

Written by Satyaraj Das

Monday, 20 February 2012 09:06 - Last Updated Friday, 30 March 2012 23:29



July 10, 1975, it was a beautiful summer day. Although i was an exuberant twenty-year-old, i had no qualms about staying indoors on this occasion. I was being initiated into the ancient tradition of Krsna consciousness by my spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the founder-acarya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. I had been working toward this for some time. When i joined the movement in 1973, my intention was to make a short experiment. I had just read Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography, Experiments With Truth, and i romanticized how i would experiment in a similar way.

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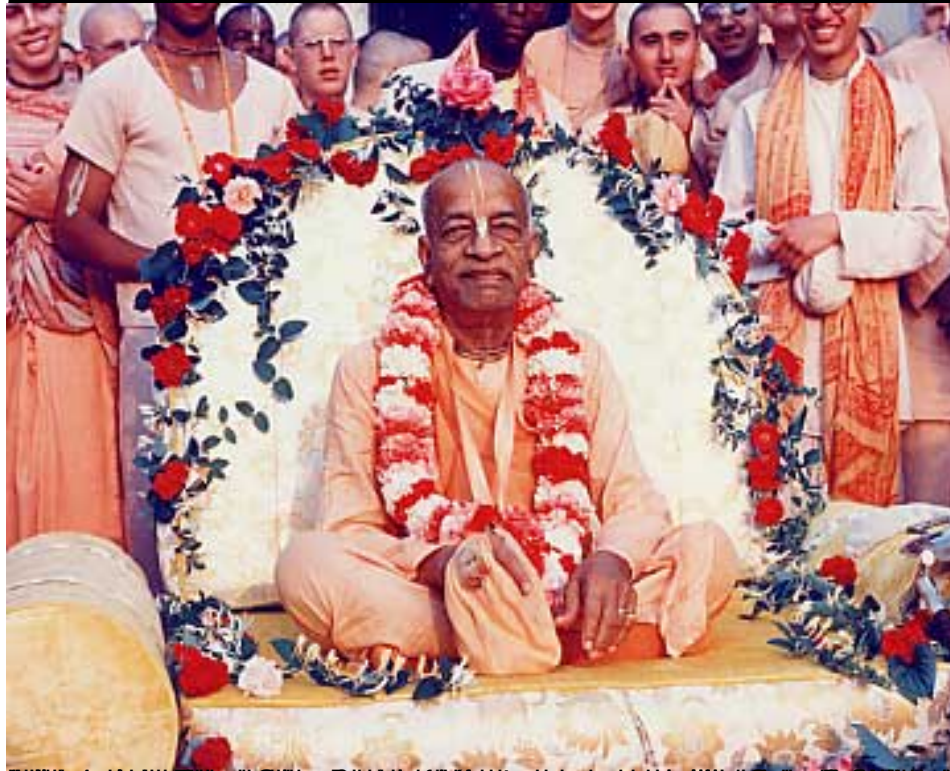
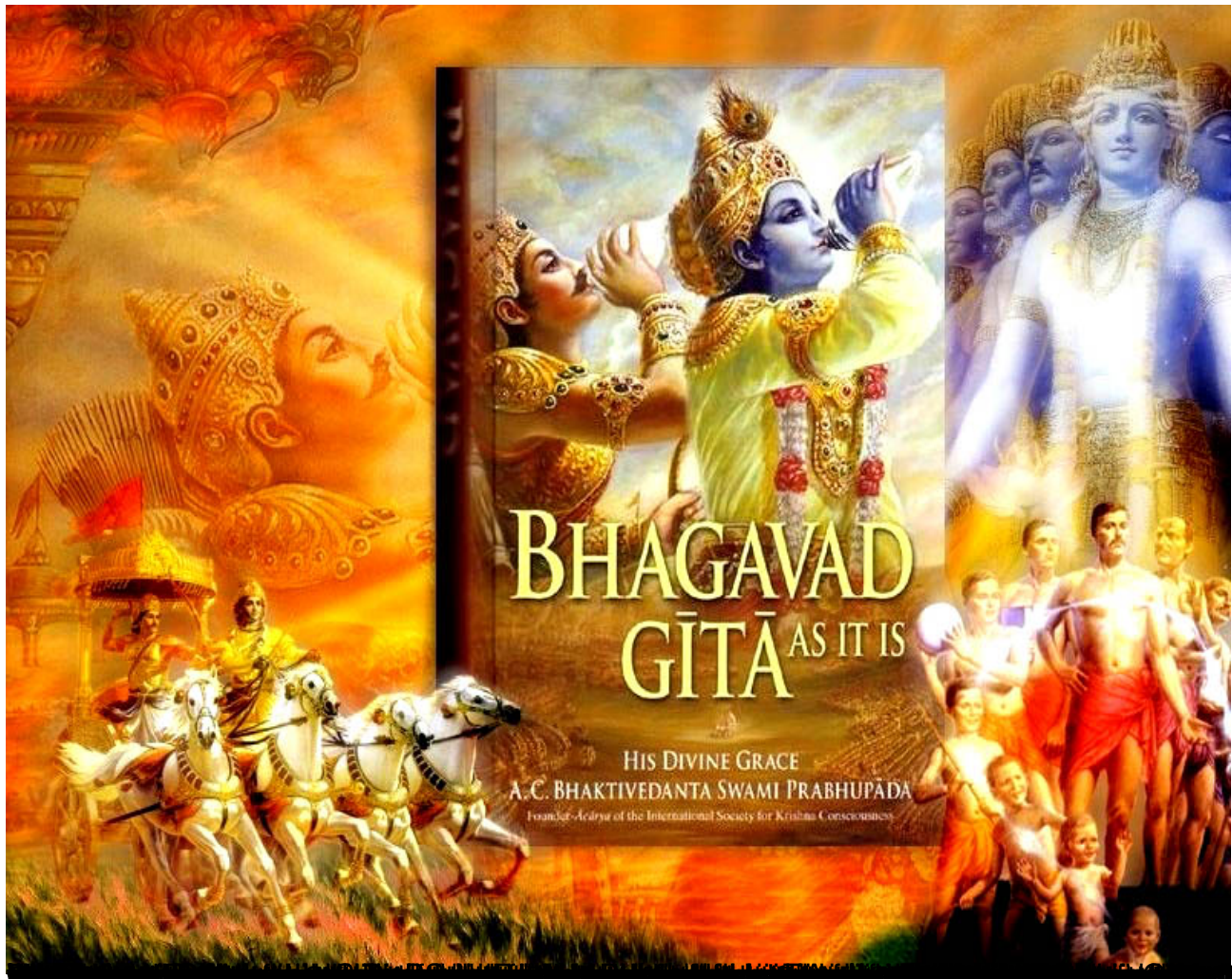
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Also, just before joining the movement, i had read Irving Stone's Agony and the Ecstasy, a fictionalized account of Michelangelo's life. I was fascinated by the great renaissance man's resolve to paint the Sistine Chapel upon the request of Pope Sixtus IV. Michelangelo's work as a painter for the Pope necessitated a mood of surrender, for he considered himself primarily a sculptor. I had fancied myself something other than a devotee of God. I was a musician, an artist, and somewhat of a scholar. So i considered myself a sort of renaissance man in my own right. But through reading Srila Prabhupada's profound works, translations of and commentaries on the ancient Vedic literature, i came to understand what i really wanted to pursue: God's mission in this world.

Before coming to Krsna consciousness, i had read that religion originated in the east, yoga groups and meditation centers back in America, while popular, did not satisfy my urge for a way of life that was completely spiritual. I took a short trip to India but returned dissatisfied. Traditional Hinduism seemed too dogmatic, with its many gods and family-based caste distinctions. Nonetheless, I knew that Hinduism had its roots in the Vedic literature, and i became interested in this source of spiritual truth. Knowing that the Vedas were written in sanskrit, i decided to enroll in a sanskrit course at Queens College in New York. If i could learn the language, i reasoned, then i could interpret the texts for myself, and i wouldn't have to rely on the commentaries of popular yogis and swamis.

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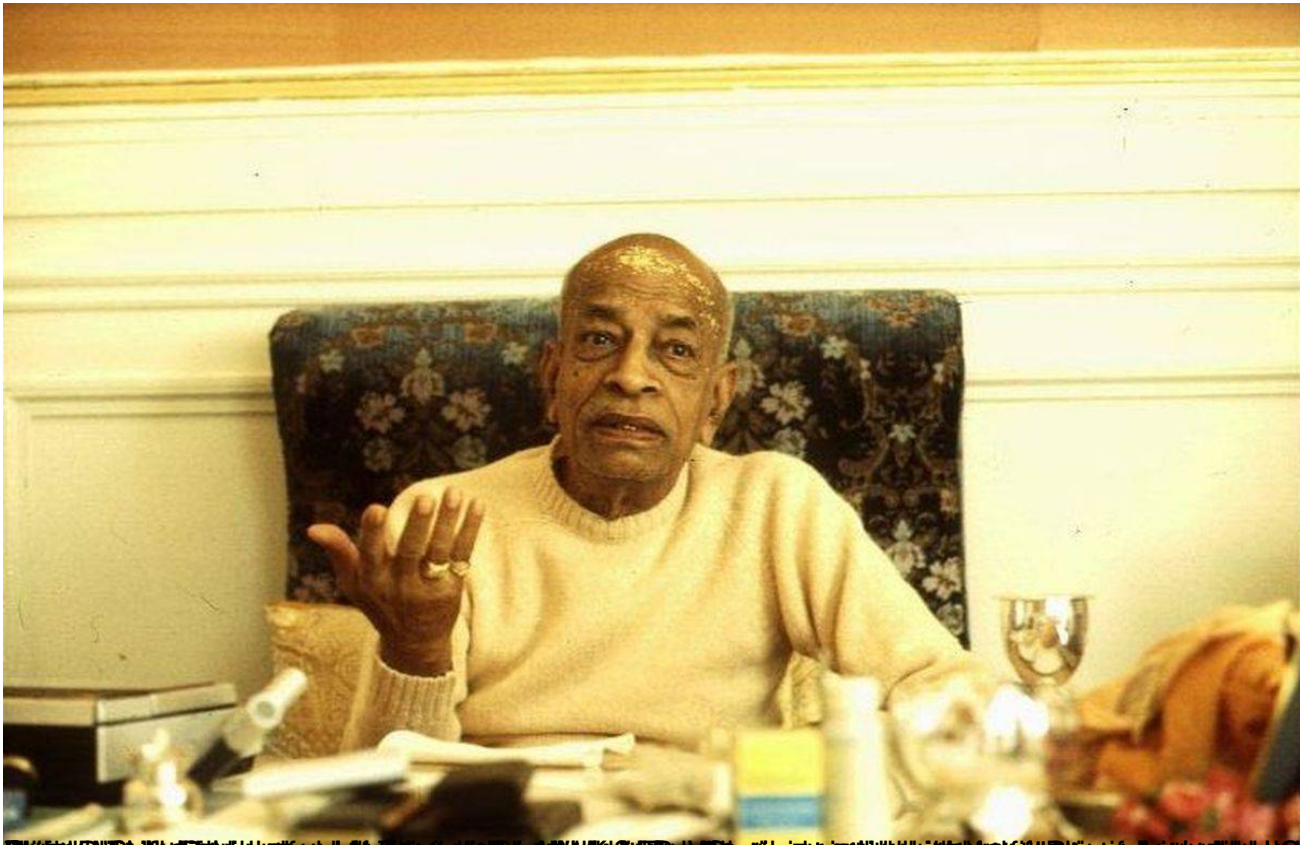
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Hare Krishna Centre - Leicester, UK - Coming To Krishna - The Agni And The Ecstasy

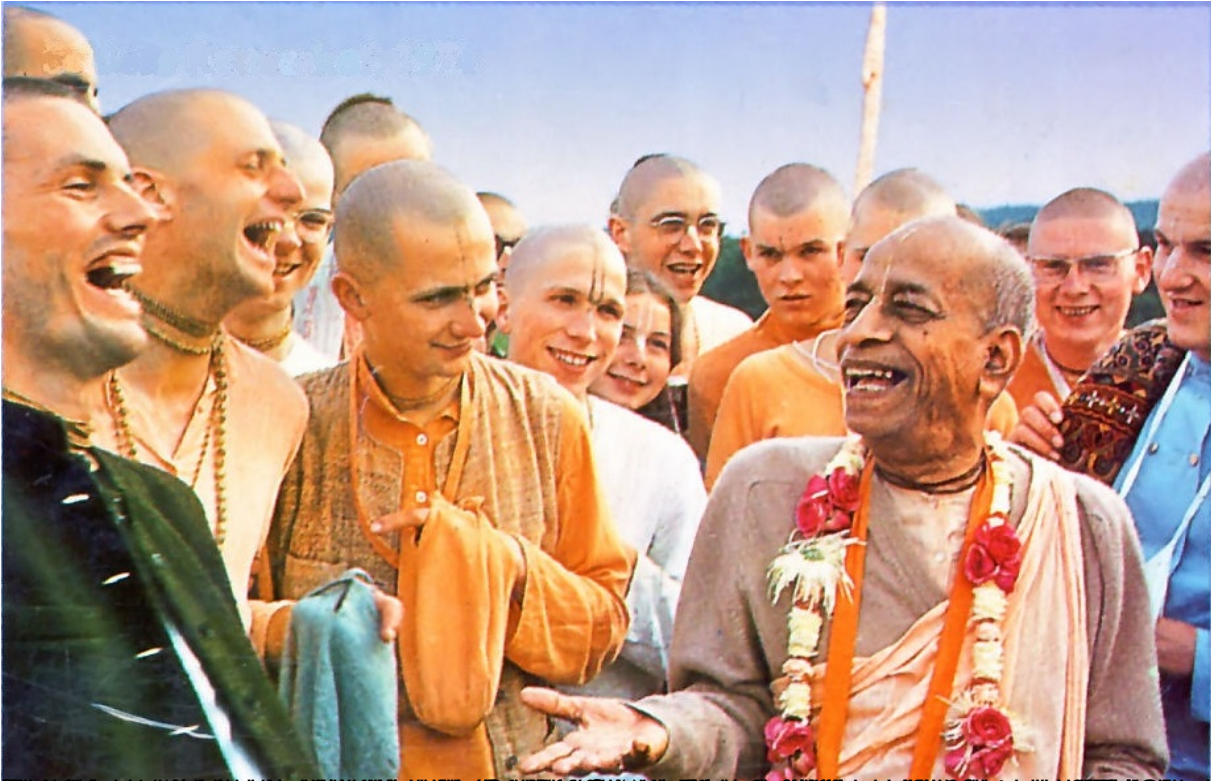
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any of the following categories, they will be classified as Chinese, either individually