

BOOK REVIEWS

Theories of the Chakras: A Bridge to Higher Consciousness. Hiroshi Motoyama. Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1982, 300 pages, \$8.95.

Reviewed by Barbara Ivanova, Moscow, USSR

From the "Winged Elephant" to the "Winged Horse"

For many decades established science has been too pragmatical to understand roots and causes, inner meanings and the real connections between investigated facts and natural phenomena: the way they lead our thought and influence our lives. In recent years we have seen a new breakthrough, which can help us to go beyond the limits of statistics, digitals and superficial "finger-philosophy"—that is, the predominant idea that things are only "real" or "true," if we can touch them with the "fingers" of formal control methods or apparatuses. Now the time is ripe to give more attention to the real truth, the inner realities, the main instrument of connection with the Universe—the human being. One of the merits of such books as the *Theories of the Chakras: A Bridge to Higher Consciousness* by Dr. Hiroshi Motoyama (selected by UNESCO in 1974 as one of the world's ten foremost parapsychologists, Japan, 1982), is exactly the investigation of these connections. Dr. Motoyama's theories serve as a real bridge between the empirical dimension of today's science and the inner dimensions of higher awareness. Works on this level help us to go beyond our superficial understanding of this tragic and transitional age.

Science touches the ground of simple physical laws with all its "feet" and weight. That is right. But it cannot exist without the wings of a free and daring thought, broad understanding of events and their deep meaning and the morals, teachings and conclusions needed by Man so much. The period when predomination was given to naked facts without their inner values and the teachings which they give us without educated meaning is over. We have grown out of it. The heavy "elephant" of traditional science has strong legs, but its wings of real thought are too weak, and its inner elevation insufficient; it therefore cannot support and sublimate its clumsy body. In order to assist the evolution of man it has to be a lesser impedance. The ancient tale about the winged horse, which was accepted as a poetical image for the future development of humanity, shows us the real way: with hoofs on the ground, a slim body and mighty wings, this creature could elevate us to the sky! The winged horse will overcome the inflexible, heavy "elephant" of yesterday's notions, which impeded the development of our knowledge in the realms of the Universal Laws.

In terms of scientific investigations, what we need to do is to connect the results of our experiments, supported by modern technology (the "hoofs"), with the "wings" of ancient knowledge, moral teachings, ethical conclusions, and it is this that Dr. Motoyama has done in his very important new book.

Of great importance are the ideas of Dr. Leadbeater, cited in Dr. Motoyama's book. First of all we have to "devote time and energy to the betterment of society before indulging in practices designed to awaken kundalini." This is rarely stressed in other books, and so many practitioners follow a dangerous path leading to egoism, false pride, and separation from the needs and fates of others, even harming them sometimes. Such persons were not taught, or cannot understand, that the main task is not their own yoga-training, and acquisition of certain skills and forces, but their giving of help to others by assisting them in their purification and in finding their way and also by helping to purify world karma. Sri Aurobindo, one of the greatest teachers, followed the same ideas: stressing the need to participate in social life and to help with good causes rather than limiting one's work and life only to self-development. We have to be grateful to Dr. Motoyama for his warnings and guidance on this aspect of evolutionary practices.

The book also gives clear explanations about the three major categories of karmic debt: "(a) that accruing from an individual's past incarnations; (b) that inherited from the family; and (c) that resulting from the actions of the society or social group. All these factors contribute to an individual's karma; they must be dealt with. It is impossible to avoid one's karma." This teaches the reader that the individual is responsible for society, and shows how yoga teaches a sense of responsibility and civil courage.

Dr. Motoyama also teaches that negative conditions such as poverty, disease, emotional conflict, etc., should be considered as ultimately beneficial occurrences. We have to learn to draw our own conclusions from adversities and difficulties, to learn to regard them as our teachers and advisers; our school of life.

Let us hope that books like this one will help us to convert the "winged elephant" of our modern science into the famous "winged horse" which is able to both walk and fly towards new realms of future knowledge. And let us hope that this book, as a 'Bridge to Higher Consciousness' will lead its readers to the light and joy of real understanding of our place amongst others, our goals in life and our tasks in the Universe.

I would like to conclude with the last words of Dr. Motoyama in his book: "I feel that the continuation of research into the nature of psi energies, by many others as well as myself, will lead to considerable change in our views of matter, of mind and body, and of the world itself."

Robert Lowell: A Biography. Ian Hamilton. New York: Random House, 1982, 527 pages, \$19.95.

Reviewed by Gordon Patterson, Florida Institute of Technology

Robert Lowell died six years ago. He lived a turbulent, confused, and sometimes brilliant life. The English poet and literary critic, Ian Hamilton, has captured much of Lowell's personality in his *Robert Lowell: A Biography*. Hamilton spent five years tracking down sources, interviewing Lowell's acquaintances, and examining Lowell's personal papers. It paid off. At times, such as in his analysis of Lowell's *Life Studies* (1959), he deepens our appreciation of Lowell's mind. It is regrettable that Hamilton rarely allows himself to speculate on the relationship between Lowell's life, his imagination, his work, and his epoch's poetic sensibility. Nevertheless, the book deserves praise. Future students of Anglo-American literature will be ill advised if they ignore this book.

Hamilton begins with a description of Lowell's parents. Both descended from prominent Boston families. Hamilton captures the essence of their relationship when he observes that: "even in his wedding photographs, and in spite of the smile, Bob [Lowell's father] contrived to recede into the background, as if all too anxious to surrender the stage to Charlotte from the very start." Charlotte Lowell dominated her husband. She disapproved of her husband. He was too weak. He had chosen the wrong career. Worst of all, he was a failure. As is often the case, Charlotte Lowell turned her attention to her son. She would make him the great man that his father never would be.

Lowell refused to be mastered. He was too much like his mother. If his mother wished to dominate him, then he would show that he was stronger. Lowell repeated this pattern throughout his life. At school he fared poorly because he rebelled against his teachers. As an adolescent Lowell dominated his closest friends. Hamilton records one episode in which Lowell decreed that one of his friends was to be a musician, another a painter. Lowell would be the poet. His personality was so strong that he convinced Frank Parker to drop out of Harvard in the middle of his freshman year to pursue a career as a painter.

Ian Hamilton traces Lowell's development in exhaustive detail. Hamilton succeeds in creating an image of the forces and individuals which shaped Lowell's career. This is the book's strongest feature. Moreover, Hamilton does not present Lowell's work in isolation. Instead, he shows that Lowell was part of a wider intellectual community that talked, argued, fought, and loved together. Hamilton has contributed much to our understanding of Robert Lowell and his place in contemporary literature.

There is something tragic about Robert Lowell. His life was governed by a struggle between opposites: order versus disorder, reason versus madness, control versus lack of restraint. His poems read as the confessions of a troubled mind. Hamilton shows that Lowell possessed the rarest of gifts. At a time when poets such as Ginsberg and