh explains these eight limbs of yoga in the column The Speaking Tree of the *Times of India* titled, "Patanjali's Panacea For All Suffering": "Patanjali describes the path to the ultimate emancipation of the human being- the eight-fold path of yoga also known as *astanga yoga*. He states eight constituents or limbs of the path yoga as: *yama*, *niyam* or ethical principles; *asana* or postures; *pranayama* or breath control; *pratyahara* or control of senses; *dharana* or concentration; *dhyana* or meditation and *samadhi* or super-consciousness" (12).

Swami Vishnu Devananda explains in his *Hatha Yoga-Pradipika* (1999) that the process of Hatha Yoga develops the knowledge of controlling two energies in body called 'ha' or Prana and 'iha' or Apana. Hatha Yoga thus is the knowledge that helps to gain control over mind. Prana and Apana are the motions of the mind. They are its thoughts. They are invisible like the wind. Hatha Yoga thus is a practical way to control the prana. For this purpose, it suggests a process with five steps called *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama* and *pratyahara* (Chap I). Devananda further explains that Patanjali's Raja Yoga concentrates on the art of controlling the mind. It perceives mind as a lake and thoughts or *vrittis* are like waves in it. He, therefore, defines Raja Yoga: *Yogashchittavrittinirodhah* (*Yoga*. I.2). It means that yoga is a process of subverting or controlling and eventually stopping these waves of thought. When thoughts or "vrittis" calm down completely, mind becomes still like a calm lake. It becomes like a clear mirror into which one may behold his self, the Atman.

He further says that these waves are of three kinds: *tamasic*, *rajasic* and *sattvic*. *Tamasic* waves are dull and gross as a result of which inertia prevails in mind. *Rajasic* waves are agitated like stormy sky and they cause turbulence in mind. Ordinarily when these waves are projected, the energy or prana/ apana moves through the Ida and the Pingala channels that lie in the right

and the left hemispheres of the human mind and body to give out sentimental and rational responses respectively. Both these channels try to dominate the mind. The purpose of yoga is to prevent the very act of dominating mind on the part of these two nerve channels and their hemispheres. The process of yoga controls prana and diverts it in to the “Sushumna” nerve channel that lies at the middle of the body and rises from the bottom of the spinal cord up to the brain in the head. *Sattvic* waves are still and calm with no motion of prana and apana. In this case, when the energy or prana flows in the Sushumna channel, it rises upward in body. As the process advances, the energy pierces through nerve centers in the body. Yoga conceptualises seven nerve centres or astral centres or *charkas* that are located in the Sushumna channel. Through the yogic practice, prana rises from the *Muladharachakra*, to *Manipurachakra*, to *Anahatchakra*, to *Visuddhachakra*, to *Ajnachakra*, to *Sahasrarchakra* and finally to the *Brahmarandhra*. It pierces through three nerve knots called the *Brahmagranthi*, the *Vishmugranthi* and the *Rudragranthi* that are located respectively at the *Muladharachakra*, the *Manipurachakra* and the *Ajnachakra*. When the prana rises in body and pierces through these nerve centres the mind acquires freedom from waves of passion and sentiments on one hand and of logic and reasoning on the other. In the process, the *sattvic* state of mind is created to help one to concentrate, meditate and attain the realization of his self (Chap. I).

The realization that one seeks through yoga is none other than yogic perception or yoga *drishti*. Bhim Sen Gupta in his commentary, *Divya Chakshu Yoga* (1991) coins another term to signify it, “Divya Chakshu Yoga”. Gupta explains Patanjali’s definition of yoga in the context of mind. He says that Patanjali believes in the excellence of mind that contributes significantly to the attainment of the *samadhi* or a stage of self-realisation. He translates Patanjali’s definition, *yogah chittavrittinirodhah* (*Yoga*. I.2) as “Yoga is controlled transformation (evolution) of mind”

(10). It focuses on self purification or purification of mind through inner transformation. He says that yoga is self-purification and psychological awakening of mind. He explains *samadhi* or yogic trance as conscious enlightenment (13). He throws more light on mind energy, its levels and functions and says that mind attains perfection through a process of self-evolution and ascent. In the process, it elevates from the state of 'micro-consciousness' to 'macro-consciousness' and further to 'complete consciousness'. He explains that 'micro-consciousness' is the normal mind. It is a network of instinct, passion, desire and intellect. "Macro-consciousness" is a higher creative mind. It is a seat of higher intuitive experiences, yogic visions and revelations. Little above the 'macro-consciousness', there lies the 'sub-macro-consciousness' that is a pre-summit level or pre-sublimation level. At this level, the focused energy expands horizontally through inner sublimation. Although this level is in sublimated attunement with the macro-mind, psychological impurities like greed and delusion are likely to surface. In this state, if a sadhaka is allured with riches, fame and power, he falls from the height of the macro level (32-36). Patanjali warns about this danger, "*te samadhavupasarga vyutithane siddhayah*", means all these powers are in fact hurdles in the path of self-actualization. Hence, a yogi has to renounce them as and when they appear to him (Yoga. III. 37).

The 'Complete Consciousness' remains at the top. It is the inner space or the psychosphere, says Gupta. At this stage, the highest potentials of mind is revealed. The consciousness becomes all pervasive and all knowing. This is the summit consciousness, the all-consciousness. It is the summit of self-evolution. It is an entry into the Eternal Bliss, the Inward Vacuum. One gets the living vision of the Whole, the Reality of One Mind (32-36). The Vedas too define the 'Complete Consciousness': "*Poornamadah poornamidam poornat poornamudchryate, Poornasya poornamaday poornamevavshishyate*". It means that the Real is the Whole. That

is the Truth. That is the Existence. That is the Life. It remains the Whole even if something is taken from it or added to it. Gupta says, "it is a higher dimension of consciousness where oneness of life pervades". This is the yogic perception that "will help to avert catastrophes, disasters and ugly impulses which loom large on the horizon by providing a healthier evolutionary view", Gupta asserts. He calls this phenomenon as "the Inner Sensory Perception" or the Yogic Perception, and not of 'extra-sensory' or 'supernatural' type. He, therefore, calls yoga as "intuitive approach to existence". He further says that yoga aims at the "making of a complete man" and not that of a superman. He describes a yogi "not different from the rest of mankind except in the sense that he has a peculiar power of concentration and an exceptional self-control and transformation of mind" (24-26). Such a yogi is a man in the fuller sense of the term, the *sthitaprajna*, i.e. a man with still and steady mind or intellect whom Krishna spells out and elaborates in the *Bhagavad Gita* (II. 56-72).

Gopi Krishna calls a yogi a mystic. He states in his book, *The Evolution of Higher Consciousness* (1996) that a yogi is "inevitable for the evolution of the mankind" (4). He outlines the history of mankind and says that the science of Kundalini emerged and evolved around 4500 B.C. in all major civilizations of the world. He concludes his review with a comment that despite having an elaborate knowledge about Kundalini, the potent reservoir of life energy, the leading civilizations declined miserably in the course of history from the great height of prosperity. He views the reasons for the decline. He attaches responsibility to great persons and leaders of the time. He condemns them for deplorable poverty of intellect and that they failed to take the knowledge of Kundalini beyond mere earthly desire and passions. All the time they kept the focus on the body and paid no attention to the consciousness. He regrets that elevated mind were absent in all areas of human activity (75). Gopi Krishna holds similar fear for the present time.

He says that the mysterious is undervalued and the spiritual is ignored in the name of factual evidence. He says that the human intellect is clouded with ego, vanity or false pride. He feels an urgent need of constant cleansing and purification from within so that man's spiritual nature unfolds in the form of the awakening of Kundalini (82). In this respect, a yogi is a complete man whose Kundalini is awakened. The *Bhagavad Gita* calls him a *jagrata*, an awakened soul (II 69). Gopi Krishna, therefore, focuses upon the evolution in to higher consciousness as a solution to the modern day problems.

Evolution is a concept that has attracted attention of scientists, biologists and psychologists of the world over the ages. The popular scientific views are the Darwinian view and the Jungian or Lamarckian view. Darwin held that evolution is a play of atoms and molecules from a tiny speck of living matter in to a man. Gopi Krishna explains that Darwin's theory seems to state that intelligent operation and real mechanism of change or the intelligent force are responsible for the extraordinary behaviour of living atoms and molecules. Psychologists like Jung and Lamarck, on the other hand, view evolution as change in the consciousness and so, they coin the term 'the unconscious' to indicate that there is something imperceptible and inexplicable in the matter. This seemed to have prevented them and other scientists from proceeding further in their researches. As a result, stagnancy occurs in scientific exploration on the matter of evolution. Against this, the Indian view prevails since the Vedic times. It views evolution as a spiritual progress. Gopi Krishna states that the spirit rises higher and higher into the state of self-awareness, until it culminates into man, the complete man (24). It recognizes that mind can influence matter through a psychical and psychokinetic phenomena. But since this point is entirely inexplicable in terms of physical laws, mystery prevails about the process of evolution on its spiritual dimension (26).

The Indian view on evolution recognizes Kundalini as the pranic force. Krishna explores the subject further. It is the *Parashakti* or the Super Intelligent Cosmic Energy that lies in every living organism. It is also called the Serpent Power. It is an active agent behind imagination and creative energy. It is a causative factor for phenomena of life. Kundalini is similar to what western occultists call the 'Astral Light' or what Egyptians call the 'Odic Force'. The Russian scientists view it as the 'bio-plasma' that causes 'bioluminescence'. These scientists viewed it as the blue aura that was visible in the Kirlian pictures obtained through a huge electron microscope called the Kirlians' equipment (161-2). Gopi Krishna regrets that the knowledge and science of Kundalini has not been used beyond mere magic or thaumaturgy, or beyond display of miraculous feats and psychic powers. He cites Eliphus Levi's view that the pranic power is responsible for genius, ecstasy, visionary experiences and even madness. Gopi Krishna asserts that Indian spiritualists view that Kundalini has a universal character. It is one mighty voice of nature, the key to the Mystery of Existence and the Guardian of human evolution. He explains that the evolutionary mechanism begins with the arousal of Kundalini (36-7).

The arousal of Kundalini, Gopi Krishna explains, is a transition of the human organism from its normal condition to the state of powerful generating plant of high-grade bio-plasma. It is a whirlwind activity in to which every neuron in the brain and every nerve and nerve filament in body participates actively. The activity starts in body when the Serpent Power called Kundalini is awakened. The stimulation is aroused through certain disciplines prescribed in yoga in most cases. In an illustrious person, it is aroused through the stage already attained by virtues of the samskaras of his previous birth. When the body becomes ripe for the experience, it gets activated. As a result, human body is converted in to a virtual dynamo to produce psycho-kinetic energy. This energy rises through the Sushumna nerve channel and streams in to the brain. What

follows is a change or transformation in the character of brain. Kundalini, thus, is a psychic power reservoir from where the energy springs and elevates (176-7).

The Indian traditions of mysticism and spiritualism attempt to explain the concept of a 'Complete Man' that can be culminated through evolution of human self. In order to explain the concept, allegorical literature has been produced on a large scale since the Vedic times. As the pure Vedic writing was too mystical and mysterious for any person to understand and explain, first a line of treatises like the *Vedantas*, and the *Upanishadas* were written and then came the *Puranas* with allegorical stories. These stories form a vital part of the Indian literary tradition. They are lucid, vivid and with varied interests. They have relevance to most sections of living beings on the earth including the human community. They give a wide and comprehensive view of life with significance through symbols and allegories. The chief among the stories are the stories of Rama, Krishna and Shiva. These stories are conceived and produced with clear intention to present a concept of a 'Complete Man' through character-sketches of these three divine personalities. One may form his understanding of Indian philosophy of life with their help. It is expected that a common man gets inspired to elevate his standard of living for sublime living and lofty thinking. The ultimate aim is to cultivate true understanding about the human existence.

Sasnarine Persaud's works abound in various mythical references from the Indian ancestry. In order to explain them, it is necessary to explain these allegorical characters. We can do so with the help of the explanation given by Gopi Krishna. In his book, *The Evolution of Higher Consciousness* (1996), he attempts to explore the concept of a 'Complete Man' taking the stories of Krishna, Vishnu, Shiva and Rama as vital illustrations. He works out his explanation with the help of rich resource material from various Indian and non-Indian sources and attempts

to present the esoteric aspects and esoteric significance of these stories. He first draws a number of incidents from Krishna's life story for the purpose. He calls Krishna's story as "a magnificent epic of Kundalini", "the whole fabric of Kundalini is woven in the story of Krishna" (106-7). He further states, "Krishna and Rama, the incarnations of Vishnu, the Universal Consciousness represent the ideals, diverse, but perfect in their own ways", and they are "the supermen developed by Kundalini with trance-human nature" (111). Certain things related to Rama and Krishna help the explanation. The blue colour of their body complexion stands for the blue aura, the astral light that a yogi beholds in an advance stage of yoga. Krishna's 16,108 wives represent the Nadis, nerve channels in human body. The Rasa-Lila symbolises some aspects of the awakening of Kundalini. Gopis are nadis. Goddess Katyayani is Kundalini, Goddess Parvati, the Parashakti. Gopis take bath in the Yamuna and offer prayers and worship to Goddess Katyayani. Their acts signify the first purificatory disciplines of yoga that aim at cleansing of the Nadis (*Nadi.shodhana*). Krishna himself is the Conscious Principle that resides in the head (112-4). Gopi Krishna further says that Krishna's story is "the portrait drawn of a supreme yogi" (123) and a model of "a new man" (116), that of the future products of Kundalini with a life span of 125 years (R. M. Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness* (1976), qtd. in Krishna, 124).

Gopi Krishna further explains the classical portrait of Vishnu reclining on the thousand-headed Serpent Bed floating on the Ocean of Milk. He says that it is "an unmistakable representation of the effects of consciousness caused by the arousal of the Serpent Power". Vishnu is "the Cosmic Man" who passes the Universal Night (160). He quotes the Sanskrit verse that is a hymn to Vishnu, "*Shantakaram Bhujagashayanam...sarvalokeikenatham*" that refers to this posture. It is the one that yogis behold in meditation, *yogibir dhynagamyam*. He also quotes the Vedic hymn that addresses to Vishnu, "That supreme state of Vishnu which enlightened

sages' perception is lighted up by dint of ceaseless meditation and constant wakefulness" (166-167). In this light, he Heinrich Zimmer's observation in his *Myth and Symbol in Indian Art and Civilization* (1969) that states that lessons or experiences of yoga are expressed in Indian myth in a popular form "to transcend the limits of individual consciousness" to reach the state of the Universal or Cosmic Consciousness (167). Gopi Krishna states that the arousal of Kundalini or the Serpent Power is an amazing phenomenon to create "a revolution of the human mind" that leads to emancipation, elevation and final attainment of the Cosmic Mind, the Complete Consciousness. It is the state of *samadhi* in which 'jiva' meets 'Shiva' and the 'Shakti' unites with 'Shiva'. It is the *Kaivalya*, isolation, the *Mukti*, liberation and the Vision of the Reality as the Cosmic Scene (168).

Gopi Krishna also explains the Natraja image of Lord Shiva as "pictorial representation of the metamorphosis wrought to be an awakened Shakti". He refers to Zimmer's exposition on this complex allegory to explain that it is "a graphical illustration of the incredible transformation that occurs when Kundalini floods the Sahasrara with the Pranic nectar extracted from cells and tissues of the organic frame" (183). He states that both Vishnu and Shiva "symbolize the state of transcendence, the evolutionary target of mankind" that is embodied in the mystical utterances in the *Vedas* and the *Upanishadas*: "Shivo 'ham", I am Shiva; "So 'ham", I am that; "Aham Brahmasmi", I am Brahman; "Tat tvamasi", Thou art That; and the like (188).

The *Bhagavad Gita* is the central text for understanding of yoga and hence 'Yogic Realism' as expounded by Saseñaine Persaud. It is an all-time celebrated dialogue-song on life and soul. Krishna sings it to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. The dialogue-song forms an integral part of the Sanskrit epic, the *Mahabharata*. The backdrop of the dialogue-song is a battlefield. The content of the dialogue-song is to act in the interest of the Truth and the

Righteous. The battlefield of Kurukshetra is symbolic of human life. The fight is human dilemma and the fighters are the two contradictory facets of the human self. The context of the fight is a condition of dilemma 'whether to act or not to act'. Arjuna's dilemma stands for human dilemma. The fight between the Pandavas and the Kauravas is that between Truth and Lie or the Righteous and the Falsehood. The root cause of the fight is Dhritashtra's delusion, his 'mamākaḥa' attitude about his sons, the Kauravas, 'mine' versus 'not mine'. The nourishing element to Dhritarashtra's favour for the 'mine' is his blind attachment for his eldest son Duryodhana whose arrogance acts as a catalyst to fuel his warring instinct. Hence, the dialogue-song opens with a clear reference to a human weakness embodied in Dhritarashtra's utterance, 'mamākaḥa Pandavascheivakimakurvata Sanjaya' (Gita, I.1)- O Sanjay, tell me what 'mine' Kauravas and Pandavas did (on the battlefield).

The opening canto of the *Gita* is remarkably entitled, '*Arjunavishadayoga*'. It is Arjuna's encounter with '*vishāda*' i.e. despair. It is generated from his dilemma and irresoluteness to fight against his elders, brothers and relatives. He becomes nervous with despair and disgust. He is unable to fight and thus declares to Krishna, 'I will not fight'. On finding Arjuna falling victim to delusion and arguing under the impact of earthly elements of passion and reason, Krishna utters no words and allows him to speak. Arjuna stands for a normal man who indulges in earthly elements of passion and reasoning. This is the "micro-consciousness" in Gupta's view (32). Under the impact of delusion and despair, he retreats from his duty or *dharma*. Hence his mind needs to be freed from earthly weaknesses that cause hurdles. Thus, the first canto writes a preface to the karmayoga that the book elaborates further.

From the second canto onwards, Krishna takes the control of the situation. He plays the role of a chariot-driver, a *sarathi* who holds reins of horses, and also those of Arjuna's thought

waves. Spiritually, he is a guru, a guide who controls thought waves of his disciple and puts him on the right path. Krishna structures his argument in a way so as to render perfect logic and conviction: The second canto is the *Sankhyayoga*: Krishna leads Arjuna to perform the task and also to know the 'Why' of this task. It is an encounter with knowledge that requires Arjuna to get rid of weaknesses of mind and act, '*Kshudram hridayadaurbalyam tyaktvotthistha Paramatapa*' (*Gita* II.3), means, "O Parantapa (Arjuna), get rid of the weaknesses of your heart and rise up (to act)". Confused about what to do, Arjuna surrenders himself to Krishna, '*Yachchhreyah syannischitam bruihi tanme, shishyaste ham sadhi mam tam prapannam*' II (*Gita* II.7)- means, "Please tell me with certainty what is good for me, I am your disciple and take me to your surrender". However, Arjuna has still some doubts left that prevent him to act. Krishna resolves all his doubts. He clearly tells him that one has to perform a task assigned to him with full faith. That is his duty, *swadharmā*. He has a right to act and not to bother about the result. Even though he performs a task, he is not the doer. He is just an agency, a *nimitta*. Whatever he does and whatever happens to him is predestined. He is like an actor in a drama. Krishna assures him that if he keeps this understanding it will save him all dangers and he will remain detached from what he is doing. With detachment his mind becomes calm, stable and still with a minimum of thought waves. Stability of mind controls thought waves and allows energy to flow higher. With elevation of energy he acquires an ability to 'see'. It is Divine Seeing, or the Spiritual Realisation, or the Yogic Perception. Such a man is called '*sthitaprajna*', a man with stable mind and resolute thinking (*Gita*. II. 72)

Krishna's concept of the *sthitaprajna* corresponds to a 'Complete Man'. It is the ultimate position in yoga or the yogic self. Krishna defines him as '*jagrata*', an awakened soul; '*vitaraḡa*', devoid of passion; '*nihspruha*': devoid of expectation; '*nirmamo*': devoid of

attachments and '*nirahamkarah*': devoid of ego. He is the one who has attained the state of '*Brahman*' and is endowed with the '*Brahma-Bliss*, the '*Sat-Chit-Anand*' in his life and even when he dies (*Gita* II. 54-72). Krishna seems to pose a model of a 'Complete Man'.

Krishna works out his argument to persuade Arjuna to act. He explores the subject of 'karma', an act in the third canto, *Karmayoga*. He explains how a common act can be elevated to the stature of a 'yagna', a sacred act in the fourth canto, '*Karmabrahmarpanayoga*'. One can do it by offering his act to god, Brahman. In the fifth canto, '*Karmasanyasyoga*', Krishna explains how to elevate a common act to make it a *sanyasayoga* or an *anasaktayoga*. One can do it by rendering it as a detached and selfless act, by withdrawing his self-interest in its performance. Krishna states 'karma' as a vital and evitable part of living. One cannot escape it. 'Karma' becomes man's duty, his 'dharma'.

To elevate an act from worthless labour to yoga, Krishna associates karma to yoga, *Yogah karmasu kaushalam* (*Gita*, II 50), i.e. Yoga is skill and perfection in performing an action. One has to add knowledge, jnana to karma to upgrade a plain act to a meaningful act. Hence, he explores the subject of jnana, knowledge in the sixth, seventh and eighth cantos namely, *Atmasanyamayoga*, *Jnanavijnanayoga* and *Aksharabrahmayoga* respectively. Knowledge too has different categories like *tamasi*, *rajasi* and *sattvic* and so it has to rise above the worldly level to reach the mysterious and the spiritual. Krishna elaborates further on knowledge in the ninth, tenth and eleventh cantos namely, *Rajavidhyarajaguhyayoga*, *Vibhutyoga* and *Vishwaroopadarshanayoga* respectively. In each of the cantos above, knowledge is explained as manifested in various forms like the earthly, the intellectual, the mysterious, the religious and the spiritual. Krishna describes his '*Vibhuti*' to Arjuna. These are the manifestation of the Divine pervading all through the universe. He calls the universe his '*sankalpasrushti*', a manifestation of

the Divine Will. Krishna says that the knowledge of his 'Vibhūti' will certainly put him on the path of yoga, so 'vikampena yogena yujyate natra sanshayaah' (Gita X.7). He further stresses that Arjuna should know the universe as having the manifestation of the divine in each atom and molecule. He should know him as a spark of the divine, *Tata devavagachchha tvam mama tejomshasambhavam* (Gita X. 41). Krishna then categorically names the best of his manifestations (Gita. X. 25). Krishna seems to indicate the goal that a yogi has to pursue.

On Arjuna's request, Krishna graces him with the vision of his Universal Form, his Cosmic Splendour-Line, '*Divyam dadami te chakshuhu pashya me yogameishwaram*' (Gita XI. 8), "To thee I grant the Eye Divine / Behold my Cosmic-Splendour Line" (Gupta). Gupta explores the concept in his book, *Divya Chakshu Yoga* (1996). The vision is the final stage of knowledge. It is yogic perception or Divya Dṛishti or Divine Seeing. The yogic perception or the divine vision is, however, an intermediary stage and not the ultimate stage. The ultimate stage is the Cosmic Consciousness, that the *Gita* delineates in the eighteenth canto, *Mokshasanyasyoga*.

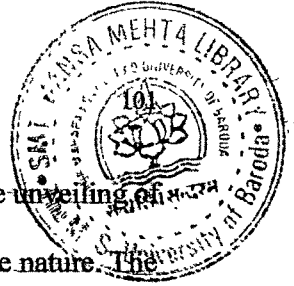
The *Gita* describes 'yoga simplified for a common man'. It views yoga as a part of routine life. Yoga has to become an integral part of human life. It is perception, a way of 'seeing' the world. It leads a person to the path of self-evolution. In this context, the *Gita* may be viewed as a common man's version of the *astangayoga* that Patanjali's *Yoga Sūtram* prescribes. Parallels may be drawn, therefore, between Patanjali's *astangayoga* and the *Gita's anasaktayoga* with just one difference that Patanjali keeps silence on the component of *bhakti*, faith or devotion. Patanjali says, *Satvapurushayoḥ shuddhisamye keivalyam* (Yoga. III.55), that is, when one's intellect and his mind/soul is purged off in equal respect, he attains *keivalyam*. He defines the soul, *Sada jnataschittavrittayastatprabhoh* (Yoga. IV.18), means, the soul is the master of mind and its thought waves. He further explains the stage of *Keivalya*, *Keivalyam swaroopapratishtha*

va chittishakteriti (Yoga. IV.34), means, *Keivalyam* is the stage where the mind energy stays in the form of the self, soul. The *Gita*'s, on the other hand, insists on *bhakti* or *shraddha* as inevitable in yoga. It helps one's self-purification and purgation and his eventual liberation and evolution to attain self-realisation. Acknowledging its vitality, it preaches devotion all through the book. Ample reference may be drawn over the book to this regards like, '*Shraddhavantō nasoooyanto*' (Gita III.31); '*Shraddhavan labhata jnanam*' (Gita III 39); '*Shraddhavanbhajata yo mam sa me yukta tama matah*' (Gita VI. 47); '*Bhavasamanvita*', '*Ekabhaktnishishyate*' , '*Shraddhayarchitumich- chhami*', '*Shraddhayayukta*' (Gita VII. 17,21,22); '*Shraddhayanvita*' (Gita IX. 23); '*Tesham satatayuktanam bhajatam pritipoorvakam*' (Gita X.10); '*Shraddhana matparama bhaktastetiva me priya*' (Gita XII.20). Krishna calls a bhakta, a devotee is a superior yogi, '*yuktatama*' (XII.2), and such a yogi is the dearest to him, '*bhaktastetiva me priya*' (XII.20). He gives an open assurance, "My devotee never suffers destruction, '*na me bhakta pranashyati*' (IX.31) and "I take care of all welfare and well-being of my devotee, '*yogakshemam vahamyaham*' (IX.22). In the last canto, *Mokshasanyasayoga*, he gets more emphatic and advises Arjuna to get closer to God, '*Manmana bhava madbhakto madyagi mam namskuru*' (XVIII.65). Finally out of deep concern for him he commands Arjuna to give up all doubts, logic, irresoluteness and fascination for any worldly object and put his mind totally to God's surrender. He assures him that he would liberate him from all sins and evils and make him pure and pious, '*Sarvadharmā parityajya mamekam sharanam vraja, Aham tvam sarva papebhyo mokshyishyami ma shucha*' (XVIII.66). Finally, Arjuna's announces his final submission to Krishna, '*karishye vachanam tava*' (XVIII.73), means 'I will follow your (thy) words'. Arjuna is now pure and fit to act with full knowledge, full conviction, full faith and full

devotion in Krishna. Thus, *Gita*'s yoga is 'karmayoga' turned to the 'anasaktayoga', turned to the 'bhaktiyoga' and finally realized as 'mokshasanyasayoga'.

Aurobindo calls Yoga, "the integral Yoga". He explains yoga as "a progressive discovery of man's spiritual status" (369). He draws his concept on an ancient Indian view on Yoga, viz. the *Katha Upanishada* states, *Yogo hi prabhavapyayau*, means Yoga is the beginning and ending of things. He views Yoga as "the essential and real executive movement of Nature" and as "the upward working of Nature" (109). Aurobindo views Yoga as psychological process, "all conscious and willed processes of psychological disciplines" (109). Yogic psychology is an examination of the nature and the movement of the consciousness (322). It is a psychic discipline by which we can pass partly or wholly into the spiritual state of consciousness. It is a spontaneous or systematised approach to the inner Reality or the Supreme Reality. It is any state of union or closeness to the divine, any entry into a consciousness larger, deeper and higher than the normal consciousness common to humankind. Yoga takes us from the surface into the depths of our consciousness and admits us into its very centre; it takes us up to the hidden topmost heights of our conscious being. It gives us the key to an inner and larger consciousness that is subliminal (329).

Aurobindo's "Integral Yoga" relates to the wholeness or totality of existence. He views its aim as "a harmonised totality of spiritual realisation and experience" or as "an integral experience of the Divine Reality" (357). He views it further as "a way of a complete God-realisation, complete self-realisation, a complete fulfilment of our being and consciousness, a complete transformation of our nature" that implies complete perfection of life" (358). He says that realisation, transformation and participation in the illumination and the change from a human body in to a divine consciousness and nature are characters of integral Yoga. In the



integral Yoga 'a progressive discovery' takes place in two steps: the first step is "the unveiling of the soul, the psychic entity" that is accompanied by a psychic transformation of the nature. The second step is the revelation of a self and spirit in the progression of that being in us as (a) it exceeds its separate individuality, (b) it enters in to a cosmic consciousness, and is released in to a supracosmic transcendence (369). It is a many-sided way or means of self-realisation, yoga of transformation. It is neither an ethical change nor religious conversion, neither sainthood nor ascetic control, neither sublimation nor a suppression of life, neither glorification nor rejection of the physical existence (369).

II SASENARINE PERSAUD'S "YOGIC REALISM":

Sasenarine Persaud is an emerging prolific writing talent that slowly earns wider acclaim. He writes in varied capacities of a writer, poet, novelist, storywriter, fiction writer, critic, cultural critic and a theorist. He belongs to the community of the Caribbean Indians. An immigrant in exile, he owns double origin, double history, double memory and two cultures. By virtue of his birth and upbringing in British Guyana in the Caribbean Islands, he inherits the spirit of the Caribbean Islands. By the virtue of his ancestral lineage in the Indian ancestry, he inherits Indianness. The history of the exiles informs that his community was put through painful experience of double exile, first from India to the Caribbean islands in 1838 and then from the Caribbean lands to Canada in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Hence, the pain and suffering of double loss of home lurk constantly at the back of his consciousness. It carries mixed feeling of betrayal and humiliation of being deprived of the rights of belonging and equality. These emotional manifestations go in to the shaping Persaud's mind.

Secondly, Persaud is a Hindu in double exile in Canada and now in the United States of America. In his case, culture acquires a three-dimensional connotation in the context of the double exiled. He is the one who has to stay away from his motherlands. Being an Indo-Caribbean in Canada, he looks at culture with three-fold expectations to form a triangle of *comfort, companionship and confidence*. This mode of psychology of the exiled sensibility may be termed as, “triangulation of expectation”, to modify on Steven Scobie’s term, “triangulation of desire” that he gives in his poem, “The Eyelash of a Camel” (Qtd, in Parikh, 118). Such psychology gives Sasanarine Persaud a vibrant voice. It voices triangular expectations of a Hindu in exile from the culture of India. His writings may be viewed as narrating a journey of a Hindu person. The journey reflects the three expectations that operate to shape his responses to the world around. These expectations give him distinct identity and strength to survive in an alien environment.

Sasanarine Persaud was born in 1958 in a Hindu family in British Guyana. Thus being a boy in a Hindu family, and also a part of the Indian diasporic culture, he imbibed basic values of the Indian culture and the Hindu religion. These values lie in him as “sanskaras” the concept that we have already discussed in this thesis. The first and the most significant person who imparted the samskaras was his mother. Annan Boodram remarks in his essay, “Revolutionary Caribbean Poet”: “Persaud’s reality is underpinned by Indian aesthetics. For this, he credits his mother who, while others were keeping birthday parties, took her children to temple to celebrate” (1). Acknowledging his mother’s contribution Persaud recreates the mother figure in Savitri of his first novel, *Dear Death*. His characterisation wins appreciation for his awareness of female characterization. In this relationship, the child was at the receiving end. The mother paid special attention so that he would value his culture and religion and also form a habit of reading. It

helped him with good exposure to the world at large and to understand it. Persaud talks about his upbringing in his article, "Viewpoint For this Love of our lives" (9). The customs, conventions and traditional practices in his family too played significant role in this. In addition to them, the festivals and celebrations and activities that the Indian community in Guyana organized exerted positive impact on him to shape his character. The activities included pujas, bhajans and religious discourses and discussions conducted at the community temple. They also included cultural activities and training in the Indian classical music, dance and arts and the Hindi language classes conducted at the Indian cultural centers. The first phase of Persaud's life thus was restricted to a personal domain. It marked a shift from the innocence in the form of naivete to understanding through gradual receiving of facts under the mother's care. Most of the time, his position remained passive and at a receiving end.

The second phase of Persaud's life was marked with his growing into young age. As a young man, he inculcated skills to know the world using the material on hand that he acquired through education, training and exposure. He had a chance of experiencing life through live involvement and active participation at the social, professional and political levels, as high school teacher and as custom officer, and as a young Hindu activist committed to the Indian community, Hindu religion and its ideology. It was a phase of awareness, resistance and the eventual experience of dejection and frustration from the surrounding world. He developed a strong sense of political awareness under his father's impact. Annan Boothram remarks in this connection, "From his father came a political awareness that was fine tuned by his experiences as a high school teacher- political interference in the education system- and as a custom officer- discrimination and graft on the waterfront". Further says Boothram, "Guyanese President Chhedi Jagan inspired in him courage and commitment to struggle and resist the wrongs in the systems

of the worlds, others' as well as his own. There was still one more person called Reepu Daman Persaud, Guyana's current Minister of Agriculture who generated in him real interest and curiosity for Indian philosophy through initial exposure" (1). Consequently, three facets of his personality such as awareness, determination and faith in cultural roots got cultivated in him.

Odaipaul Singh, his friend and colleague at the high school, was another person to reflect on his life. He in fact fascinated Persaud for his dedication to Indian philosophy and religion. Singh says in his article, "Sasenarine Persaud: Guyanese Writer and Poet Living in Canada", "I soon discovered that Persaud was not only an aspiring poet and writer but also that he was much involved in the cultural life of his community". He details on his activities as a young Hindu that he organised a progressive and dynamic group affiliated to a Hindu temple in greater Georgetown. This group carried out a work of educating young Hindus and inspiring in them greater awareness and dedication for the Hindu culture and tradition (14).

While operating in various capacities in different worlds, Persaud was much grieved at the political interference of the Euro-centric power forces and their discriminatory strategies against the Indians in the West Indies. The corruption and murders committed by government agents and the cultural invasion of the western influences too disturbed him. He reacted sharply against these conditions in different ways. In his own community, he witnessed that the pandits and the members of the Temple committee wore a double face, and lived a 'doublespeak', as religious persons and as persons who indulged in illicit deeds motivated to earn political mileage. Their hypocrisy and malafide intentions were deceptive to the community. It disturbed him even more. He found betrayal within the community, and it was more frustrating than that of a foreign agency.

In the public life, Persaud viewed authorities at different levels and from different angles - community, education, social, political and business. He viewed it as an agency through which the imperial-colonial agenda of the western power forces was perpetuated. He viewed their working as paving the way for another imperialism called cultural imperialism perpetuated through economic imperialism. He remarks on the situation, "Later, less conditioned by the voices of our earlier education, we learnt differently, lived differently". He further examines the Caribbean land as the arena in which the imperial forces enforced their agenda (*Viewpoint*, 9).

As a young writer, Persaud aspired to get published in the west and earn recognition. He viewed the Caribbean land as "a great centre of the English language and its literature" (*Viewpoint*, 9). But ruthless rejection on all fronts aroused in him disgust, "But some things take longer to change, perhaps never change" (*Viewpoint*, 9). He realized that his efforts to affect change in the system and life would be futile. Hence, he chose to retreat from the Caribbean world and migrate to Canada.

The third phase of Persaud's life occurred in Canada. With purgation of his mind through heart throbbing and mind-boggling life experiences in Guyana, he grows into an age of maturity. In Canada, he acquires experiences of life are often intersected with his memory of the past. Persaud's memory is a characteristic blend of three worlds, the Hindu or the Indian, the Caribbean and the Canadian. His sensitivity seems to move among these three worlds. Hence, its movement may be termed as 'trans-world movement'. His perception thus becomes a blend of the present and the past in both personal and public domains. It operates on varied levels such as local, national, international and the ancestral. It reflects an immigrant's struggle to survive in midst of alien and unfriendly forces ever pouncing to eliminate his identity and culture. It speaks

with much sharper sensibility to give out vibrant voices and concrete mindset to generate unique vision of human life.

In Canada, after he failed at getting jobs, teaching or any other suitable job, Persaud chose to take up a writing career. He hoped for fulfillment of his long-awaited aspiration. He tried his hands at various literary forms like essay, novel, short story, poetry, criticism, cultural criticism and theory. His works include:

ESSAYS:

1. "India in the West Indies? But of Course!".
2. "Extending the Indian Tradition: Indian Literature, Music, Culture and Writers of Indian Origin Born in the West Indies".
3. "Yoga as Art- Meditating on Sam Selvon".
4. "Kevat: Waiting on Yogic Realism".
5. "I Hear A Voice, Is It Mine? Yogic Realism & Writing the Short Story".
6. "Watch My Language: From Cheddi Jagan to Martin Carter"
7. "V.S. Writerji : S. T. Naipaul".

NOVELS:

1. *Dear Death*. 1989.
2. *The Ghost of Bellow's Man*. 1992.

COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES:

1. *Canada Geese and Apple Chatney*. 1998.

COLLECTION OF POETRY:

1. *Demerary Telepathy*. 1988.
2. *A Surf of Sparrows' Songs*. 1996.

3. *The Hungry Sailor*. 2000.
4. *The Wintering Kundalini*. 2002
5. *A Writer Like You*. 2002.

Persaud's writing seeks to illustrate the stages of progressive comprehension of his life like: a). naiveté to unconscious understanding of the world through a child's sensibility and observation; b). a young person's reception of life experiences and his struggle to find the meaning; c). a grown-up person's matured perception with mindset of concrete thinking patterns to attaining the vision of life. He dwells on his real life experiences with an eyewitness approach. For his first novel, *Dear Death* (1986), he draws material from the memories of his childhood in the British Guyana. For his second novel, *The Ghost of Bellow's Man* (1989), he derives incidents from his life in the young age that he spent in Guyana. Like wise, the stories in his collection, *Canada Geese and Apple Chatney* (1998) narrate the incidents of his life both in Guyana and in Canada. Odaipaul Singh remarks about the novel, *The Ghost of Bellow's Man*:

... the event of *The Ghost* might on the surface of it appear as defeat and negation for an honorable and progressive group of young people. However, the fact that the author was able to excavate the episode from his subconscious and transform apparent despair in to a statement of affirmation is an indication of his genius and skill as a writer, a cultural critic and a visionary. And thus, in his own transformation and liberation, we all become transformed and liberated (14).

Persaud's poetry is located in the landscapes of Guyana and Canada. The riverscape of the river Damerara forms the major backdrop of his poems in *Demerary Telepathy* (1988). It supplements his contemplation with conducive environment. His poetry then flows lucidly like a sparrow surfing on the ocean water in his four later books of poetry giving a feel of soul's singing. It is

remarkable that his writing does not stop at bare realism. It acquires a visionary stage of perception with a yogi's approach to realism. Odaipaul Singh remarks that Persaud appreciates an Afro-Caribbean poet Martin Carter for his wisdom and heightened perception and sensitivity "to internalize the experiences of the oppressed masses" (14).

Considering the basic material that Persaud employs to write and the very purpose to write, it may be said that Persaud seeks to write a biography of a Hindu in double exile. Since he mingles realism with fiction, the biography may be read as fictional in nature. The narrative is delivered with varied perspectives of persons other than Persaud himself and yet it bears an echo of an autobiography. An autobiography may be rooted in truth or in fiction, or in both, facts and fiction. Since Persaud's autobiographical narration has ample references to his life experiences it may also be termed as fictional autobiography. The question arises why one writes an autobiography. It may be for self-gratification, or self-condemnation, or repentance. Some may go beyond the sentimental attitude and view writing of an autobiography as an experiment in self-analysis. It holds an idea of right projection in which honesty, frankness and sincerity are the prime concerns. However, in the recent context of migration and suffering of displacement and loss of roots, there emerges a new approach to view an act of writing autobiography as healing process by providing an outlet to long suppressed agonies of the exiled. Christine Watson reports on her interview with Alice Masak French in, "Autobiographical Writing as Healing Process: Interview with Alice Masak French" (2000) to impart French's views on writing autobiography. French describes the process:

I think it got a lot of anger out of the way in my life... When I'd start a chapter, I'd have to go through real anger period and then through a softening and then a healing. When you think of some bad memory and you get so angry- like taking walks...

And so you kind of shove everything down, and when you start bringing memories up, it is like opening a really bad something...gone rotten and dirty and horrid...

As you write, everything that you have kept down and kept down for so many years comes out and you have so many problems because of it, mainly because you weren't willing to deal with them. But, you suddenly have to deal with them, because you are writing this book. And that's where the healing comes in. You let it out, you cry about it, you get mad about it, you get angry, frustrated, and then you look at it in pieces until it all comes out. Sometimes there is one to blame and sometimes there isn't. You get an understanding. So, that's why it was a healing process, especially when I wrote my second book. That really was a healing process. (38-39)

Alice Masak French focuses on three stages of the healing process: 'the anger period', 'the softening' and 'the healing'. The outcome of the process is 'an understanding'. She believes that writing is compulsion for those who suffer. Persaud's narrative seems to bear the imprints of French's views, however, with some points of difference. Persaud's narrative spills over literary works and literary forms and the narrator does not confine himself to the writer's self, but assumes multiple selves to give out a narrative carrying multiple perspectives and responses to the reality. Yet it gives a reader a feel of an autobiography.

Then one more question arises: What does Persaud seek to explore through his writing? or as Odaipaul Singh puts it, "What is the stuff that forms the poet's experiences that are to be chiseled and refined as the art of redemption and emancipation?" (14). The answers lie in Persaud's vision that may be explained under two headings: the Indian World-View and the *Yogic Realism*. He seeks to invent a new literary expression to convey his vision.

SASENARINE PERSAUD'S VISION: THE INDIAN WORLD-VIEW:

Sasenarine Persaud elaborates on the Indian World View in his two essays/articles: "India in the West Indies? But of Course" and "Extending the Indian Tradition: Indian Literature, Music, Culture and Writers of Indian Origin Born in the West Indies."

'Indianness' is the first component of Persaud's Indian world-view. Persaud holds a strong sense of Indianness. It is for him, in Harbans Nakra's words, "a comfortable sense of identity – a prideful self image that equips him to handle any aggression (real or perceived) that he or his family faces" and "he can respond with pride and without rancour" (181). The non-Indian part of Persaud's life experiences too serves as mere window to get glimpses of his Indianness. Annan Boothram remarks in her, "Revolutionary Caribbean Poet" that for Persaud, Canada is a "connecting point to India" (No page number). Odaipaul Singh remarks, "Persaud blazes a new trail" in his conscious application of traditional Hindu theories of aesthetics and poetics, the theories of "Alamkaras", "Rasa" and "Dvani" (14). Persaud makes a bold claim for deep and primordial "Indic consciousness", something perhaps similar to the Jungian idea of archetypes that informs their writing and work of art. Odaipaul Singh elaborates on the point:

The living echoes of India much like the theory of Dhvani itself, the myths of *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayana*, the teachings of Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, the metaphysics of the *Upanishads*, the rhythms or talas of the Shiva's eternal drums, and the melodic structure of the Indian raga reverberating in the cosmos as OM are all found in Indian art and life in the Caribbean. When V. S. Naipaul denounces his association with his Indian cultural roots, Persaud believes that Naipaul could not escape his ties with India. He, therefore, asks: "After all was it not 'Hanuman House' on which V. S. Naipaul built his *House*?" (14)

Annan Boodram points out, “Persaud’s reality is underpinned by Indian aesthetics” (1). Even his Caribbean association is not discontinuity, Singh says, “Therefore, I will agree with Persaud that the world-view that informs his writing is Indic” (14).

Odaipaul Singh calls Persaud’s writing a happy blend of the Indic and the Caribbean. He says, “much more subtly fused and interwoven so that ‘each is the other’” (14), a multiple identity- “to be Indian *and* Caribbean”- as “very Indian way of being” and complementary.

Persaud’s essay “India in the West Indies? But of Course!” is his proclamation to be an Indian. Although staying away from India, he remains an Indian, “The worlds of Europe, Africa, China and the Americas converged, but I always returned to India. India was always there...” He says, “just after birth, they made me look to India in the Naam Samskar (naming ceremony) and the accompanying pujas... The world was an Indian world. All else existed irritant to that Indian world, one went out into the other world to serve that Indian world better”. He elaborates further,

The Indian world was crammed and intense. Music, epics and stories, and rituals abounded. Structures, styles and rhythms, reason and devotion, forms and figures in various shapes, colours, gender and sizes appeared as symbols of philosophies in abundance. And the *pandits* brought it all in to indelible focus. All forms emanated from formlessness and led to formlessness. All *yogas* led to one great *yoga*. And each *yoga* was complete. Death was as dear as life! There was life in death! There could only be creation if there was dissolution. It seemed contradictory and yet at the same time it all made sense. Several philosophers, including Gandhi, posit that the battle of the *Mahabharata* was really symbolic of the battle of the mind, where two major components of the mind face each other, manifesting in the dualities of action and inaction, conscious and unconscious, reason and emotion. (52)

Further he says, “We listened to the rhythms of various ragas, studied them and practiced them on a variety of instruments. We sang *dhuns*, *bhajans*, *kirtans*, *chowtals*, *drupads*, *taans*” (52). Persaud understands that in the condition of poverty of his knowledge of Hindi music was a real help. “The *Rasa* (mood) evoked in the singer’s voice, in the *puja*, in the music said everything”, “the ancient rhythms beginning with Om and ending with the ageless Swahaa” (52). He attaches significance to the recital of mantras and stotras and singing of dhuns, bhajans and kirtans in the accompaniment of chowtals, drums or tans.

Persaud counts the theory of Alamkara as valuable, “Indians were the masters of the Alamkara school” (52). The discipline of the Indian aesthetics conceived the figures of speech like pun, simile, extended simile, hyperbole, to facilitate literary expression. The Indian literature is rich and fascinating with power of symbolism, suggestion, metaphor, allegory and also metaphysics. Parables and allegorical stories in the Indian mythological writings such as the *Mahabharata*, the *Remayana*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Purans*, the *Upanishads*, the *Panchatantra* and the *Jabalkathas* are some of the brilliant illustrations. Persaud’s says, “I touch just areas of Indianness in my work and suggest that it is a part of a continuing Indian literary tradition” (52).

Persaud also refers to another significant component of the Indian world. It is the theory of mathematics. He says, “Indians were also masters of mathematics” (52) with a very valuable invention of ‘ZERO’. Music and mathematics are inseparable to Hindus. Persaud explains his being ‘mathematically’: “Let’s see. I was born in South America and so I am South American. And being born in Guyana I am Guyanese. And being born in the West Indies I am West Indian and being born in the Caribbean I am Caribbean? Who minds? And now living in Canada, I get all sorts of hyphens and prefixes to Canadian” (52). He asserts, “I was born in India, Guyana, South America. Or if you will, I was born in the West Indies. I am an Indian of the West. My

address is in constant flux. And yes, lest I forget these gnomic origins and poesies, I am Indian” (52). Thus, Indianness is the spirit that remains lurking in his psyche constantly modulating his perception of the world around.

‘Continuation of the Indian traditions in writing’ is the second component of his Indian world-view that he elaborates in his essay, “Extending the Indian Tradition: Indian Literature, Music, Culture and Writers of Indian Origin Born in the West Indies”. Persaud’s claims that when Indo-Caribbean writers write the traditions of Indian literature and literary criticism with three important literary schools of “Dhvani”, “Alamkara”, and “Rasa” get due reflections. Emerged from the system of yoga these schools flourished at their fullest from the third century B.C. to 1200 A.D. through Sanskrit literature and classics. The cinema, dance, and drama today are rich only because of the influence of the Rasa. The texts were meant to define and redefine the principles of writing as conceived by their writers and thus creativity served them as ‘empirical science’ (16). Persaud claims that he follows these Indian traditions.

Persaud further says that in 1200 A.D. religious chauvinism fed complex and varied literary and artistic brilliance. He recognises the contribution of Tulsidas’ *Ramcharitmanas*, the sixteenth century “Ramayana” as rejuvenating spirit of literary creation in the times of severe setbacks during the twelfth century, “This epic poetic-drama captured the essence of Indian civilization and enshrined it in the hearts of common folks” and “It was Tulsidas’ answer to and defiance of the Islamic sickle sweeping India” (16). Persaud also reviews the role of the Hindu chauvanism in the context of Indian immigrants in the West Indies and independent Guyana. He says, “They learned from Gandhi; Gandhi learned from Tulsidas! If there was no sword to match

the tyrant and his men then there was religion and there was the pen" (17). Persaud holds religion as most effective weapons to struggle and survive in the conditions of exile.

Persaud considers Indianness as a political position, "to affirm Indianness was an act of defiance of the regime", a political need to survive. Ramabai Espinet echoes a similar concern when she says, "You can't live in a place without being political" Referring to the fear of assertion of Indianness among Indo-Caribbeans in Canada, she says that it is a political need to invent an identity (Pillar 170, Qtd. in Sarbadhikary, 123-4). Persaud says that his novel, *The Ghost of Bellow's Man* voices this concern, "more than a documentation of the pressures on Hindus to change, it is proof of the Indian aesthetics at work" (17). He also says that works of most Indian writers in the West Indies certainly mark a continuation of the Indian traditions, though it may not be conscious efforts on their part. He regrets that Indian writers of eminence in the West Indies like V. S. Naipaul, Sam Selvon, Ismith Khan overlooked significance of the component of Indian culture at work in them, however, it is very much evident in their works. To support his argument, he draws evidences from their acclaimed works. For instance, Ismith Khan's *The Jumbie Bird* is an excellent work of his genius and master craftsmanship of Indian golden jewelry and the fine etchings of a master goldsmith and it is "distinctly expressing aspects of Indian aesthetics", under the direct influence of his father (17). V. S. Naipaul's novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* too has evidence of Indianness in the form of "the Hanuman Katha". He says that the "Hanuman Katha" got intensely into the Indian psyche for centuries (24). The Hanuman puja is the most popular puja and Hanuman is held as the greatest symbol of strength in Indian life. In this context, V. S. Naipaul's novel "could not escape this- satire or no- he built Hanuman House as a base for his novel, or rather Hanuman House built his masterpiece" (24). Sam Selvon's works and Arnold Itwaru's poems in *Body Rites* too reflect the effect of Indian music and its

rhythms of chowtals (19). He says, "Ramayana Bani and especially Chowtal are perhaps the most powerful and energizing forms of singing I know" (19).

Indian music forms the essence of the Indian world-view, "Dhvani, Alamkara, Rasa and ultimately Yoga, union, was distilled in it" (17-8). In this context, Persaud says that Bhakti Yoga is the most efficacious way to union with self and Self. It became a precious heritage of the exiled. With Bhakti Yoga they also carried music, the rhythms, musical instruments, styles of deliverance of ancient mantras, expressions of tantras and yantras, and more than a hundred ceremonies, especially in the verses of Tulsidas' *Ramacharitmanas* lay a deep impact on the psyche of the Indians in the West Indies (14). They formed medium to conduce Indian aesthetics (18). Hindu missionaries from India like Morari Bapu and Hindi films too served as metaphor, "the Ram-Lanka stone bridge to the West Indies" (18-9).

Persaud admits that his sense of music helps him to structure his writing, particularly his second novel, *The Ghost of Bellow's Man* and his poetry in *A Surf of Sparrows' Songs*. Clues that mark the working of Indian aesthetics in Persaud's novels is meditation and the yogic world view through which the content is presented. For instance, through the Hanuman-Ravan Katha, Persaud discusses the issue of continued erosion of Indian cultural life in the west with a metaphor of 'chair', "a symbol of ghamaand or pride" (23) and ironic amusement, "And who looked foolish when Hanuman Mimicked Ravan on his high throne? A tall tail/tale!" (*The Ghost*, 16). Hanuman's strength implies magical power of yoga.

The major Indian theme that gets delineated at length in Persaud's works is yoga and yogic quest for self and Self. Persaud further says, "This is not only writing a novel or 'yoga as art' at work but a demonstration of the Rasa theory" (24). The mood or rasa of Raj's utter disgust

gives the sense of a yogic burning, THE DANCE OF SHIVA. What burns is not paper but Raj's fiction and illusion. It eventually results into his transformation (25).

Another element that connects this novel to India is its intertextuality. The novel is structured on a story of "Guide", a Hindi film which is based on R. K. Narayan's award winning masterpiece novel, *The Guide* (25). Raju is an extravagant tourist guide who turns a holy man after much adventures, deceptions and decline of his fortune. Trapped up in the image, Raju undergoes transformation - "Life for life-giving rain: transformation and redemption" (25). Raj's transformation too occurs in a similar way. Trapped in the expectations of others, he romanticizes him as a leader and is further trapped in a "label-web" and "romanticizes being a writer"(25). At the end, all his illusions fade away and he prefers to retreat. This goes in the tradition of the yogic and Indian view, says Persaud (25).

Finally, the naming of some of the characters have a bearing on the Indianness, for example, Dalip from Dilipkumar, the famous Hindi film star; inspector Adjit from Ajit, a charismatic and popular Hindi film villain; Raj from Raju, the guide or Raj Kapoor, the greatest showman of the Hindi films; Gopal from his namesake Krishna are a few instances. Persaud says that these names, "like naming or naam samskar, kept the contact with India unbroken" (26). More specifically, Gopal's character is designed on the Krishna model, a spectator and counselor to Arjuna in the battle of the Mahabharata. Raj corresponds to Arjun, a doer and a warrior, who is confused, perplexed and in utter disgust. Gopal's counseling remains central to the last chapter in Part Two called, "The Understanding". At its ends, Raj finds him in a more comfortable position and in a more decisive state of mind. Thus, Raj's despair may be Arjuna's 'Vishadayoga' to eventually become yoga.

II. YOGIC REALISM:

“Yogic Realism” forms the second half of Sasenarine Persaud’s vision. The first half lays down a theoretical and theological base, while the second half explores on the application part. Yogic Realism refers to the inner world of self and Self. Persaud’s two essays that focus on the concept are: “Yoga as Art- Meditating on Sam Selvon”, and “Kevat: Waiting on Yogic Realism”. Persaud is aware that, in Harbans Nakra’s words, “restricting his interface in his society” or “the process of ghetto-isation” would lead him to isolation. Nakra views that one needs to have ‘a certain minimum interaction’ with the society at large in order to vest meaning to his existence and to earn wider acceptance in the society at large. The merits can be decided by “internal evaluation” and “external evaluation” on which the matrix can be graded. According to the matrix, cultural activities of the kinds of ‘artistic endeavours’ and ‘yoga’ or ‘meditation’ reach closer to the ideal mark of evaluation on both internal as well as external evaluation. Hence, they would make an ideal choice of cultural activities to allow optimum interaction with the world at large (182-187). In this respect, Persaud’s choice of writing and ‘writing’ and ‘yoga’ sounds befitting to the context.

Persaud’s essay, “Yoga as Art- Meditating on Sam Selvon” presents Persaud’s tribute to the vision of Sam Selvon, a veteran Caribbean writer living in the West. Persaud acknowledges that Sam Selvon supported Persaud’s disclaim and comments on the hyphenated identity as his right to speak, “as an individual from a different generation and sensibility to feel as I did” (61). He counts it as “much more respect to an obscure writer obsessed with his ancestral inheritance” (61). As an acknowledgement of Sam Selvon’s contribution to his literary vision, Persaud discusses Selvon’s story, “My Girl and The City”. It laid deep impact on him for years, “I have

carried those lines, this story in my head for years". The opening words fascinated him most, "All these words I hope to write I have written them many times already many times in my head. I had many beginnings, each as good or as bad as the other". The words gave him, by just a freak, the knowledge of yoga and the clinical yogic analysis and its universality. He felt that he was reading a work of a genius (62). Anand K Coomarswamy in his book, *The Dance of Shiva* (1924) says, "the artist first meditated to achieve an equanimity of mind to induce maximum creativity, and creating and perfecting the work of art in the mind first, before even picking up the chisel, or pen, paint brush, musical instrument or vibrating a word, surfacing a sound of poesy from Kundalini's tip" (64). Persaud counts it as his early acquaintance with yoga, Kundalini, and meditation as forgoing principles and processes leading to creativity and creation.

Persaud's says that Sam Selvon's Indianness was incomprehensible for the lack of information on his identity. His story, "My Girl and the City" goes beyond race, caste, colour, religion and region. Selvon had meditated and captured a moment of eternity that he froze in words, "Everything that happens is words. Pure expression is nothing". His story has high philosophical level. It is a story of yoga, of the universal, colourless, raceless, nameless love, "the city is loaded with thought, so that by the time I take the inner Circle I am as light as air". It suggests that the novice or beginner always has his head filled with thoughts until, with constant practice, he learns to empty his head as he approaches a state of moksha or nivarana. He feels light as air with emotional bonds falling aside (65). Selvon was a great player of words with mastery over double meanings. Persaud relates Selvon's story to the Advaita Vadanta School. The story, "My girl is real" raises a doubt whether the girl is real. It goes with the Vedanta principle that all but Brahman is maya or illusion (65). He relates it to allusions about Selvon's identity, "Selvon is as close and as far from Salvam or Salvam as Harry is from Hari, as

Sheelagh is from Shila as west is from east” (65). He relates Selvon to Tagore’s personality, “Poetry, he said, had been his first love. Perhaps it was his only love. I think now of Tagore and his prose could well be poetry- just as could Selvon’s. There are other similarities too, the longish white hair and the look of an ascetic or yogi” (66). Finally, he gets into personal touch relating him to his father, “I never got a chance to tell my father how much he meant to me, how much I owed all that I am and my vision of the line between soul and gold to him. It is one of the great regrets of my life. And in Selvon, this comes back to haunt me” (66). The essay is thus a memorable tribute of a young writer to an old master. Through genuine tone of intimacy and reverence, it bridges the gap between the generations to link a concept of ‘yoga as art’.

The essay, “Kevat: Waiting on Yogic Realism” states that “Yogic Realism” is Sasenarine Persaud’s innovation on method of writing. For it, he dwells on the ancient Indian concept of Yoga. The term “Yogic Realism” is Persaud’s coinage. Stating the logic for the coinage, he wrote to Dr. Om P Juneja at Vadodara in his letter of December 23, 1996: “Yogic Realism- a term which I have coined for my writing as none of the existing labels; post-colonialism, post modernism, magical realism, etc. are wide enough, deep enough to hold my writing- and the culture out of which it comes”. Further he says, “A number of critics here, including a few Indian writers, are interested in my concept of Yogic Realism and I have been defining the term as I see it – but the concept of Art as yoga is an ancient one”.

The question remains to define the term. Persaud says that he is not very keen on defining the term. He rather seeks to demonstrate it. Radhakrishnan states, “reason can demonstrate the truth but reason cannot discover or reach the truth”. In this context, he says, “And my writing was /is a window to discovering that truth” (9). Persaud looks at the question of defining and

assigning a role of 'originator', 'founder', "while it is true that my articulation and application of it to writing is new and original the concept is an ancient one" (8). He acknowledges Yoga as the source of his new and original articulation on writing.

Persaud considers writing as 'Dharma'. He attributes sacredness and piety to the act of writing. He calls it 'Bhakti Yoga'—"devotion in prayer or single minded offering of all that pure consciousness, and a steadfast and unwavering preoccupation with a particular activity as offering, and path to that consciousness" (15). Any activity- dance, drama, painting- performed in this spirit would fall in this category. About writing he says, "-and yes writing for those of us who engage in it **because we must** (unconcerned if money or fame or recognition come our way), **because it is our dharma**" (emphasis retained, 15-6). He explains the term 'dharma', "to serve community and the spirit according to our abilities, stations and inclinations" (16). Throwing more light on the spirit of writing he says that both the *Bhagavatagita* and Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra* called all those involved in creating art and culture - musicians, temple dancers, sculptors, artisans and poets (including all great sages)— 'Bhakti Yogis'. Persaud seeks to invest two spirits in the act of writing: Bhakti (devotion) and Yoga (efforts). He views him with an analogy of the Kevat of the *Ramayana*: "I feel more like Kevat, the fortunate boatman in the *Ramayana*". He performed his dharma, he says, of carrying people across the river Ganga years after years. He did not even know his act and was doing it unconsciously. All the time he was waiting for Rama, "Waiting for Rama" (2). One day Rama, the god appeared before him and requested him to take him across the river. He knew that his dharma was 'to be a ferryman'. Persaud too believes that writing is dharma, an unconscious act for him and he has to wait for Yogic Realism to illuminate his mind.

Yogic Realism becomes Persaud's method of writing. It applies the Yogic principles to writing. Persaud says, "For me Yogic Realism is the application of the spirit of yogic principles and forms, and the application of Indian philosophy and concepts to writing. In other words it is where writing is serving as conduit or yoga for union with the divine spirit/consciousness- not yoga-serving 'art' though there is a fine line separating the two, and even instances when the two may well run with and complement the other" (2). He explains that Yogic Realism is different from magical realism and post modernism, "mind ultimately triumphs over body, that each consciousness is part of That Consciousness from which it came, working itself back to that pure consciousness, that any activity, any expression- even writing- which is not unselfish is ego". He quotes Radhakrishnan on the spirit of Indian philosophy, "...it is not enough to merely know truth but to realize it and become one with it" (*History of Indian Thought*). (2). He considers writing as a means to make the cross-over to self and Self, the union. Persaud also quotes Aurobindo's words to become the sub-title of the essay: "But in thought, so in life, the true rule of self-realisation is a progressive comprehension" (1). He explains that when a musician sings a song, he is unconcerned about the song, its form, its meaning. Yet the comprehension of the song depends upon "the cognisant of all of these as a part of community and a society and an aptitude out of which the song births and lives and dies" (2). Thus, the cognisant knowledge and the aptitude are put to use to comprehend the song and "to make cross-over to self and Self, the union" (2).

Persaud explains that yogic realism allows freedom of form following the spirit of yoga. Like in yoga, one may adapt to "Hatha yoga", another to "bhakti yoga", third to "jnana yoga", fourth to "karma yoga", or one may adapt to Hatha yoga initially and switch over to Raja yoga or any other form. There are no prescriptive norms about the form. A writer has freedom to choose

the form that suits his purpose. The *Bhagavatagita* too supports the plurality of paths to yoga as interrelated categories of yoga; Bhaktiyoga, Jnanayoga and Karmayoga, *Ye yatha mam prapadhyante tanstaiheiva bhajamyaham* (*Gita*, 4, 11) means, “as men approach me so do I accept them”.

Parsaud admits that philosophy is a major component of the Hindu samskaras as explained earlier in this chapter. He looks forward to getting them metamorphosed in writing. Parsaud views his poems in *A Surf of Sparrows' Songs* in the spirit that writers of ancient India held their own work (3-4). He says that the book is really a single unfinished long poem which continues in his present poetry manuscript, “The Hungry Sailor: Poetry from Florida” (4). The book remains an offering of poetry. He, therefore, gives the book a subtitle, “a Poemanjali” i.e. a poem offering. He further says, “Yes, this book is written in the school I call Yogic Realism and I have used a definition of Patanjali on yoga in his *Yoga Sutra* (2nd Cent. BCE), the first yoga theory, ‘contemplation is the process of fixing the mind on something specified’”(4).

Parsaud explains that yoga is a discipline that employs ego to master the ego, of employing the mind to master the mind- or rather to empty the mind of all thoughts. Patanjali defines yoga as “emptying [of] the mind”. One has to focus on the mind to empty the mind and arrive at the stage of ‘Sat-chit-anand’ (pure consciousness, pure intelligence and pure bliss) or moksha or the Infinite. In Hinduism, idols of gods and goddesses, in any medium and material, are used to serve the purpose. The mind is focussed on any one of them. Parsaud says that in writing of *A Surf of Sparrows' Song*, words, punctuations and language serve as metamorphose to murtis or idols or medium. He has organised the structure of the book based on three broad categories of yoga, the base of Patanjali’s yoga, as defined in the *Bhagavatagita*. He uses punctuations to mirror the concept. He calls punctuation and verse-breaks as his (and writer’s)

idols, “murtis”, the objects to focus the mind on for controlling the mind. They give meaning and rhythm in a reading. The poetry begins with clear verse-breaks and punctuation in earlier poem fragments. Persaud calls them “meditations”. After page fourteen there is absence of punctuations and verse-breaks in the poetry. This goes in much the same way a practicing yogi gradually and progressively relinquishes the need for objects to assist concentration in the achievement of that stage of samadhi (5). Persaud says that the last full stop appears on page fourteen. Then after, the spirit is in full flow, the mind fettered and unfettered. He says that in his book the poetry and the process mirror yogic approaches, the saguna and nirguna that is respectively a personal approach and an impersonal approach. Punctuation and absence of punctuation correspond with these two approaches (5).

Persaud says that the logic of Yogic Realism seems to have contradiction at its root. But it is just superficial. The components- body and spirit- are complementary to each other to give meaning and existence to each other. To comprehend the spirit/ consciousness, the mind needs the physical body and the body without spirit is nothing, just ‘a sparkless mass’. From time immemorial, Indian philosophy and yoga hold that, to put in Radhakrishnan’s words, “the spirit of man is the most significant clue to this reality and to that universe, more significant by far than the physical and the external”. The spirit lies in the music of the soul. Therefore, music remains an integral part of Indian life (may be all lives). Music is inseparable from philosophy, politics, rituals and from past and present. All these are woven together. The yogic spirit asks for consistency of action and thought through coordination of activities in life. It allows no compartmentalization or separation. Persaud says that *A Surf Of Sparrows’ Songs* exemplifies that “the concept of yogic realism is the crystallization” (6). Persaud refers to his novel, *The*

Ghost of Bellow's Man in view of the Indian classical music. It implies the reincarnation of the spirit. The *Riga Veda* too accepts the central value of music in yoga (8).

Persaud regrets that his views on yogic realism are not taken seriously by writers and critics and he faces a condition is like that of Salman Rushdie's that he explains in his essay, "Commonwealth does not exist". But the yogic tradition teaches him not to seek validation without, but within - with the soul itself. He asks, "Who could be a better critic of my work than me in that situation?" (7). He accepts the responsibility to explain his theory and works. Persaud acknowledges that some literary persons like Nadine Pierre, a Haitian scholar; David Dabydeen, a scholar and writer; Antinio Benitez-Rojo, a distinguished critic and novelist supported his views. He also acknowledges the support of Peter Nazareth, Michael Dash and host of others. They taught him to bridge the gap between demonstrating and discovering, theorising and doing. (9).

Persaud provides signposts to the theory of Yogic Realism. The first signpost is "crafting". Insistence on crafting is common with a western writer. Even a writer of Indian origin like V. S. Naipaul too insists on crafting, "often he would write three WHOLE sentences in a day and that by the end of the day would have scratched out two". Persaud says "I was crafting too, only I was doing in the Indian yogic way: writing a work over and over in my head- consciously and not-so consciously breathing, thinking and living the work". He admits that Sam Selvon's masterpiece story, "My Girl and The City" and Coomarswamy's essay, "Hindu View of Art" built in him confidence to challenge the fashionable school of 'high literature', that is the school of the one-hundred-and-one-drafts, or the school of 'physical' crafting and 'sweating'. Persaud defends the school of "waiting for inspiration" against western criticism, "the realisation of form,

a window on self and Self; the darshan, that moment/glimpse of grace in samadhi...yogic realism” (10-11).

The second signpost is the inspiration of India. Persaud says that he worked out his theory of yogic realism first in *A Surf of Sparrows' Songs*, and then in *The Hungry Sailor*. The first book was inspired from the huge pipal trees on the first afternoon (dusk) in Miami. He narrates his experience, “I think, I touched self and Self- entered a special time and space sparked by those huge, extraordinary pipal trees across US Highway no 1 away from the campus.” (9). He found the trees sacred, because under them, he thought he had a contact with Buddha and all great rishis of ancient India. The trees crystallised everything for him and gave him direction to define his work Likewise, a coconut palm tree outside the front door of his Uncle Ram's house in Miami inspired him for his second book. He found that the trees were doing Surya Namaskar to the Sun rising over the ocean and the bay among the parrots and the winds in the dawn trees. It gave him the realisation of the Upanishadic egg/ sun creation story that becomes the base of poetry in *The Hungry Sailor*. The book explains the process that ancient rishis followed to define their theories. “That was how the ancient seers, the rishis, operated. It was how ‘science’ operated: to move down or step down from mental-concrete to concrete-concrete to prove their theories” (11). Persaud contends that Miami helped him to explore the yogic space through spaces and channels. *A Surf of Sparrows' Songs* explains the concept of change and plurality through strong sense of a clash of cultures and places, of north and south and east and west. (11).

The third signpost is binary opposition of male-female. Against western preoccupation with binary opposition, Persaud offers a yogic view, “Yoga accepts the differences in evolution of the consciousness of the most awakened- the most mind-emptied, spirit-filled” (12). He refers

yogis like Giri Bala whom Paramhansa Yogananda narrates in his *Autobiography of a Yogi*. He defines, “the yogi is able to accept and therefore deal with, and in many ways transcend differences” (12). Persaud explains the yogic position on the gender issue. The creation story gives two revelations of Shiva-Uma, the divine couple: in one, Shiva is half male and half female; while in the other Shiva and Uma are two different consciousnesses inhabiting different bodies. Raising questions on the gender issue, he states: “Innate to yoga and yogic realism is the concept of lives, reincarnation –an “ancestral” memory” (13). He cites an illustration of the monarch butterflies of Canada who migrate to Mexico and back every summer. The generation that sets on the migration does not necessarily reach the destination. In transition, five generations are born and die. The question arises then how they make the way finally to their summer grounds and back to Mexico. The answer to it is the cycle, a genetic coding, an ancestral memory, or a consciousness based on particular culture that does not deny other cultures (13). This helps him define his Indian ancestry and the theory of samskaras.

The fourth signpost is yoga itself. In *A Surf of Sparrows' Songs* Persaud criticises the west's celebration of the abuse of yoga in “Column Six” calling it ‘the corporate yoga’ (87-88).. He enumerates the abuses of yoga as marketed in the west: a). Yoga solely for ‘success’ in the west, through publication of ‘howto’ book, marketing of ‘keepfit’ video and a class with a high fees charged; b). Propaganda of Yoga solely for stress management and c). Fashion of Yoga for novelty or to acquire ‘powers’. Persaud regrets that some of the Indian sects too indulge in these abusing acts (13).

The fifth signpost is Yogic Realism as political act. He says the Yogic Realism implies politic. It is a silent resistance to western writing practices with a new concept of ‘writing as yoga’. He says that this politics implies high value of Gandhi's protest through fasting and

prayers (13-4). It aims at bringing about revolution in one's 'seeing', perception of the world through yogic transformation of mind that may occur through contemplation, concentration and meditation. It elevates writing to a state of yoga and a writer to a state of a writer-yogi.

The sixth signpost is "Music is yoga". The novel, *The Ghost of Bellow's Man* and the poem fragment, "Refuting the Buddha" exemplify Persaud's preoccupation with music. He explains that music transcends meaning and yet the meaning remains. Indian classical singers begin with words, sentences and meanings. But then they slowly and gradually switch over to pure sounds and sing just meaningless note symbols like 'sa, re, ga, ma, pa, tha, ni sa'. These are the symbols that capture the essence of the spirit. In it, words seem to mean nothing and a singer is more concerned with capturing the singing of the soul. He says that music springs out of bhakti, the way of selfless devotion that calls for the total involvement of the self with the Self. About the Indian classical music, Persaud says that it had its origin in the *Vedas* as three basic notes of Sanskrit mantras culminating in 'swahaa'. He imbibed these sounds in to his sensibility through pujas. The hum of the tune of mantras fascinated him and non-Indian schoolmates too.

The seventh signpost is Bhakti yoga. Persaud relates Bhakti to writing. The poet's basic task is to arrange words that contain meaning. He is a craftsman of words. Persaud calls him a 'wordsmith'. Words may generate several layers of meaning and cause multiples of meaning. A reader may look for an infinite multiplicity of meaning and enjoy it. The yogic stage facilitates the multiplicity of meaning, he explains, "Yoga is transcendence of the particular, it is also a cognition of those layers of meaning and at the same time a cognition of That Meaning. Yoga is throwing off of all aids (the idols, rosaries, etc.) which focus the mind, yet at the same time clog the mind, ties the mind to a certain mind set- that is why according to Patanjali it is "emptying of the mind" (14). "In yogic realism," says he, "in this instance where the tool is writing, it becomes

throwing off, 'emptying' of punctuation and the particular even in the meaning- the path of nirguna" (14).

The eighth signpost is guru. Persaud reiterates that the system of yoga assigns a special status to the guru. He found his guru in first in Odaipaul Singh who later became Swami Aksharananda. But as he advanced in his efforts to understand yoga Paramhansa Yogananda inspired him with his book, *An Autobiography of a Yogi* (1967) and he takes him as his guru. The lessons of tradition too act as guru- 'tradition as guru'. He says that the guru helped him to know the line and bridge the gap between understanding and knowing. In this connection, he refers to the *Bhagavatgita* in which Krishna describes three broad categories of yoga: Jnana (the way of knowledge), Karma (the way of selfless action and Bhakti (the way of selfless devotion) (15). The illustrations of Buddha's quest, Tagore's Upanishadic words, "salvation for me is not in renunciation" (*Gitanjali*, 68) and Kevat's devotion explains these ways.

In the essay, "I Hear A Voice, Is It Mine? Yogic Realism & Writing the Short Story", Saseriarine Persaud deals with the subject of Yogic Realism in the context of his voice in the west. He thus focuses on the political dimension of Yogic Realism. Such a concern drives Persaud to relate 'voice' with an act of writing on one hand and his vision of yogic realism on the other. He says, "I wrote a short story"; "I raise my voice too" and it was with fear that "My history, my people's history, would be erased, falsified" (530). Denial of voice in the west concerns him most, "he saw/ heard/ felt my voice" (530). Finally, he rests on the yogic concept while writing a short story, "A short story has a life of its own. It is yoga. ...For me, all writing is yoga" (532). Persaud's position of this kind thus seeks to establish a relative equation like:

“Writing the short story >> Voice >> Yogic Realism” that conveys that story-telling can be an effective tool to assert voice and in the context the voice is yogic realism.

Focusing more on writing the short story, Persaud says, “No writer of the short story, or of the novel or poetry or any other literary form, writes in vacuum... One writes... And one’s tools are memory and imagination, ...” (531). He says his memory brings to him rich literary and oral traditions of story telling of ancient India, “replete with stories” (531) and stories remained integral to his life. He further says that “telling was a catharsis” (532) and in this context he refers to Sam Selvon’s story, “My Girl and the City” as a story “about writing as yoga”, as illustrating element of storytelling - (in Sam Selvon’s words), “*So what? So now I weave?*” – and of classic catharsis. He remarks, “His story sings; it is poetry, a thesis on writing – Yogic Realism” (532). Persaud views an art of story telling as helpful to work out the concept of Yogic Realism, “*the telling made the stories, the telling was the essence of stories*” (the writer’s italics retained) (533).

He calls his story, “S. T. Writerji” as “a fiction, about yarn-spinning” or it may be “read as a thesis on the short story and writing fiction” (535). Another story, “These Ghosts of Ghosts” reflects through Devic’s question, “Do you know what he’s doing?” on his intention of writing, “until I came upon the pieces of Hindu esthetics. Until I found the rock of my voice which led me to define what I was doing in my work as Yogic Realism” (533). Another story, “When Men Speak That Way” is a “meditation” of an early hour of the morning on the majestic Damerara River to illustrate two kinds of story telling by Mr. Singh and Dr. Philip Shiv Kumar as “the two forms of discourse”, “two kinds of writing”, “two kinds of yoga”. Mr. Singh represents rigidity and Dr. Kumar represents a fluidity more associated with Karma Yoga. The story, “Heads” illustrates transposition of a mind or *samskaras* in cases of West Indian writers of Indian origin

under the impact of the western success dream. Through a dialogue between Anand Sharma and Raj, two fictional selves representing two facets of Persaud's literary self, the story represents critics' positions on fiction and short story. He says that although the story sounds like "a meta-fiction or postmodern" it is not so. It forms a part of Indian literary tradition that Vyasa of the *Mahabharata* practiced. In the story, the narrator of the events is also a participant-actor in the main story at other points. Persaud calls this Yogic Realism. He also cites an ancient story of a carpenter and his knife that A. K. Ramanujan once cited to sum up his concept of writing, "just continuing in an ancient Indian literary tradition" (530). About him he says, "And there is always India. India shadows everything I do" (535).

The story "Dog" is Persaud's reaction to Canada's compulsion on writers in exile to write on a subject that they prescribe through stories of three dogs, a Canadian dog, Brownie and Shiva. The family-story line at the opening of the story indicates different dimensions of one's pride in his ancestry. It also hints at the narrator's mocking put-me-down attitude to spark off a debate on the issue, "Who is a Brahmin?" In this context of a Upanishadic story of a Brahmin who pelts a dog with a stone (536), a Brahmin stands for a voice and the story gives an ironic perception on voice in the west. The title story in the collection, "Canada Geese and Apple Chatney" is Persaud's experiment in an Indian dialect of English, "But form? Hatha Yoga or Jnana Yoga?" (536). It focuses on the political dimension of Yogic Realism to counteract black racism perpetuated through Kamau Braithwaite's 'Nation Language' that undermined the Indian presence in Guyana and Trinidad, "the Guyana I had left behind come back to haunt me, only now in literature" (537). A new variety of Hindi-English counteracts the Creole-English. The intension is to reaffirm Indian presence in the west. He is aware that Sam Selvon and V. S. Naipaul did it before him to some extent. But he also knows the reason, "They both wrote with

different compunction: 'to make it' in a Euro-world". Persaud did not care "to make it" in a Euro-world or any world. He says, "I had a vision I would pursue" and the vision is yogic Realism. He calls it a distinct political act (537). Persaud regrets that though the story earned good appreciation from a number of academicians and critics in the UK, "a fine exponent of Guyanese literary creole with an Indian infection" they ignored, or were unaware of, "the overtly political aspect of Hindi-English". This political aspect is none other than Yogic Realism that echoes the *Bhagavad Gita*'s doctrine of "Swadharmā"- one's own law of living (*Gita*. 3/35). Gandhi's dictum too rests on this doctrine.

The essay, "Watch My Language: From Cheddi Jagan to Martin Carter" takes a different of yogic realism through Sasenarine Persaud's critical survey of Martin Carter, his contemporary writer of Afrosporic origin. His reading of him takes reflective and reflexive modes. The reading acquires a different dimension of introspection and self-correction. In the process, it reflects transformation of his mind. Persaud read Martin Carter at different stages in life and through different spheres of activities like a private sphere of family and relatives, an academic sphere of school and college, a public sphere in Guyana, and finally his own reading at maturity. He confesses that his private sphere was overshadowed with upheavals and threats from the African race- "the roving gangs of black men on bicycle", "the Kabaka", "the niggerness", "the Burnham regime" and "the black racism", threat to its "stabilizing center of home, family and relatives". So the concern was that of a strong defiance "to salvage the lost Indian pride"(359). In this context, Indians in Guyana viewed Cheddi Jagan's clinging to Gandhi's concept of "PASSIVE-resistance" as mere cowardice to hold back their revolutionary spirit at its peak for bloody fight. They also held Martin Carter responsible for their plights, "And this quotable man had sold out

this quoting man- so he was no good”, “Carter served the Kabaka and Jagan kept us down”(360). As a child he fell to the impact of such populist Indian opinion that affected his reading of Carter.

At school and college he was posed to another dimension in view of the contribution that Jagan and Carter made to the making of Guyana. This made him to review his previous reading, “But reasoning- thinking- analysing is a slower process than the reflexive emotional”, says he (360). He read Jagan’s *The West on Trial* “again, carefully, slowly” and read Carter’s “Watch My Language” with renewed understanding. He calls it “a watershed moment” to introspect and “to re-examine” his earlier reading., “And so it was that I could finally go to Carter, and let the work and one’s subjective reason speak” (361).

At an age of maturity Persaud got engaged in “teaching, politicking and poetrying” (361). As a young activist, he indulged in celebrating Tagore’s influence in Guyana and the Caribbean. He views Carter’s unbeatable greatness in the light of Tagore’s unbeatable influence by juxtaposing his poetic potential with Tagore’s (362). Persaud traces some parallels in the poetic geniuses of the two like “seeming simplicity”, “directness of language”, and the impact of their poetry and literary presence on the struggles for freedom of their respective countries (363). He counts the Tagore presence in Guyana as “a Tagore/ Upanishadic/ Indian influence” that “brought all that was expected of the spirit of India” (364). Persaud asks whether Carter could be unaware of Tagore’s influence. He thus evaluates Carter by his similarities with Tagore.

The Tagore presence contributed significantly to the Indian presence in Guyana and the West Indies. George Lemming counts it as “a Caribbean reality” in one of his significant presentations in Canada. Walcott too recognises in his famous Nobel address that no intellectual in Guyana could ignore Indians and Indian culture and literature. Martin Carter himself too notes

in his interview with Frank Birbalsingh in *Kyk-over-al* that Guyana is distinct from the Caribbean because of the Indian population and its culture, and speech patterns and literature (364-5). Persaud says, "Carter continues to be as important a voice..." and further says that no judgment can be objective and "not clouded by race" (364). With bold confessions he proclaims Martin Carter as Guyana's first world poet with "no confusion of form" (365), "without putting on any great airs" and with remarkable truth-seeking faculty. But he regrets his addiction to drinking that made him weak (363). Persaud too determined to give up drinking.

Persaud's critical survey outlines the evolution of reading in his case. It is an attempt to strike a balance with a genuine gesture 'to cross-over' the bounds of race, religion, region and culture. His gesture reflects his capability to correct him. Thus, reading here corresponds to yoga as transformation of mind. Reading thus has a vital role in yoga. Persaud seeks to demonstrate the working of yogic Realism through self-reflexive mode in which reading precedes an act of writing.

Persaud's another critical survey titled, "V. S. Writerji/ S. T. Naipaul" presents his confessions about his misreading of V. S. Naipaul in his early age and his gesture to correct him. The Naipaulian sensibility is an overpowering influence in the Indo-Caribbean literary regime. It did not spare Persaud's mind. He outlines his acquaintance with Naipaul from his teenage first through his story, "B Wordsworth" about which he says that like Sam Selvon's story, "My Girl and the City" Naipaul's story failed to fascinate him.

The title of the essay is catchy. It is deliberate to indicate an unusual intermingling of two names, 'S. T. Writerji' and 'V. S. Naipaul', a fictional name in his stories and a real name. He seems to engage the two in a discourse on writing. He juxtaposes this discourse and with that in

the story. It intensifies what Persaud's seeks to convey through his remark in the essay, "I Hear a Voice, Is it Mine?" about Naipaul and several other writers of Indian ancestry, they wrote, "to make it" in a Euro-American world (537). It further hints at a concept of "transposed heads" that the story, "Heads" conveys. Persaud perhaps seeks to transplant his reading of Anand Sharma to that of V. S. Naipaul.

As a child of 15, he viewed V. S. Naipaul under his uncle's impact and the Indian opinion about Naipaul in Guyana, "we should not turn out like Mr. Naipaul". He admits that it was a delusion on his part, "I was 15 and thought I knew the world"; says with arrogance, "thought I was the world, that I was, and would be, a prophet for my people in a way Naipaul never was, never could be". Later on he realized that his uncle's reading reflected "seeming contradictions" and hence was flawed, "and though he continued to be critical of Naipaul, he continued to read him". He noticed similar contradictions in his own reading of Naipaul, "What does one know at fifteen?" It is a kind of is self-reading, a kind of introspection.

Persaud's journey of reading exhibits the transformation of Persaud's mind from a stage of falling prey to popular public opinion to gradual acquisition of independent opinion. He explains it by referring to the story, "Canada Geese and Apple Chatney" that delineates transformation in the opinion, say from the position, "And Writerji – a hope you ain't turn out like Naipaul" to that of, "criticism is not hatred, to disavow is not to disown". Twenty years after reading Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness*, he now pays "a tribute" to Naipaul calling Naipaul's novel, *A House for Mr. Biswas* "a truly great novel of the twentieth century", "If ever there is a novel of compassion, love and hope, and belonging – felt not to be in Naipaul – it is this novel". Persaud's reading thus moves from 'no-fascination' position to 'some opinion' and eventually to a position of 'appreciation'. He says, "a mind as questioning, and analytical as

Naipaul had to come around, full circle- to appreciate the extremely rigorous intellectual and philosophical Hinduism we celebrated, a Hinduism encoded in the rituals, pujas and festivals we enjoyed". In the light of Naipaul's denouncing and disowning Hinduism, Persaud finds him mounting the same boat as Naipaul did, "I said so, and therefore I too, like Naipaul, had become a sort of turn-coat". He too feels guilty, "they felt, I too would sell my culture for fame". He says that Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival* "would make full circle". Persaud's opinion too appears to come round the circle to proclaim Naipaul as following the Indian tradition, although unconsciously. Finally, he comments on Naipaul's quoted wish or ambition to write another book on India, "This says it all. If this isn't belonging, love- what is? - The House did not fall".

The critical surveys assert freedom of mind. It states stages of reading like flawed reading, confession, self-correction and appreciation to lead ultimately to tribute. It marks that the mind changes and it is ready to change. This is transformation of his mind. It is a kind of "progressive comprehension" that yoga seeks to work out in a person ("Kevaf", 1). Thus, reading too turns out to be yogic realism. Persaud's critical surveys illustrate it aptly. They convey Persaud's sincerity, honesty, boldness, openness and capacity to change in the interest of perception of the real/ Real, that is Yogic Realism.

Persaud in his columns titled, "Viewpoint For this love of our lives: Writers on Writing" "One learns to build brick by brick" concludes on his position as a writer, "I hope we will share special and stimulating (not necessarily agreeable) moments with this love of our lives- this writing" (5). The above comment reflects Persaud's awareness about the present literary scenario. He struggles to get a solution to the problem of the invisibility that a writer suffers in the western literary world. As a solution to the problem, he pleads to value the heritage of India and write about the Indian ancestry that is all time great and rich. Persaud wants writing to

become “spoken narratives” (V. S. Naipaul), of the Indic ancestry, culture and community. It is deliberate and conscious political act in a Euro-world. Such a writer would pose a threat to the western literary circles. However, his viewpoint receives, slow and steady recognition from a sensible audience. The titles, awards, and publications attributed to him speak about it.

The various titles ascribed to him are: “Guyanese Writer and Poet Living in Canada” (Odaipaul Singh), “Revolutionary Caribbean Poet” (Annan Boodram), “Pioneering Caribbean author” (*Caribbean Life*), “Canadian Fiction in Pink” (Judith Fitzgerald), “Poet Loves India from a far” (Bageshree Vaze), “Just a few gems in the poetry grab-bag” (Fraser Sutherland). The places from where Persaud’s writing and reviews are published fall across the global map like New York, Toronto, Ottawa, London, Dubai, Norman Oklahoma and India. He has received number of awards and financial grants too like: “K.M. Hunter Foundation’s 1996 Emerging Artist’s Award for Literature”; “Canada Council Award”, 1996; “An Ontario Work-In-Progress Award”, 1996; “A Caribben Heritage Award”, 1998 and “The Canada Council Grant”, 1998. All these show a slow and gradual acceptance of Persaud’s worldview in a postcolonial world. His worldview embodies the Indian worldview and his sincere devotion to the Indian ancestry. It is like his return to India, rather a metaphorical journey back home. He yearns genuinely that the Indian worldview would receive attention from the world at large. He views his writing as continuing India’s literary and aesthetic traditions, philosophical and spiritual position, music and yoga and as “spoken narratives” to accomplish world recognition to the Indian worldview that he encodes as his Yogic Realism. Through it he seeks to interact with the world at large. He may also be placed among postcolonial writers who engage them in the efforts of discovering their roots, ‘Return to Roots’. He also seeks to enhance the value of his ancestry.

The chapter thus reveals that Sasenarine Persaud is a conscious writer with high Indic sense who values most his identity as an Indian and the cultural heritage that he received from the Indian ancestry. Indianness is the concern of supreme attention that he with high consciousness seeks to read in his writing and also in the writing of his contemporary Caribbean writers of Indian origin. Such high priority to Indianness by an exiled writer naturally makes us curious to probe into his mindset. Therefore, the chapter first conducts an inquiry into a concept of Indian mind as laid down in the Indian philosophical and religious positions and then probes into Persaud's mindset on the parameters that are revealed from the inquiry. It also focuses on his literary vision that informs his Indian world-view and the yogic world-view that contributes to the shaping of his innovative theory of writing namely Yogic Realism. In this light, Persaud's essays serve as source material to explain his intension to write. Writing in his case serves to him a metaphorical journey to India, a real solace in the condition of his inability or impossibility to physically return to roots. Instead of mourning or complaining, he prefers to write with a hope that it would serve him a bridge or crossover to India. More significantly, he shows keen curiosity in the mystical and spiritual dimensions of India and in this light views writing to provide him a ground to work out his curiosity of India's spiritualism. Writing for him is yoga and its aim is yogic realism. Hence, the chapter also relates his views with those imparted by Indian scriptures like Patanjali's *Yoga Sutram* and the *Bhagavadgita* and other philosophical works on yoga. It is hoped to have an optimum view of Persaud's mindset to call it an Indian mind. With this conceptual groundwork on Persaud's psyche or mind, the third chapter shall review Persaud's fiction, his two novels and short stories to focus on how a Hindu persona survives in exile.