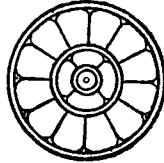


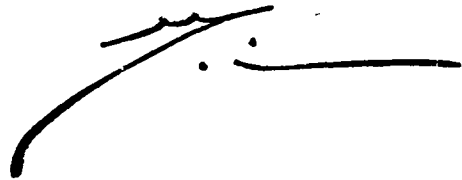
MOTHER INDIA

SEPTEMBER 1956

Price: Re. 1.



Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute:
A new light breaks upon the earth,
A new world is born.
The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. VIII

No. 8

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Based on the Mother's Talks to the Children of the Ashram)

Q. We saw a film about the musician Berlioz. His work, it appears, came to ripeness by his suffering. What is the place of suffering in the creation of art?

It all depends on people. There are some who are considerably helped by suffering. This man Berlioz, I consider him one of the most pure expressions of music. I may even say he is an incarnation of music, of the musical spirit. Unfortunately his body was a little frail—that is to say, it did not have the basis which Yoga for example gives and so it shook him too much and made him too emotional, nervous, agitated. But from the point of view of creation, I have always had the impression—and it was very strong on the day of the film—not only that he was in rapport with the spirit of music, the musical sense itself, but also that this spirit entered into him with such force that it quite upset him.

The opinion that it was suffering which made him a creator is a purely human opinion. What is on the contrary very remarkable—if we turn the whole thing round—is that there was no physical pain which did not instantly translate itself into music within him: in other words, the spirit of music was much stronger than human suffering, and every blow which he received from life and which he was just too sensitive to have the power to resist was all the same translated immediately into music. This is a very rare thing. Generally all the creators need a little time, a little tranquillity in order to be able to recommence creating. With Berlioz it was spontaneous, the stroke of suffering brought about the musical expression at once. Truly, for him all life began with music, ended with music, was music itself, and he has such a sincerity and such an exclusive intensity in his attachment to music that I am convinced the very spirit of music manifested through him. It is perhaps not the most beautiful music written: the cause for this is that weakness of what we here call the *ādhāra*. But it is still very beautiful and in spite of its power it has a great simplicity. It is a sort of limpidity of line he achieved with naturally a masterly knowledge of technique. His power of orchestration was most remarkable. When one can orchestrate something for six hundred players, it is a science as complicated as the most complex mathematics and in fact very close to it.

I knew a musician who was not at all his equal but was still good and he used to compose; he had composed operas. He would sit before a big sheet of paper and put down the names of the different instruments and in front of each he would simply write down what had to be played. He was a friend whom I saw at work: it was as if he were writing equations. When it was finished, there was nothing to do but give it to an orchestra; it turned out to be a magnificent thing. Berlioz, you must have observed, played on the piano his theme; he played some notes, it was nothing, it had the air of two or three notes. That was all: it made his theme. And then on this theme, all of a sudden he would set himself to write. Sometimes he did not even play on the piano, he wrote directly. It is a special cerebral construction. There were others who composed exclusively on the piano and it was necessary to make someone else write for them. Someone else had to undergo the labour of giving the different notes and of organising the notes in order to reproduce the harmony that was made. But this man of whom I speak—there were great musicians like Saint-Saens, for example, musicians of his time, who gave him their compositions to be orchestrated. They wrote them as one writes for the piano, for two hands, and he changed them into orchestral music; he orchestrated just as I have said, simply by separating the different groups of instruments and putting before each the part which it had to play.

Q. When one listens to music, how should one truly listen?

One can truly listen if one can be totally silent, silent and attentive, simply as if one were a registering instrument: one does not move and one is nothing but ears. Then the music enters one; and it is only after a while that one perceives the effect or what the music means or the impression that it creates.

The best way of hearing is to be like a mirror, immobile and concentrated, quite silent. I have seen musicians—that is, composers and players—hearing music: people, like them, who really love music still themselves completely: All has to be a stillness—and if one can stop thinking, that is all to the good, one can get then the full profit.

Music is one of the means of inner opening, one of the most powerful means.

Q. When one receives a shock of misfortune, should one try to express it by music or poetry, at least if the expression is spontaneous?

If one has the gift of expression, yes. Otherwise it is not necessary. There are different depths in the shocks, all are not on the same plane. Generally

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

people receive emotional or sentimental shocks altogether on the surface and that is why they weep and cry and sometimes even gesticulate: these are shocks in the outer crust. But at a greater depth there are shocks which one usually receives in silence, yet which awake in one a creative vibration and the need to express oneself. Then if you are a poet, you write poetry, if you are a musician you make music, if you are a littérateur you write a story and if you are a philosopher you describe your state. Now, there is a still greater depth of sorrow which leaves you in an absolute silence and opens the inner gates to profundities that put you into immediate contact with the Divine. But this does not get expressed in words. It changes your consciousness, but mostly some time passes before you can say anything. The shocks suffered by Berlioz belong to the second category.

Q. Often on Sundays you have yourself played on the organ. Do you decide beforehand what plane the music should come from?

Before I take my seat I do not even know what notes I want to strike. Plane? It is always the same inner region. That is why I can speak with some experience of the origin of the music of Berlioz: it is a region which is well-known to me and which I constantly visit. But I do not know at all what will come. I do not even decide what is the sentiment or idea or state of consciousness I am going to express. I am like a blank sheet of paper, I come and sit down, I concentrate for a minute and I let it all come. After a while I know, but not always. When, however, I hear the music a second time—on the tape-record—in the evening, then I know what it is because it is no longer myself doing anything, it is something that comes from outside.

Q. On one day you asked all of us to make out what you were going to play.

There are times when I know, there are times when I do not. Only, at times if I could have at my disposal an orchestra of two hundred players, it would be most interesting. The means are poor: that is to say, the music which I perceive and which comes to me would get expressed just as it should, by such means as you saw the other evening in the cinema. It needs expression of that kind in order to express itself wholly. So at present it has got to be collected as in a dropper and then given out drop by drop: like that it is naturally much reduced. It is not a grand affair. There is a great deal that escapes.

(2-10-1954)

ON "SAVITRI"

(Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo)

MYSELF: We have been wondering why you should have to write and rewrite your poetry—for instance, *Savitri* ten or twelve times—when you have all the inspiration at your command and do not have to receive it with the difficulty that faces budding Yogis like us.

SRI AUROBINDO: That is very simple. I used *Savitri* as a means of ascension. I began with it on a certain mental level, each time I could reach a higher level I rewrote from that level. Moreover I was particular—if part seemed to me to come from any lower levels I was not satisfied to leave it because it was good poetry. All had to be as far as possible of the same munt. In fact *Savitri* has not been regarded by me as a poem to be written and finished, but as a field of experimentation to see how far poetry could be written from one's own yogic consciousness and how that could be made creative. I did not rewrite *Rose of God* or the sonnets except for two or three verbal alterations made at the moment.

MYSELF: If X could receive his inspiration without any necessity for rewriting, why not you?

SRI AUROBINDO: So could I if I wrote every day and had nothing else to do and did not care what the level of inspiration was so long as I produced something exciting.

MYSELF: Do you have to rewrite because of some obstruction in the way of the inspiration?

SRI AUROBINDO: The only obstruction is that I have no time to put myself constantly into the poetic creative posture and if I write at all have to get out something in the intervals of quite another concentration.

MYSELF: With your silent consciousness it should be possible to draw from the highest planes with the least concentration.

ON "SAVITRI"

SRI AUROBINDO: The highest planes are not so accommodating as all that. If they were so, why should it be so difficult to bring down and organise the supermind in the physical consciousness? What happy-go-lucky fancy-web-spinning ignoramuses you all are! You speak of silence, consciousness, over-mental, supramental etc., as if they were so many electric buttons you have only to press and there you are. It may be one day but meanwhile I have to discover everything about the working of all possible modes of electricity, all the laws, possibilities, perils etc., construct modes of connection and communication, make the whole far-wiring system, try to find out how it can be made foolproof and all that in the course of a single lifetime. And I have to do it while my blessed disciples are firing off their gay or gloomy *a-priori* reasonings at me from a position of entire irresponsibility and expecting me to divulge everything to them not in hints but at length. Lord God *in omnibus*!

29-3-1936

NIRODBARAN

THE SECRET OF THE VEDA

SRI AUROBINDO

CHAPTER XX

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

THERE yet remain two constant features of the Angirasa legend with regard to which we have to acquire a little farther light in order to master entirely this Vedic conception of the Truth and the discovery of the illuminations of the Dawn by the primeval Fathers; we have to fix the identity of Sarama and the exact function of the Panis, two problems of Vedic interpretation which are very closely related to each other. That Sarama is some power of the Light and probably of the Dawn is very clear; for once we know that the struggle between Indra and the original Aryan seers on the one hand and the sons of the Cave on the other is no strange deformation of primitive Indian history but a symbolic struggle between the powers of Light and Darkness, Sarama who leads in the search for the radiant herds and discovers both the path and the secret hold in the mountain must be a forerunner of the dawn of Truth in the human mind. And if we ask ourselves what power among the truth-finding faculties it is that thus discovers out of the darkness of the unknown in our being the truth that is hidden in it, we at once think of the intuition. For Sarama is not Saraswati, she is not the inspiration, even though the names are similar. Saraswati gives the full flood of the knowledge; she is or awakens the great stream, *maho arṇah*, and illumines with plenitude all the thoughts, *viśvā dhryo virājati*. Saraswati possesses and is the flood of the Truth; Sarama is the traveller and seeker on its path who does not herself possess but rather finds that which is lost. Neither is she the plenary word of the revelation, the Teacher of man like the goddess Ila; for even when what she seeks is found, she does not take possession but only gives the message to the seers and their divine helpers who have still to fight for the possession of the light that has been discovered.

Let us see, however, what the Veda itself says of Sarama. There is a verse (5) in I. 104, which does not mention her name, nor is the hymn itself about the Angirases or Panis, yet the line describes accurately enough the part attributed to her in the Veda: —“When this guide became visible, she went, knowing, towards the seat that is as if the home of the Dasyu,” *prati yat syā nīthā adarśi dasyor, oko na acchā sadanam jānatī gāt*. These are the two essential

characteristics of Sarama; the knowledge comes to her beforehand, before vision, springs up instinctively at the least indication and with that knowledge she guides the rest of the faculties and divine powers that seek. And she leads to that seat, *sadanam*, the home of the Destroyers, which is at the other pole of existence to the seat of the Truth, *sadana rtasya*, in the cave or secret place of darkness, *guhāyam*, just as the home of the gods is in the cave or secrecy of light. In other words, she is a power descended from the superconscient Truth which leads us to the light that is hidden in ourselves, in the subconscious. All these characteristics apply exactly to the intuition.

Sarama is mentioned by name only in a few hymns of the Veda, and invariably in connection with the achievement of the Angirasas or the winning of the highest planes of existence. The most important of these hymns is the Sukta of the Atris we have already had to take note of in our scrutiny of the Navagwa and Dashagwa Angirasas, V. 45. The first three verses summarise the great achievement. "Severing the hill of heaven by the words he found them, yea, the radiant ones of the arriving Dawn went abroad; he uncovered those that were in the pen, Swar rose up; a god opened the human doors. The Sun attained widely to strength and glory; the Mother of the Cows (the Dawn), knowing, came from the wideness, the rivers became rushing floods, floods that cleft (their channel), heaven was made firm like a well-shaped pillar. To this word the contents of the pregnant hill (came forth) for the supreme birth of the Great Ones (the rivers or, less probably, the dawns); the hill parted asunder, heaven was perfected (or, accomplished itself); they lodged (upon earth) and distributed the largeness." It is of Indra and the Angirasas that the Rishi is speaking, as the rest of the hymn shows and as is indeed evident from the expressions used; for these are the usual formulas of the Angirasa mythus and repeat the exact expressions that are constantly used in the hymns of the delivery of the Dawn, the Cows and the Sun. We know already what they mean. The hill of our already formed triple existence which rises into heaven at its summit is rent asunder by Indra and the hidden illuminations go abroad; Swar, the higher heaven of the superconscient, is manifested by the upward streaming of the brilliant herds. The sun of Truth diffuses all the strength and glory of its light, the inner Dawn comes from the luminous wideness instinct with knowledge,—*jānatī gāt*, the same phrase that is used of her who leads to the house of the Dasyu in I. 104-5; and of Sarama in III. 31-6,—the rivers of the Truth, representing the outflow of its being and its movement (*rtasya presā*) descend in their rushing streams and make a channel here for their waters; heaven, the mental being, is perfected and made firm like a well-shaped pillar to support the vast Truth of the higher or immortal life that is now made manifest and the largeness of that Truth is lodged here in all the physical being. The delivery

of the pregnant contents of the hill, *parvatasya garbhah*, the illuminations constituting the seven-headed thought, *ṛtasya dhītiḥ*, which come forth in answer to the inspired word, leads to the supreme birth of the seven great rivers who constitute the substance of the Truth put into active movement, *ṛtasya preṣā*.

Then after the invocation of Indra and Agni by the “words of perfect speech that are loved of the gods”,—for by those words the Maruts¹ perform the sacrifices as seers who by their seer-knowledge do well the sacrificial work, *ukthebhir hi śmā kavayaḥ suyajña...maruto yajanti*, (Rik 4)—the Rishi next puts into the mouth of men an exhortation and mutual encouragement to do even as the Fathers and attain the same divine results. “Come now, today let us become perfected in thought, let us destroy suffering and unease, let us embrace the higher good,” *eto nu adya sudhyo bhavāma, pra ducchunā mināvāma ā varīyah;* “far from us let us put always all hostile things (all the things that attack and divide, *dvesāṅsi*); let us go forward towards the Master of the sacrifice. Come, let us create the Thought, O friends, (obviously, the seven-headed Angirasa-thought), which is the Mother (Aditi or the Dawn) and removes the screening pen of the Cow” (Riks 5,6). The significance is clear enough; it is in such passages as these that the inner sense of the Veda half disengages itself from the veil of the symbol.

Then the Rishi speaks of the great and ancient example which men are called upon to repeat, the example of the Angirasas, the achievement of Sarama. “Here the stone was set in motion whereby the Navagwas chanted the hymn for the ten months, Sarama going to the Truth found the cows, the Angirasa made all things true. When in the dawning of this vast One (Usha representing the infinite Aditi, *mātā devānām aditer anīkam*) all the Angirasas came together with the cows (or rather, perhaps by the illuminations represented in the symbol of the cows or Rays); there was the fountain of these (illuminations) in the supreme world; by the path of the Truth Sarama found the cows” (Riks 7, 8). Here we see that it is through the movement of Sarama going straight to the Truth by the path of the Truth, that the seven seers, representing the seven-headed or seven-rayed thought of Ayasya and Brihaspati, find all the concealed illuminations and by force of these illuminations they all come together, as we have been already told by Vasishtha, in the level wideness, *samāne ūrve*, from which the Dawn has descended with the knowledge (*urvad janati gāt*, Rik 2) or, as it is here expressed, in the dawning of this vast One, that is to say, in the infinite consciousness. There, as Vasishtha has said, they, united, agree in knowledge and do not strive together, *sangatāsaḥ*

¹ The thought-attaining powers of the Life as will appear hereafter.

THE SECRET OF THE VEDA

sam jānata na yatante mithas te (VII. 76-5), that is to say, the seven become as one, as is indicated in another hymn; they become the one seven-mouthed Angirasa, an image corresponding to that of the seven-headed thought, and it is this single unified Angirasa who makes all things true as the result of Sarama's discovery (verse 7). The harmonised, united perfected Seer-Will corrects all falsehood and crookedness and turns all thought, life, action into terms of the Truth. In this hymn also the action of Sarama is precisely that of the Intuition which goes straight to the Truth by the straight path of the Truth and not through the crooked paths of doubt and error and which delivers the Truth out of the veil of darkness and false appearances; it is through the illuminations discovered by her that the Seer-mind can attain to the complete revelation of the Truth. The rest of the hymn speaks of the rising of the seven-horsed Sun towards his "field which spreads wide for him at the end of the long journey," the attainment of the swift Bird to the Soma and of the young Seer to that field of the luminous cows, the Sun's ascent to the "luminous Ocean," its crossing over it "like a ship guided by the thinkers" and the descent upon man of the water of that ocean in response to their call. In those waters the sevenfold thought of the Angirasa is established by the human seer. If we remember that the Sun represents the light of the superconscious or truth-conscious knowledge and the luminous ocean the realms of the superconscious with their thrice seven seats of the Mother Aditi, the sense of these symbolic expressions¹ will not be difficult to understand. It is the highest attainment of the supreme goal which follows upon the complete achievement of the Angirasas, their united ascent to the plane of the Truth, just as that achievement follows upon the discovery of the herds by Sarama.

Another hymn of great importance in this connection is the thirty-first of the third Mandala, by Vishwamitra. "Agni the (Divine Force) is born quivering with his flame of the offering for sacrifice to the great Sons of the Shining One (the Deva, Rudra); great is the child of them, a vast birth; there is a great movement of the Driver of the shining steeds (Indra, the Divine Mind) by the sacrifices. The conquering (dawns) cleave to him in his struggle, they deliver by knowledge a great light out of the darkness; knowing the Dawns rise up to him, Indra has become the one lord of the luminous cows. The cows who were in the strong place (of the Panis) the thinkers clove out; by the mind the seven seers set them moving forward (or upwards towards the supreme), they found the entire path (goal or field of travel) of the Truth; knowing those (supreme seats of the Truth) Indra by the obeisance entered

¹ It is in this sense that we can easily understand many now obscure expressions of the Veda. e.g VIII. 68-9, "May we conquer by thy aid in our battles the great wealth in the waters and the Sun," *apsu surye mahad dhanam*.

into them" *vīlau satīr abhi dhīrā atṛndan, prācā ahinvan manasā sapta viprāḥ; viśvām avindan pathyām ṛtasya, prajānan it tā namasā viveśa* (Riks 3,4,5). This is, as usual, the great birth, the great light, the great divine movement of the Truth-knowledge with the finding of the goal and the entry of the gods and the seers into the supreme planes above. Next we have the part of Sarama in this work. "When Sarama found the broken place of the hill, he (or perhaps she, Sarama) made continuous the great and supreme goal. She the fair-footed, led him to the front of the imperishable ones (the unslayable cows of the Dawn); first she went, knowing, towards their cry" (Rik 6). It is again the Intuition that leads; knowing, she speeds at once and in front of all towards the voice of the concealed illuminations, towards the place where the hill so firmly formed and impervious in appearance (*vīlu, drdha*) is broken and can admit the seekers.

The rest of the hymn continues to describe the achievement of the Angirasas and Indra. "He went, the greatest seer of them all, doing them friendship; the pregnant hill sent forth its contents for the doer of perfect works; in the strength of manhood he with the young (Angirasas) seeking plenitude of riches attained possession, then singing the hymn of light he became at once the Angirasa. Becoming in our front the form and measure of each existing thing, he knows all the births, he slays Shushna;" that is to say, the Divine Mind assumes a form answering to each existing thing in the world and reveals its true divine image and meaning and slays the false force that distorts knowledge and action. "Seeker of the cows, traveller to the seat of heaven, singing the hymns, he, the Friend, delivers his friends out of all defect (of right self-expression). With a mind that sought the Light (the cows) they entered their seats by the illumining words, making the path towards Immortality (*ni gavyatā manasā sedur arkair kṛṇvānāso amṛtatvāya gātum*). This is that large seat of theirs, the Truth by which they took possession of the months (the ten months of the Dashagwas). Harmonised in vision (or, perfectly seeing) they rejoiced in their own (abode, Swar) milking out the milk of the ancient seed (of things). Their cry (of the Word) heated all the earth and heaven (created, that is to say, the burning clarity, *gharma, taptam ghrtam*, which is the yield of the solar cows); they established in that which was born a firm abiding and in the cows the heroes (that is, the battling force was established in the light of the knowledge).

"Indra, the Vritra slayer, by those who were born (the sons of the sacrifice), by the offerings, by the hymns of illumination released upward the shining ones; the wide and delightful Cow (the cow Aditi, the vast and blissful higher consciousness) bringing for him the sweet food, the honey mixed with the *ghṛta*, yielded it as her milk. For this Father also (for Heaven) they fashioned the

vast and shining abode; doers of perfect works, they had the entire vision of it. Wide-upholding by their support the Parents (Heaven and Earth) they sat in that high world and embraced all its ecstasy. When for the cleaving away (of evil and falsehood) the vast Thought holds him immediately increasing in his pervasion of earth and heaven,—then for Indra in whom are the equal and faultless words, there are all irresistible energies. He has found the great, manifold and blissful Field (the wide field of the cows, Swar); and he has sent forth together all the moving herd for his friends. Indra shining out by the human souls (the Angirasas) has brought into being, together, the Sun, the Dawn, the Path and the Flame” (Riks 7-15).

And in the remaining verses the same figures continue, with an intervention of the famous image of the rain which has been so much misunderstood. “The Ancient-born I make new that I may conquer. Do thou remove our many undivine hurters and set Swar for our possessing. The purifying rains are extended before us (in the shape of the waters); take us over to the state of bliss that is the other shore of them. Warring in thy chariot protect us from the foe; soon, soon make us conquerors of the Cows. The Vritra-slayer, the Master of the Cows, showed (to men) the cows; he has entered with his shining laws (or lustres) within those who are black (void of light, like the Panis); showing the truths (the cows of truth) by the Truth he has opened all his own doors,” *pra sūnṛtā dīsamāna ṛtena durāś ca viśvā avṛṇod apa svāh* (Riks 19-21); that is to say, he opens the doors of his own world, Swar, after breaking open by his entry into our darkness (*antaḥ kṛṣṇān gāt*) the “human doors” kept closed by the Panis.

Such is this remarkable hymn, the bulk of which I have translated because it both brings into striking relief the mystic and entirely psychological character of the Vedic poetry and by so doing sets out vividly the nature of the imagery in the midst of which Sarama figures. The other references to Sarama in the Rīg-veda do not add anything essential to the conception. We have a brief allusion in IV. 16. 8, “When thou didst tear the waters out of the hill, Sarama became manifest before thee; so do thou as our leader tear out much wealth for us, breaking the pens, hymned by the Angirasas.” It is the Intuition manifesting before the Divine Mind as its forerunner when there is the emergence of the waters, the streaming movements of the Truth that break out of the hill in which they were confined by Vritra (verse 7); and it is by means of the Intuition that this godhead becomes our leader to the rescue of the Light and the conquest of the much wealth hidden within in the rock behind the fortress gates of the Panis.

We find another allusion to Sarama in a hymn by Parashara Shaktya, I.72. This is one of the Suktas which most clearly reveal the sense of the

Vedic imagery, like most indeed of the hymns of Parashara, a very luminous poet who loves always to throw back something more than a corner of the mystic's veil. It is brief and I shall translate it in full. "He has created, within, the seer-knowings of the eternal Disposer of things, holding in his hand many powers (powers of the divine Purushas, *naryā purūṇi*); Agni creating together all immortalities becomes the master of the (divine) riches. All the immortals, they who are not limited (by ignorance), desiring, found him in us as if the Calf (of the cow Aditi) existing everywhere; labouring, travelling to the Seat, holding the Thought they attained in the supreme seat to the shining (glory) of Agni. O Agni, when through the three years (three symbolic seasons or periods corresponding perhaps to the passage through the three mental heavens) they, pure, had served thee, the pure one, with the *ghṛta*, they held the sacrificial names and set moving (to the supreme heaven) forms well born. They had knowledge of the vast heaven and earth and bore them forward, they the sons of Rudra, the lords of the sacrifice, the mortal awoke to vision and found Agni standing in the seat supreme. Knowing perfectly (or in harmony) they kneeled down to him; they with their wives (the female energies of the gods) bowed down to him who is worthy of obeisance; purifying themselves (or, perhaps, exceeding the limits of heaven and earth) they created their own (their proper or divine) forms, guarded in the gaze, each friend, of the Friend. In thee the gods of the sacrifice found the thrice seven secret seats hidden within; they, being of one heart, protect by them the immortality. Guard thou the herds that stand and that which moves. O Agni, having knowledge of all manifestations (or births,) in the worlds (or, knowing all the knowledge of the peoples) established thy forces, continuous, for life. Knowing, within, the paths of the journeying of the gods thou becamest their sleepless messenger and the bearer of the offerings. The seven mighty ones of heaven (the rivers) placing aright the thought, knowing the Truth, discerned the doors of the felicity; Sarama found the fastness, the wideness of the cows whereby now the human creature enjoys (the supreme riches). They who entered upon all things that bear right issue, made the path to Immortality; by the great ones and by the greatness earth stood wide; the mother Aditi with her sons came for the upholding. The Immortals planted in him the shining glory, when they made the two eyes of heaven (identical probably with the two vision-powers of the Sun, the two horses of Indra); rivers, as it were, flow down released; the shining ones (the cows) who were here below knew, O Agni."

So runs this hymn of Parashara, translated with the utmost possible literalness even at the cost of some uncouthness in the English. It is clear at the very first glance that it is throughout a hymn of knowledge, of the Truth, of a divine Flame which is hardly distinguishable from the supreme Deity,

of immortality, of the ascent of the gods, the divine powers, by the sacrifice to their godhead, to their supreme namēs, to their proper forms, to the shining glory of the supreme state with its thrice seven seats of the Godhead. Such an ascent can have no other meaning than the ascent of the divine powers *in man* out of their ordinary cosmic appearances to the shining Truth beyond, as indeed Parashara himself tells us that by this action of the gods mortal man awakens to the knowledge and finds Agni standing in the supreme seat and goal; *vidan maro nemadhītā cikivān, agnim pade paramē tasthvānsam*. What is Sarama doing in such a hymn if she is not a power of the Truth, if her cows are not the rays of a divine dawn of illumination? What have the cows of old warring tribes and the sanguinary squabbles of our Aryan and Dravidian ancestors over their mutual plundering and cattle-liftings to do with this luminous apocalypse of the immortality and the godhead? Or what are these rivers that think and know the Truth and discover the hidden doors? Or must we still say that these were the rivers of the Punjab dammed up by drought or by the Dravidians and Sarama a mythological figure for an Aryan embassy or else only the physical Dawn?

One hymn in the tenth Mandala is devoted entirely to this "embassy" of Sarama, it is the colloquy of Sarama and the Panis; but it adds nothing essential to what we already know about her and its chief importance lies in the help it gives us in forming our conception of the masters of the cavern treasure. We may note, however, that neither in this hymn, nor in the others we have noticed is there the least indication of the figure of the divine hound which was attributed to Sarama in a possibly later development of the Vedic imagery. It is surely the shining fair-footed goddess by whom the Panis are attracted and whom they desire as their sister,—not as a dog to guard their cattle, but as one who will share in the possession of their riches. The image of the hound of heaven is, however, exceedingly apt and striking and was bound to develop out of the legend. In one of the earlier hymns (I. 62) we have mention indeed of a son for whom Sarama "got food" according to an ancient interpretation which accounts for the phrase by a story that the hound Sarama demanded food for her offspring in the sacrifice as a condition of her search for the lost cows. But this is obviously an explanatory invention which finds no place in the Rig-veda itself. The Veda says "In the sacrifice" or, as it more probably means, "in the seeking of Indra and the Angirāsas (for the cows) Sarama discovered a foundation for the Son," *vidat saramā tanayāya dhāsim* (I.62-3); for such is the more likely sense here of the word *dhāsim*. The son is in all probability the son born of the sacrifice, a constant element in the Vedic imagery and not the dog-race born of Sarama. We have similar phrases in the Veda as in I. 96-4, *mātariśvā puruvārapuṣṭir vidad gātum tanayāya svarvit*,

“Matarishwan (the Life-god, Vayu) increasing the many desirable things (the higher objects of life) discovered the path for the Son, discovered Swar”, where the subject is evidently the same but the son has nothing to do with any brood of puppies.

The two Sarameya dogs, messengers of Yama, are mentioned in a late hymn in the tenth Mandala, but without any reference to Sarama as their mother. This occurs in the famous “funeral” hymn X. 14, and it is worth while noting the real character of Yama and his two dogs in the Rîg-veda. In the later ideas Yama is the god of Death and has his own special world; but in the Rîg-veda he seems to have been originally a form of the Sun,—even as late as the Isha Upanishad we find the name used as an appellation of the Sun,—and then one of the twin children of the wide-shining Lord of Truth. He is the guardian of the Dharma, the law of the Truth, *satyadharmā*, which is a condition of immortality, and therefore himself the guardian of immortality. His world is Swar, the world of immortality, *amrte loke akṣite*, where, as we are told in IX. 113-7, is the indestructible Light, where Swar is established, *yatra jyotir ajasram, yasmin loke svar hitam*. The hymn X. 14 is indeed not a hymn of Death so much as a hymn of Life and Immortality. Yama and the ancient Fathers have discovered the path to that world which is a pasture of the Cows whence the enemy cannot bear away the radiant herds, *yamo no gātum prathamō viveda, naiṣā gavyūtir apabhartavā u, yatra naḥ pūrve pitarahḥ pareyuh* (Rik 2). The soul of the heaven-ascending mortal is bidden to “outrun the two four-eyed varicoloured Sarameya dogs on the good (or effective) path” (Rik 10). Of that path to heaven they are the four-eyed guardians, protecting man on the road by their divine vision, *yā te śvānau yama rakṣitārau caturakṣāu pathirakṣi nṛcaḥsasau* (Rik 11), and Yama is asked to give them as an escort to the soul on its way. These dogs are “wide-moving, not easily satisfied” and range as the messengers of the Lord of the Law among men. And the hymn prays “May they (the dogs) give us back bliss here in the unhappy (world) so that we may look upon the Sun” (Rik 12). We are still in the order of the old Vedic ideas, the Light and the Bliss and the Immortality, and these Sarameya dogs have the essential characteristics of Sarama, the vision, the wide-ranging movement, the power to travel on the path by which the goal is reached. Sarama leads to the wideness of the cows; these dogs protect the soul on its journey to the inviolable pasture, the field (*kṣetra*) of the luminous and imperishable herds. Sarama brings us to the truth, to the sun-vision which is the way to the bliss; these dogs bring the weal to man in this world of suffering so that he shall have the vision of the Sun. Whether Sarama figures as the fair-footed goddess speeding on the path or the heavenly hound, mother of these wide-ranging guardians of the path, the idea is the same, a power of the Truth that seeks and discovers, that finds

by a divine faculty of insight the hidden Light and the denied Immortality. But it is to this seeking and finding that her function is limited.

INTUITION

A highest flight climbs to a deepest view :
In a wide opening of its native sky
Intuition's lightnings range in a bright pack
Hunting all hidden truths out of their lairs,
Its fiery edge of seeing absolute
Cleaves into locked unknown retreats of self,
Rummages the sky-recesses of the brain,
Lights up the occult chambers of the heart ;
Its spear-point ictus of discovery
Pressed on the cover of name, the screen of form,
Strips bare the secret soul of all that is.
Thought there has revelation's sun-bright eyes ;
The Word, a mighty and inspiring Voice,
Enters Truth's inmost cabin of privacy
And tears away the veil from God and life.

SRI AUROBINDO
Savitri, Book X, Canto 4

HIS PROMISED HOUR

Always He now
Bestirs our heart,
At every hour
From dawn to eve—
On waking up
He lives within
Each moment lived
In heart and mind—
A Golden Flame
Of love and love's own light,
A Springtime of the soul.

There was a time
When all was lost
As nightfall came;
The lamp unlit
We groped alone
Unconscious hours
And worlds unknown—
What we had built
Was swept away
And love and love's own light
Were shadows on the wall.

But now His Truth
Has entered in
Each living heart,
His Promised Hour
Floods all around
And quickens life
With something more
From heights beyond—
The Sacrifice
Of all that went before
Bears Love and Truth and Light.

NORMAN DOWSETT

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Gita-Navaneeta Part II by Swami Keshavadeva Acharya (Hindi) Published by Sri Aurobindo Pustakalaya, Railway Road, Hapur P.O. Pages 244. Price Rs. 3/8

We welcome the second part of the *Gita-Navaneeta*, the first part of which was reviewed some time back in *Mother India*. That the reading public is also according a warm welcome to such a book proves at once that the author has succeeded in his work and that there is a hopeful reversal of taste for serious literature in the country. Indeed, unless there is a definite change in the thought of the people, a determination to probe the mystery of life, scan the inner mechanism of human nature, and ascertain the goal of existence, the great hopes that the Indian renaissance has evoked will remain unfulfilled and the political freedom that has come will fail to bear any spiritual fruit. And in this work of spiritual and psychological exploration a devoted study of the ancient lore is of incalculable importance. The more the mind of the land turns to its old heritage, the greater will be the light available to it for constructing a glorious future.

The book under review begins with the question of the Avatara. The author, following the light of Sri Aurobindo, has dealt with almost all the aspects of this difficult subject. What is an Avatara? what is the purpose of his descent? what are the criteria of his authenticity? what are the different categories of the Avatara? these are some of the points raised and elucidated in the book. Then there is an ample exposition of the nature of bhakti, which is both interesting and instructive. In the next chapter the reconciliation effected by the Gita between jnana, bhakti and karma has been ably expounded and is sure to be of particular interest to the modern mind. It is to be noted that this reconciliation is not a mental synthesis or an eclectic syncretism as propounded by some of the modern commentators of the Gita, but a fusion of the three principles in spiritual experience on the heights of the being, above the swaying interaction of the three gunas. It has been shown by the author that knowledge cannot be perfect and sovereignly creative in life until it is steeped in the resplendent soma of love and objectified and dynamised in action. Man possesses not only an intelligence and reason, but also a heart

of emotion, and a will and power to act; and if any perfection on earth is destined for him, it can only be a perfection of his whole organism and his integrated personality. Knowledge or bhakti or karma by itself cannot certainly lead him to that integral perfection. The three are indispensable, not only as means to the realisation of the Supreme—the Supreme is not the Akshara, but the Purushottama—but also as a means of His manifestation in human life.

The author then explains the difference between the standpoints of the Sankhya and the Gita. The Gita's postulate of the three Purushas raises it far beyond the ken of the Sankhya and bridges the gulf between Purusha and Prakriti. With apt quotations from Sri Aurobindo the author has shown how the mutable and the Immutable are but twin aspects of the Ineffable Supreme who transcends and comprehends them both. He has also shown the deficiencies of the philosophies of Shankara and Ramanuja by a level-headed comparison of their respective view-points with the view-point of the Gita.

In the last three discursive chapters the author has covered a wide range of subjects from materialism and its crude conclusions, its recent orientation to vitalism, and its timid and tentative advances towards the Spirit, to the pressing problems of the modern world, the grim menace of universal destruction, and the way out of the present cultural *impasse* by the unreserved self-surrender of man to the supramental Light which has descended upon earth. God's prevenient Grace, it is affirmed, will heal and transform what ignorance and perversity have hurt and deformed.

The book is well-planned and lucidly written. It deserves to receive wide recognition among Hindi-knowing readers. It contains four fine photos of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. We look forward to its concluding part.

RISHABCHAND

IS OUR CHRONOLOGY FOR ANCIENT INDIA CORRECT ?

SOME CRITICISMS AND SUGGESTIONS

2

THE echo of some name like “Chandragupta” in the appellation “Sandrocottus” or “Sandrocyptus” cannot be denied. To hear something like “Pataliputra” in “Palibothra” seems also reasonable, though we must note that Colonel Wilford stoutly refused to do so in spite of agreeing with Sir William Jones about Chandragupta Maurya.¹ We have surely to search for an Indian king who can be matched with the figure in the narratives of Justin, Arrian, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Quintus Curtius, Plutarch and others. But, obviously, much more than the similar name of the first Maurya must be adduced in favour of Sir William’s hypothesis, for other apt names can be culled from Indian history: we have even three additional Chandraguptas—two belonging to the Gupta dynasty and one to the Panduvamsis of Mahakosala. The Gupta pair had even Pataliputra as their capital.

We are told that there is not only the extraordinary correspondence between what the Greeks write about Sandrocottus and what the historical traditions of India say about Chandragupta Maurya but also the discovery of several historical events outside the Sandrocottus-problem yet reinforcing Sir William’s solution of it. We are supposed to have much more to rely upon than Max Muller’s skilful treatment of the problem or even Dr. R.K.Mookerji’s brilliant survey, *Chandragupta Maurya and His Times*. The independent establishment of various other dates than some year between 325 and 315 B.C. has been claimed, all of them supporting directly or indirectly this chronology. They are almost thought to have removed the onus of proving Sandrocottus the first Maurya: the two simply must be one.

But may it not be that the conviction of the correctness of Sir William’s hypothesis lay behind the fixing of every date and that the minds of historians were subtly conditioned to look for just that interpretation of data which would be in accord with the original “synchronism”? A touchstone, as it were, for

¹ *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. V, p. 262.

all subsequent theories may have been felt here and no line of research encouraged which could run counter to the old identification, the first shaping influence in our chronological studies. Since historically this identification preceded all other alleged discoveries, we must assume its determining effect unless they can be demonstrated to have been clear of it. And the demonstration can be made only if they are shown as plain cases pointing more or less in one single direction and substantially free from dubiousness anywhere. Unless this condition is fulfilled we have to fall back upon the original thesis and take it to be the decisive argument of the protagonists of Chandragupta Maurya and, only after weighing it, turn to these "discoveries" with some hope of properly interpreting them. Or else, if we not only find this condition unfulfilled but can also directly disprove those "discoveries", a potent argument will emerge against the original thesis itself and invite a reorientation.

Let us for the moment look entirely from the side of Sir William's followers and formulate, as they would, the access of strength brought to the old identification. Perhaps the most impressive is connected with Asoka Maurya. It is also the most popular and Dr. Mookerji has made use of it in part.¹

In all indigenous records Asoka succeeds Chandragupta, his grandfather, with only his father Bindusara in between. Now, in two of the numerous inscriptions of the Buddhist king Priyadarsin who has been proved from the Ceylonese chronicles to be Asoka and who even calls himself by that name in the Minor Rock Edict at Maski, we have the sure indication of a date which we should expect if Sandrocottus were Chandragupta Maurya. One inscription (Rock Edict II) mentions as contemporaries of Asoka "the Yona raja Amtiyaka and also those who are the neighbours of Amtiyaka";² the other (Rock Edict XIII) lists not only Amtiyaka—or, rather, Amtiyoka, as he is now spelt—but also four others with kingdoms beyond Amtiyoka's: Tulamaya, Amtekini, Maga, Alikasudara.³ And in the dominion of all of them Asoka claims his *dhamma* to have been spread and his institutions for the medical care of men and animals established. The Prakrit word "Yona" whose Sanscrit substitute is the more familiar "Yavana" and which is broadly synonymous with "foreign" is strictly and originally the Indian equivalent of the term "Yauna" used by the Persian emperors Darius and Xerxes in their inscriptions as a generic designation of the Greeks after the name of one prominent province of Greece with which the Persians first came into contact: Ionia. And in ancient times—up to the

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 72-5.

² R. R. Bhandarkar, *Asoka*, p. 229.

³ B. M. Barua, *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, pp. 7, 109.

second century A.D.—it applied only to the Greeks.¹ But we have in Asoka much more than merely an indication of Greek kings. The names can be read as referring to Greek rulers in the middle of the third century before Christ, the successors of Alexander's successors: Antiochus II Theos, King of Syria and Western Asia (261-246 B.C.), Ptolemy II Philadelphus, King of Egypt (285-247 B.C.), Antigonus Gonatus, King of Macedonia (277-240 B.C.), Magas, King of Cyrene (300-258 B.C.) and Alexander II, King of Epirus (272-255 B.C.).²

To find the names of five Greek kings, who were contemporaries of one another, answering to the sounds in Asoka's list of his Yavana contemporaries cannot be put down to fanciful preconception on our part: the probability that a fivefold correspondence in one place is purely accidental reduces to as good as zero. A genuine historical revelation is here. And just the mention of these names is enough for us to feel Chandragupta Maurya to be Sandrocottus whose accession-date between 325 and 315 B.C. is in the near past behind the reign-periods of these kings.

But that is not all. We can get back to that date with greater precision by judging the time the news of accession or death of these rulers took to reach Asoka. Mookerji's latest figure is 2 years.³ Then the dates imply that Asoka could not have mentioned them as living contemporaries earlier than 259 B.C.—that is, 2 years after the accession of Antiochus which was the latest—or later than 256 B.C.—that is, 2 years after the death of Magas which was the earliest. The inscription is calculated by Senart to have been set up 13 years after Asoka's coronation which, according to the *Mahāvamsa*,⁴ took place 4 years after his accession. This puts his coronation back to between 272 and 269 B.C. and his accession to 276-273 B.C. Most scholars accept the interval between accession and coronation, but Bhandarkar does not and Mookerji inclines to agree with him.⁵ If we coincide the two events and add to the coronation-date the 25 and 24 years the Puranas give to Bindusara and Chandragupta respectively⁶ we get the period between 321 and 318 B.C. as the date when Chandragupta ascended the throne. If we start from the accession we get 325-322 B. C. for Chandragupta's coronation. The reign-lengths found in the Ceylonese chronicles—28 years for Bindusara⁷ and 24 for Chandra-

¹ *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol II. *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 101. E.J. Rapson, *Ancient India* (Cambridge, 1916), p. 86.

² In his article in *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 88.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ V. 22.

⁵ *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 72.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 704.

⁷ *Mahāvamsa*.

gupta¹—will yield 324-321 B.C. for the coronation and 328-325 B.C. for the accession. In all cases, who could Chandragupta Maurya have been except Sandrocottus?

That Asoka's kings were really the Greek ones we have named is proved also by the phrase just preceding the mention of them in Rock Edict XIII: "even as far as 600 yojanas". The Yona or Yavana rajas are said to be located within 600 yojanas from Asoka's borders. Now, a yojana meant in ancient India, as we can judge from Kautilya's *Arthashastra*,² approximately 4½ miles. Working from this we arrive at 2700 miles or thereabouts as the farthest limit of the kingdoms of the Yavana rajas—the very distance roughly between India's western borders and Epirus, the farthest of the Greek dominions concerned.

There is, in addition, the orderly manner of introducing the five kings, keeping evidently in view the contiguity of the five territories. If we look at the territories of the suggested Greek kings, we realise that Asoka in arranging them as he did showed a correct idea about their relative geographical positions.³ If these kings were Asoka's contemporaries, Antiochus II Theos of Syria and of Western Asia was his nearest Greek "frontager". The nearest southern Greek "frontager" of Antiochus was Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt. The nearest western Greek "frontager" of Antiochus was Antigonus Gonatus of Macedonia. The nearest western Greek "frontager" of Ptolemy was Magas of Cyrene in North Africa. The nearest western Greek "frontager" of Antigonus Gonatus was Alexander of Epirus. Such systematic geography implicit in Asoka's succession of names conveys to us a keen sense of his contemporaneity with those Greek kings.

If it be asked how, since the realm of Antiochus II Theos is known never to have extended east of Herat, he could have been a genuine "frontager" of Asoka's, we can answer in B.M. Barua's words about the travels of Hiuen-Tsang in India: "The Chinese pilgrim saw one stupa known to have been built by Asoka on Mt. Pi-lo-sa (Pīlusāra) near the capital of the country of Kapiśa, and two stupas near the city of Nagarāhāra. The country of Kapiśa abutted on the north on the Snowy Mountains and on the remaining three sides it bordered on the Black Ridge (Kalakūta?) which is identified with the Hindu Kush. It lay at a distance of about 120 miles west from Lan-po (Lampāka, modern Langhan, a small country lying along the northern back of the Kābul river). Kapiśa was included in the Persian empire...during the reign

¹ *Manjusri-Mulākalpa*, V. 441.

² Dr J. F. Fleet's Note on p. 541 of R. Shama Sastry's translation

³ B M Barua, *Asoka and His Inscriptions*.

of the first Achaemenian king Cyrus. The site of the town Nagarahāra, the old capital of the Jalālābād district, may be placed 'in the angle formed by the junction of the Sukhar and Kābul rivers, on their right banks.'¹ All this region is just that which is between Herat and the usual western terminus of India, the region we should expect Asoka to rule over if he were the grandson of Sandrocottus to whom, according to the Greek historians, it was ceded in about 305 B.C. by Seleucus Nicator, one of the generals and successors of Alexander the Great. To create the extreme probability that Hiuen-Tsang was not mistaken we have the inscription of Asoka in Aramaic characters which has been discovered near Jalalabad in Eastern Afghanistan, more than half way to Kabul.² That Asoka's rule did not stop with the usual western terminus of India is proved by it.

The Greek historians ascribe to Sandrocottus not only Parapanisadae, Aria and Arachosia (the capitals of which were respectively the cities now known as Kabul, Herat and Kandahar): they also included Gedrosia (Baluchistan) in his empire. Now, Hiuen-Tsang noticed ten stupas attributed to Asoka in the country of *Saukūta* (*Taukūta*, modern Sewistan) with Ho-si-na and Ho-sa-la as its two chief towns. Barua remarks: "If Pitasila and Avanda were places beyond the Sulaiman and Kirthar ranges and somewhere in Baluchistan, their inclusion in Asoka's empire is completely in accord with the testimony of the Classical writers vouching for the inclusion of Gedrosia..."³

The contemporaneity of Asoka with Antiochus II Theos and the other Greek kings beyond Antiochus is made still more certain if we remember the information given us by the Classical writers Strabo, Pliny and Athenaeus. Seleucus Nicator sent Megasthenes as ambassador to Sandrocottus. Antiochus I Soter, the son of Seleucus, sent an ambassador named Deimachus to the son of Sandrocottus. From this it seems natural that, if Asoka were the grandson of Sandrocottus, Antiochus II would be his contemporary. Again, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, the neighbour of this Antiochus, despatched an ambassador named Dionysius to the Indian court, the third to come in all, just as Asoka was the third in the Mauryan line. Everything fits in perfectly with the recognition claimed of Greek names in the Indian ones inscribed by Asoka and leads us at once to recognise Sandrocottus as Chandragupta Maurya.

Finally, we have a significant distinction made by Asoka between two classes of Yonas or Yavanas. In Rock Edict V he speaks of the Yonas, Kambojas and Gandharas as being within his kingdom, and in Rock

¹ *Asoka*, p. 105.

² *The Age of Imperial Unity*. p 77

³ *Asoka*, p. 105.

Edict XIII he speaks of the first two tribes in the same way. Whether they were completely subject to him, as Bhandarkar holds, or semi-independent, as Raychaudhuri, Jayaswal and Barua conclude, nobody doubts that they were part of his empire. And these Yonas have to be considered a Greek colony founded between the rivers Kopphen (Kubha or Kabul) and Indus before the advent of Alexander the Great's Macedonian army. For, if they did not precede the Macedonians, they would not have been called Yonas or Ionians. They must have come at some time between the Macedonian invasion of India and the first Persian contact with the Ionians which resulted in all Greeks being termed Yaunas. It was they whom Alexander's army met on its march beyond Persia towards India at the city named Nysa. Jayaswal, referring to Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander* (Book V, Ch. 1), writes about them: "They were probably Perso-Greeks—Greeks or Ionians who had moved and immigrated under the suzerainty of the Persian Empire. The name of their city, Nysa, is a strong evidence of their Persian connection. They had been Hinduised; Alexander's companions first regarded them as Indians. As stated by the Macedonian writers, the Nyseans claimed to have been Greek in origin. They knew their Greek gods and Greek mythology and traditions."¹ In a footnote Jayaswal, referring to Arrian's *Indika* (I), adds: "Arrian without any doubt treats them as Greeks or Indo-Greeks." In support of the view that the Yonas of Asoka's empire were a pre-Alexandrine Greek colony Bhandarkar, besides citing other considerations, points with finality to the coins resembling those of the earliest type of Athens which are known to have been collected from the north-western frontiers of India.² Now, these Greeks are distinguished by Asoka from the Yona rajas who are said to be quite independent and outside his empire and forming a group of "frontier sovereigns". In the light of this sharp contrast the latter cannot but be identified with the Greek kings Antiochus II, Ptolemy II, Antigonus, Magas and Alexander II.

In addition, we have a non-Greek synchronism to confirm the Greek. The Ceylonese chronicles *Mahāvamsa* and *Dīpavamsa* give us the history of Ceylon from the time of its colonisation by people from Bengal under the lead of Vijaya. The *Mahāvamsa* places in year I of Buddha's death the occasion when "the ministers in full assembly" consecrated Vijaya king. Then it goes on to give the length of each succeeding reign. The sixth king Devanampiya Tissa is said to have reigned from the 236th to the 276th year after Buddha and to have been the contemporary of Devanampiya Asoka who came to the throne 218 years after Buddha and reigned for 37 years and introduced Buddhism into

¹ *Hindu Polity*, p. 148.

² *Carmichael Lectures*, 1921, p. 26. Cf. *Numismatic Chronicles*, XX, 191.

Ceylon. That the two kings were really contemporaries and had political and cultural relation is established beyond doubt by the most ancient Brahmi inscription of Ceylon so far found, carrying us back to the time of Uttiya, the brother and immediate successor of Tissa. Now, according to the Ceylonese tradition, Buddha passed away in about 544 B.C. So Tissa's reign-period falls in 308-268 B.C. and Asoka's in 326-289 B.C. Compared to the accession-date reached by way of the Greek synchronism this is off the mark by over five decades, but it may be judged pretty accurate in view of the somewhat uncertain methods of history-writing in the East. That it should come so near may be taken as extremely suggestive and well-nigh confirmatory. Further, some historians have remarked that the earliest Ceylonese chronicle, the *Dīpavamsa*, merely states that "Piyadassi" (Priyadarsin) was crowned 218 years after Buddha's death. But the term Priyadarsin was not confined to Asoka and at least his grandfather bore the same honorific.¹ So, possibly the 218 years refer to Chandragupta's coronation.² In that case 326 B.C. would apply to Chandragupta and the approximation to the usually accepted chronology would be surprisingly close.

According to Wilhelm Geiger, the date 483 B.C. was the one current in Ceylon for Buddha's death up to the close of the fourth century A.D., after which a revision was made and the present reckoning from 544 B.C. adopted.³ This would bring Asoka's accession to 265 B.C., almost in a line with the conclusion from the Greek synchronism. And it is also practically in accord with what is most accepted today, the finding of Takakusu from the Chinese tradition of the "dotted record" of Canton in which, it is said, a dot was put each year after Buddha's death and the practice was continued up to the year 489 A.D. when the number of dots ran to 975, thus yielding 486 B.C. as the date of his demise.

Confirmation of the Greek synchronism may also be read broadly in the Junagarh inscription of Mahakshatrapa Rudradaman I of the Kardamaka family—the only inscription to mention Chandragupta Maurya no less than Asoka.⁴ The immediate subject of it is the dam of the Sudarsana lake not far from the city of Giri-nagar (modern Junagarh), the old capital of Saurashtra. This dam was broken by a severe cyclone and Rudradaman got it repaired, but in recording the fact of repair he recalls that it was constructed by the viceroy of Chandragupta Maurya in Saurashtra and that irrigation-canals

¹ Bhandarkar, *Asoka* p. 5.

² Raychaudhuri, *Indian Culture* (Calcutta), II 560.

³ *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 237.

⁴ *Epigraphia Indica*, VIII, 43 and 46-7.

were excavated by a governor of the province on behalf of his master Asoka. This implies that Rudradaman came after the Maurya emperors, though not necessarily close on their heels. And if we could know his date we should know at least the time after which the Mauryas could not have existed. But this is not all. Rudradaman also says that he twice defeated Satakarni, lord of Dakshinapatha. Now several kings of the Andhra Satavahana dynasty—between which and the Mauryas two other dynasties, the Sunga and the Kanva, intervened—have “Satakarni” as their name. So some sort of general distance from Rudradaman to the Mauryas mentioned by him may be gauged. But the date is 72 years in what seems at first Rudradaman’s own reign, which would be no help at all. Fortunately we have other inscriptions of the Kardamakas as well as a good collection of their coins and the ever bigger number—up to 127 in the inscriptions and 226 on the coins¹—which meets us as the family continues convinces us that the years are of some era. There are several eras in India, one of which is that of 78 A.D. This is popularly attributed to a King Salivahana, but, as Sir R.G.Bhandarkar tells us, up to nearly the thirteenth century A.D. it was known by the name of “the era of the Saka King of Kings” and “the era of the coronation of the Saka King.”² Since the Kardamakas were a Saka family—that is, one hailing originally from the Scythians of East Iran³—the generally accepted view is that its dates are to be referred to the Saka Era of 78 A.D. Thus the Satakarni defeated by Rudradaman must have lived some time before $78 + 72 = 150$ A.D.

There are two clues as to who this Satakarni was. Both are double-featured. In the first we have, on the one hand, Rudradaman saying that although he twice defeated Satakarni he spared his life because he was a relative, and, on the other, the Kanheri Inscription which refers to a Kardamaka princess as the daughter of Mahakshatrapa Ru(dra) who must be Rudradaman and as the wife of Vasishthiputra Satakarni, apparently a co-uterine brother of Vasishthiputra Pulumavi (*alias* Pulumayi or Pulumai or Puluman) who is known as the son and successor of the king Gautamiputra Satakarni.⁴ Thus a connection between Rudradaman and Gautamiputra is established and the latter proved to be the Satakarni mentioned. In the second clue there is, on the one hand, the Jogalthembi hoard showing that Gautamiputra restruck the coins of a Mahakshatrapa named Nahapana Kshaharata and of no other later

¹ *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 187, 189.

² *A Peep into the Early History of India*, p. 25.

³ The very name Kardamaka has been derived by some from the Kardama river in Bactria (Raychaudhuri, *The Political History of Ancient India*, Fourth Edition, p. 363, footnote 3).

⁴ *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 183.

IS OUR CHRONOLOGY FOR ANCIENT INDIA CORRECT?

ruler of Nahapana's dynasty which he claims in his own inscriptions to have uprooted: he and Nahapana were therefore contemporaries.¹ On the other hand, Nahapana himself has a number of inscriptions bearing dates which are of an unspecified era but which significantly range between the years 41 and 46—numerals as of a period before that of Rudradaman who is known not only by the Jungarh Inscription of Saka 72 but also by the inscriptions found at Andhau in Kachchha (modern Cutch), mentioning him and his grandfather Chashtana and dated 52 (130 A.D.)² Thus Gautamiputra seems to have destroyed Nahapana in Saka 46 or somewhat later, and this as well as the number of regnal years on his own coins leads us to give him the reign-period of Saka 28-52 or 106-130 A.D. and to affirm him as Rudradaman's Satakarni, the foe vanquished but spared most probably a little before 130 A.D. which is Gautamiputra's last year. As Gautamiputra is one of the six or eight kings at the tail-end of the thirty or thirty-two Andhras, to place Chandragupta Maurya about 450 years before him appears highly reasonable to modern historians.

The reasonableness is reinforced by the Hathigumpha inscription of the conqueror Kharavela of the Chedi Dynasty of Kalinga;³ for, a passage in it refers to a canal that was excavated by a Nanda king "three centuries earlier" (as the majority reading of a slightly ambiguous expression goes). We know of the Nandas who were the direct predecessors of the Mauryas. Hence, if Kharavela could be dated, we would be certain where to place Chandragupta. Unfortunately we get in this inscription merely the several regnal years in which Kharavela did various things. A phrase sometimes read as "year 165 of the Maurya Era" is read quite differently by other authorities⁴ and cannot be of service. But there is evidence of his contemporaneity with some Satakarni whom he flouted in his 2nd regnal year. So the Andhras are shown to be on the throne already three hundred years after the Nandas and, considering the large number of them, we may assume that the earlier ones came during Kharavela's time (say, the latter half of the first century B.C.) and the later ones during Rudradaman's, about 450 years after Chandragupta Maurya.

To the Junagarh Inscription, seen in a context of other epigraphic or numismatic matter, may be added two documents from Europe. One is the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*⁵ written between 70 and 80 A.D. by an Egyptian Greek who was a merchant in active trade and personally made a voyage to India. Among the various bits of information about the names of the harbours and

¹ *The Age of Imperial Unity* p. 180, footnote 1.

² *Ibid*, p. 183.

³ *Epigraphia Indica*, XX, 72 ff.

⁴ *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 215, footnote.

⁵ Edited by Schoff, with notes and identification of places named in the text. "Erythraean Sea"=Indian Ocean.

whatever else touched on commerce, we find a reference to the different market-towns of the country called Dachinavades and a mention of Calliena "which in the time of the elder Saraganus became a lawful market-town; but since it came into the possession of Sandares the port is much obstructed, and Greek ships landing there may chance to be taken to Barygaza under guard." Dachinavades has been identified with Dakshinapatha, Calliena with Kalyana near Thana, Barygaza with Broach, Saraganus with some Satakarni and Sandares with Sundara Satakarni who is placed in the Puranic list a few generations earlier than Gautamiputra Satakarni. So again we have the Andhra Dynasty at precisely the period where it should be if it followed, after the Sunga and the Kanva, the dynasty of the Mauryas established in the time of Alexander.

The second document is the book of Ptolemy, the geographer from Alexandria. His famous *Geography*, written in about 140 A.D. on the basis mainly of information collected by Marinus of Tyre a few years earlier, speaks of Baithana as the capital of Siroptolemaios and Ozéné as that of Tiastenes. Baithana appears to be Pratishtana and Siroptolemaios to be Sri Pulumavi, the son of Gautamiputra Satakarni, especially since in inscriptions we have "Siri" for "Sri" before "Pulumavi" as well as before some other kings' names, while Ozéné is likely to be Ujjayini and Tiastenes to be Chashtana the grandfather of Rudradaman, who, according to inscriptions at Andhau, was Mahakshtrapa in Saka year 52 or 130 A.D. As Gautamiputra Satakarni is said to have died in about 130 A.D, his son would really be the contemporary of Chashtana for at least a few years before the latter's demise. And the towns associated with Siroptolemaios and Tiastenes by the Greek geographer are in fact historically associated with Gautamiputra's son and Rudradaman's grandfather. Hence, again, the date assigned to Chandragupta Maurya must be right.

In view of Pulumavi's coming several generations after Sundara Satakarni according to the Puranic list, it seems most natural that a book of 70 or 80 A.D. should mention Sundara and one of 140 A.D. refer to Pulumavi. The identification made from Ptolemy's indications and from the hints of the *Periplus* fit in with each other and are thus doubly strengthened.

Thus it is a many-aspected and variously supported structure that Sir William's hypothesis has become today. One might hardly be blamed if, in consideration of its development, one joined with the mass of Orientalists in identifying Chandragupta Maurya with Sandrocottus. But before it is accepted as perfectly sound we must see what can be said against it as preparatory to taking one's stand upon the Puranas.

(To be continued)

K. D. SETHNA

Students' Section

PURUSHA AND PRAKRITI

(From Sri Aurobindo's Unpublished Letters)

What experience? The separation from mind, physical and vital? That is the separate Purusha consciousness. The Purusha separated from the instruments can control them—when there is an identification, he cannot.

*

*

It observes their movements and gives or withdraws its consent according to their nature. Or else it quiets them all down so as to receive only from above.

*

*

There is the witness element in the consciousness that can distinguish [rightly]—otherwise it is only possible if the psychic becomes active.

*

*

The Purusha is one thing and the ordinary mental will and force are another. The latter may be unsuccessful in their action. When you are in the Purusha consciousness, that itself implies a state of concentration and receptivity.

*

*

At present it is the Purusha in the mind that you feel—when you become aware of the Purusha on the spiritual plane then there is more chance of its getting into direct touch with the Divine.

*

*

MOTHER INDIA

You were using a mental control. When the silence came the mind stopped its action, so the mental control ceased. It has to be replaced by a spiritual control, the silent Purusha will.

*

*

It is only by developing the habit of will or command in the Purusha consciousness that that can be done. Left to himself the Purusha is either involved in Prakriti, controlled by her or separate and a witness.

*

*

As you have indulged the Prakriti for the last ten thousand lives or so, it has been accustomed to impose its own way on the Purusha. To be separate is only the first step. Also I fancy the Purusha in you is still very mental in its will.

*

*

That is the old Vedantic idea—to be free and detached within and leave the Prakriti to itself. When you die, the Purusha will go to glory and the Prakriti drop off—perhaps into hell. This theory is a source of any amount of self-deception and wilful self-indulgence.

*

*

There is no question of throwing away the lower nature, but of observing it, knowing it, and transforming it.

NAGIN DOSHI

LYRICS FOR THE LITTLE ONES

THE NAME

Repeat, my soul! repeat all time
The Mother's sweet and magic Name;
It is a power, it is a poise;
The wildest natures it can tame.

It is a vibrant wonder-house
Of diamond-gloried consciousness
That knows no limit Time-imposed
And drowns in splendour all distress.

It is an intimate urgent call
To Grace of God, miraculous,
That hurries down to raise thee up
From earth's abysses dangerous.

Let it resound thy silent depths,
And wake the sleeping God within;
For 'tis His touch that can transform
Our death into a life divine.

MOTHER INDIA

OUR GREATEST TREASURE

Without Thee, Mother! what are we?
Mere lumps of human clay,
A living death, obscurity
Of night without a day.

Our life is born but from Thy breath,
Thy sun-smile is our light;
Thy beauty weaves for us the wreath
Of perfect pure delight.

Thou art our fortune's golden star,
Our hope's unfailing prop,
Our aspiration's aerial car,
The diamond mountain-top.

Our love has found its home in Thee;
Thou art the heart of God:
Ambrosial gifts unceasingly
Are by Thy grace bestowed.

For ever in Thee, Oh! let us live
And work for Thee with pleasure!
Our self, our all, Oh! let us give!
Thy grace our greatest treasure!

FOR EVER YOURS

YOURS, for ever Yours, my Lord!
For all eternity;
A breath of Yours, a thought of Yours,
Your power, Your purity.

I offer all my self to You;
Be You my all in all;
My father, mother, brother, friend,
Possession big and small.

Be You my highest happiness,
My joy beyond all measure,
My plumbless depths, my boundless breadths,
My altitudes of azute.

Make of my heart Your home for ever,
Bright with Your sun-smile warm;
And let Your Presence near and dear
Grace this my creature-form.

PUNJALAL

THE FOUR AGES OF INDIA'S CULTURAL CYCLE

THE PHILOLOGICAL METHODS OF THE VEDA AND OF MODERN SCHOLARSHIP

“LAW and process must have governed the origins and developments of language. Given the necessary clue and sufficient data, they must be discoverable. It seems to me that in the Sanskrit language the clue can be found, the data lie ready for investigation”. (*On the Veda*, p. 59)

Sri Aurobindo has written two articles on the subject of philology. One is given the title “The Philological Method of the Veda” and forms part of the serial “The Secret of the Veda”; the other article is “The Origins of Aryan Speech”. In the first he has given the condition of the Sanskrit language and its course of development in Vedic times; in the second he has dealt with the law and process that governed the origins of sound and speech of the Vedic Sanskrit and its development into the classical Sanskrit, and in both he has dealt with the hollowness of the presentday methods of philology. This tracing of the origins and development of the Aryan speech he did because he could easily find the clue and the data which lay ready in it.

Now, many questions arise from the above quotation and the research work done by Sri Aurobindo in this field, and they all have a very important bearing on the problems of life that still face man; also on the historical facts of his past life. What are the clues and the data in the Sanskrit language, what are the laws and processes that governed the origins of the Vedic and the still earlier Sanskrit and its development into the classical Sanskrit, what is the bearing of all this research and its result upon the origins of human speech itself and upon the origins and development of other languages, and finally what light do they throw on the present problems and the past history of man's life on earth? These are the questions—and Sri Aurobindo's writings give us immediate answers to some of them, but more than that they give us correct guidance for a further pursuit of research to know in full the answers to all these questions.

Every living or dead language constitutes two things; one is its alphabet, which is an instrument of vocal sound and the other is the “psychology of the word,” that is to say, the relation which the idea expressed by the word bears to the sound of the word. A dialect has no alphabet but it has its ‘psychology of the word’. There may be a third thing too which constitutes the language

and that is the script in which the alphabet is written. It may be that all dialects are ancient and most of them are dead, and the few that are still living will either absorb themselves in languages or perish. Of the ancient languages, there are some which are dead like Greek and Latin, some which are living like Tamil and a few Asiatic languages, and some others which are half-living and half-dead like Sanskrit. All these languages have their alphabets and their "psychology of the word". Of the modern extant languages it is not known correctly whether each of them had from the very beginning its own alphabet and its word or whether and at what stages it borrowed both the alphabet and the word from ancient languages; this is so because the science of languages has not yet developed scientifically.

Sri Aurobindo says, "In the history of philological research, we have made as yet too crude and slender a foundation to rear upon it the superstructure of scientific laws and scientific classifications. We cannot yet arrive at a sound and certain classification of human tongues still extant in speech, record or literature. We must recognise that our divisions are popular, not scientific, based upon superficial identities, not upon the one sound foundation for a science, the study of various species in their development from the embryo to the finished form or, failing the necessary material, a reverse study tracing back the finished forms to the embryonic and digging down into the hidden original foetus of language. The reproach of the real scientist against the petty conjectural pseudo-science of philology is just; it must be removed by the adoption of a sounder method and greater self-restraint, the renunciation of brilliant superficialities and a more scrupulous, sceptical and patient system of research". (*Ibid.*, p. 649-50.)

If anybody should say that a Science of Language is undiscoverable Sri Aurobindo's reply is, "In India, at least, with its great psychological systems mounting to the remotest prehistoric antiquity, we cannot easily believe that regular and systematic processes of Nature are not at the basis of all phenomena of sound and speech". (*Ibid.*, p. 638.)

Now let us find out "the regular and systematic processes which are at the basis of sound and speech" in the formation and the development of the Sanskrit language, as they are described by Sri Aurobindo in his writings. Firstly, of sound, —we know that it can be either voice or noise; the sound that is produced by a living organ is generally known as voice, and by a non-living instrument, as noise. But the Aryan who found his alphabet made a still subtler distinction among sounds produced even by the human organ and said that what was produced by the vocal chords alone,—that is, the larynx—was voice and what was produced by the other parts of the human body, like the mouth, without the help of the vocal chords was only noise. The voice sounds were called

Swaras which means illumination and the noise sounds were called Vyanjans, which means manifestation. Vyanjan coming into contact with Swara manifests the truth of its illumination. He then found that the basic voice sounds are five,—a, i, u, ṛ, and l, of these the last was rarely used and the last but one was used only to some extent. So we can say there were only four. By an elongation of these four, four other vowels were formed,—ā, ī, ū, ṛ; then by a modification of the first two four others were formed,—e, ai, o, au. Having determined the voice sounds, he next went to see how the mouth organ could produce voice sounds. He knew that the sounds produced by the mouth without the help of the larynx are only noise sounds, but when these noise sounds contact the voice sound of the larynx, these too become voice sounds. So he began to proceed first to know the noise sounds produced by that part of the mouth organ nearest to the larynx, and this we all know is the throat; the sounds produced by it are,—k, kh, g, gh, and n. The part of the mouth next to it is the palate; its sounds are,—c, ch, j, jh, and n. The alphabets that followed these two groups in succession are the cerebrals, the dentals and the labials, each of them being five in number. But Sri Aurobindo says, “With the possible exception of the cerebral class and the variable nasal it can hardly be doubted, I think, that the Sanskrit alphabet represents the original vocal instrument of Aryan speech”. (P. 661) If this be so, the next sounds which are cerebrals may not have been included in the alphabet of the earlier Aryans. Perhaps it may be that the earlier Aryan speech was called Girvana Bhasha and when Samskara (refinement) was given to it by later Samskartas, it became Sanskrit. In the Girvana Bhasha itself there may not have been the cerebral and the variable nasal sounds. The word “cerebral” is connected with cerebrum and this does not form part of the mouth organ and so perhaps the original Aryans might not have considered to put the cerebrals,—ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, and ṇ, in their alphabet. The part of the mouth next to the palate is the teeth and the sounds by them are,—t, th, d, dh and n; these are called dentals. The last part of the mouth organ is the lips and the noise produced by them are,—p, ph, b, bh and m. Of all these five groups of noises by the different parts of the mouth organ, the first is a hard sound, the second is its aspirate, the third is a soft sound, the fourth is its aspirate and finally the fifth is its nasal. Then the four sounds which are mid-way between the noises and the voices are,—y, r, l, and v. Finally there are the four hissing sounds,—ś, ṣ, s and h; these eight sounds also have been included in the alphabet. Thus the way by which the alphabet was formed by the ancient Aryans is a most regular and systematic process of Nature, behind which there must be a psychological bearing of a certain harmonious connection between the different parts of the human organ that produced these seed-sounds and the essential sense that these seed-sounds

bear in them. The voice sounds are also called Aksharas, the indestructibles; the noise sounds are then called Ksharas, the destructibles. The former by themselves possess meanings and the latter do not; but when the latter combines with any of the former each such sound forms what we call a syllable in English and while it is given the dignity of an Akshara it also gets a meaning. These syllables are the primary root-sounds of the Aryan speech. From each of these primary root-sounds a secondary root-sound was formed by adding to each of them a consonant. If the primary root-sounds of each consonant forming a group may be called a word-family, then there are as many word-families as there are consonants. Similarly, the secondary root-sounds of each consonant form a group which may be called a word-clan. Then to each of the secondary root-sounds, by a further addition of either a semi-vowel or a consonant, a tertiary root-sounds, was formed and these became the word-tribes. There are a few other variations in the formation of these root sounds, the details of which are not given here. But this forms the broad general basis for the providing of stock of embryonic words for the formation of words of speech for the Aryan. Thus when the primary, the secondary and the tertiary root-sounds, which we have for the sake of convenience called word-families, word-clans and word-tribes, were formed, these along with the vowel seed-sounds formed the whole stock of root-sounds or mother-roots or embryonic words, as variously called by Sri Aurobindo in his writings, and it is out of these that all the allied languages of the Aryan speech have grown and developed by a natural process. In the early beginnings of speech, whether of language or of dialect, it is natural that no distinction was made between the different parts of speech of any particular word. From any of the above stock the same basic word formed to the primitive man at once a noun, a verb, an adjective and an adverb, but he always connected its sound with the meaning of the mother-root; these sounds were not given meanings arbitrarily; there was always a certain relationship between the sound of the word and the meaning of the word. But then how was the meaning of the word determined for the particular sound of the word? It was either the vital sensation or the emotional feeling of the primitive man which the sound of the embryonic word produced in him and not any arbitrary mental idea that determined the meaning of the embryonic word. But the same sound which produces a certain sensation in the vital and physical consciousness of the primitive man may produce a different sensation in the mental or spiritual consciousness of the Aryan Rishi or in the consciousness of other men whose inner being is differently constituted. Thus the same embryonic word acquired both in the beginning and in course of time several meanings. Similarly the same ideas were possessed by different embryonic words. Still the meaning or the idea of the word bore always to the

primitive man and the Rishi or as a matter of fact to any other mystic of any other ancient human society in those early days, a certain relationship to the sound of the embryonic word. With regard to the regular and systematic process by which the root-sounds acquired their meanings on a psychological basis, Sri Aurobindo says:

“We can find an equal regularity, an equal reign of fixed process on the psychological side, in the determining of the relation of particular sense to particular sound. No arbitrary or intellectual choice but a natural selection has determined the growth and arrangement of the sounds, simple or structural, in their groups and families. Is it an arbitrary or intellectual choice or a law of natural selection that has determined their significances? If the latter be true and it must be so, if a Science of language be possible, then having this peculiar arrangement of significant sounds, certain truths follow inevitably. First: the seed sound *v*, for example, must have in it something inherent which connected it in man’s mind originally in the first natural state of speech, with the actual senses borne by the primitive roots *va, vā, vi, vī, vu, vū, vr, vṛ*, in the primitive language. Secondly, whatever variations there are in sense between these roots must be determined originally by some inherent tendency of significance in the variable or vowel element, *a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, r, ṛ*. Thirdly, the secondary roots depending in *va, vac, vaj, vanj, vam, val, vap, vah, vaś vas*, etc. must have a common element in their significances and, so far as they varied originally, must have varied as a result of the element of difference, the consonantal termination *c, j, m, l, p, h, ś, s*, respectively. Finally in the structural state of language, although as a result of the growing power of conscious selection other determining factors may have entered into the selection of particular significances for the particular words, yet the original factor cannot have been entirely inoperative and such forms as *vadana, vadatra, vada* etc. must have been governed in the development of their sense dominantly by their substantial and common sound-element, to a certain extent by their variable and subordinate element. I shall attempt to show by an examination of the Sanskrit language that all these laws are actually true of Aryan speech, their truth borne out or often established beyond a shadow of doubt by the facts of the language.” (*Ibid.* p. 670, 671.)

Thus we see the clue, the origins and some of the laws and processes that governed the pre-Vedic and Vedic Aryan sound and speech, that is, its word formation and its “psychology of the word.” At present in this article we are as much concerned with the development of the Vedic Sanskrit into the later classical Sanskrit as we are with the origin and growth of Greek, Latin and Tamil which Sri Aurobindo says are equally allied to the Aryan speech. He says that these were connected with the Aryan speech at different stages of that speech; each of these languages contains certain word-families, word-clans, and

word-tribes of Aryan speech, the groups in Tamil being different and earlier than the groups in Greek and Latin. He could say this because of his knowledge of all these languages and also of Sanskrit through its various stages. Without being contented, as Max Muller was, with the similarities of formed words which, he says, are always misleading, he traced the words of these languages to their embryonic words and found similarities in the mother-roots and their meanings. Sri Aurobindo insists that this method must form the Mulamantra or the clef of the Science of Philology. About the Tamil language and its connection with Sanskrit, he says, "It is only the accident of an early and continuous Sanskrit literature that enables us to establish the original unity of the Aryan tongues. If it were not for the old Sanskrit writings, if only the ordinary Sanskrit colloquial vocables had survived who could be certain of these connections? Or who could confidently affiliate colloquial Bengali with its ordinary domestic terms to Latin any more certainly than Telugu or Tamil? How then are we to be sure that the dissonance of Tamil itself with the Aryan tongues is not due to an early separation and an extensive change of its vocabulary during its preliterary ages? I shall be able, at a later stage of this inquiry to afford some ground for supposing the Tamil numerals to be early Aryan vocables abandoned by Sanskrit but still traceable in the Veda or scattered and imbedded in the various Aryan tongues and the Tamil pronouns similarly the primitive Aryan denominatives of which traces still remain in the ancient tongues. I shall be able to show also that large families of words supposed to be pure Tamil are identical in the mass, though not in their units, with the Aryan family." (*Ibid*, p. 647.)

Then again while speaking of the Aryan tongues, he says: "even in the commonest terms, the ancient languages tended to lose their original vocabulary and diverge from each other so that in the process, if it had not been arrested by an early literature, all obvious proof of relationship might well have disappeared". (*Ibid*. p. 646)

These two quotations definitely prove that Tamil arose from the original Aryan speech and not from the later Sanskrit. Both these were from one common origin and there was an "early separation and an extensive change of its vocabulary during its pre-literary ages", and because this extensive change in Tamil was arrested by an early literature in it, the proof of relationship between Tamil and the original Aryan speech is still traceable. Thus the tracing out of the embryonic words and their study in the allied languages of Aryan speech, not only Tamil but also Greek and Latin, and a finding of the similarities in their forms and meanings, enable us to know at what stage of development the original Aryan speech had its connection with the various Aryan dialects, which broke away from it. The more we find these common root-sounds and the common structure in their growth, the more we will be able

to find the common mentality in the present Aryan nations that formed the original stock. This is a thing that can be done only by scholars of classical and Vedic Sanskrit through a wide study and a patient working at it and forms one branch of the Science of Philology; the other branch is that of finding out the history of Aryan speech—origins itself. This branch is again divided into two parts, “the embryonic into which research must be immediate as of the first importance, the structural which is less important and therefore may be kept for subsequent and subsidiary enquiry. In the first we note the roots of speech and inquire how *vrc* came to mean to tear, *dal* to split or crush, whether arbitrarily or by the operation of some law of nature; in the second we note the modifications and additions by which those roots grow into developed words, word-groups, word-families and word-clans and why those modifications and additions had the effect on sense and use which we find them to have exercised, why the termination *anu* turns *dal* into an adjective or a noun and what is the source and sense of the various terminations *ābra*, *bhi*, *bha*, *delphoi*, *dalbhāh*, *ān* (Greek *oñ*) and *ana*.” (*Ibid.* p. 655-6.)

There are in the Rig Veda many words, as Yaska has said, more than four hundred, for which there are no meanings in Classical Sanskrit. While translating the Rig Veda into English Sri Aurobindo gave them meanings by the above method, correlated the meanings to the forms of these root-sounds in the allied Aryan languages and found that the sense of whole clauses, sentences and verses was thereby cogent, whereas with some arbitrary meanings given to them by Sayana and others who followed him, the sense of the verses becomes incongruous, as we find in their translations.

One more passage from Sri Aurobindo’s writings, which in terms of modern Science gives the connection at once between Matter, Ether, Sound, Word, Speech, Meaning, other Planes of Existence, the Mantra and the Rishi, is quoted here from his commentary on the Kena Upanishad (pp. 36-38).

“We know that vibration of sound has the power to create—and to destroy—forms; this is a commonplace of modern Science. Let us suppose that behind all forms there has been a creative vibration of sound.

“Next, let us examine the relation of human speech to sound in general. We see at once that speech is only a particular application of the principle of sound, a vibration made by pressure of the breath in its passage through the throat and mouth. At first, beyond doubt, it must have been formed naturally and spontaneously to express the emotions created by an object or occurrence and only afterwards seized upon by the mind to express first the idea of the object and then ideas about the object. The value of speech would therefore seem to be only representative and not creative.

“But, in fact, speech is creative. It creates forms of emotion, mental

images and impulses of action. The ancient Vedic theory and practice extended this creative action of speech by the use of the Mantra. The theory of the Mantra is that it is a word of power born out of the secret depths of our being where it has been brooded upon by a deeper consciousness than the mental, framed in the heart and not constructed by the intellect, held in the mind, again concentrated on by the waking mental consciousness and then thrown out silently or vocally—the silent word is perhaps held to be more potent than the spoken—precisely for the work of creation....”

“The Vedic use of the Mantra is only a conscious utilisation of this secret power of the word. And if we take the theory that underlies it together with our previous hypothesis of a creative vibration of sound behind every formation, we shall begin to understand the idea of the original creative Word. Let us suppose a conscious use of the vibrations of sound which will produce corresponding forms or changes of form. But Matter is only, in the ancient view, the lowest of the planes of existence. Let us realise then that a vibration of sound on the material plane presupposes a corresponding vibration on the vital without which it could not have come into play; that, again, presupposes a corresponding originative vibration on the mental; the mental presupposes a corresponding originative vibration on the supramental at the very root of things. But a mental vibration implies thought and perception and a supramental vibration implies a supreme vision and discernment. All vibration of sound on that higher plane is, then, instinct with and expressive of this supreme discernment of a truth in things and is at the same time creative, instinct with a supreme power which casts into forms the truth discerned and eventually, descending from plane to plane, reproduces it in the physical form or object created in Matter by etheric sound. Thus we see that the theory of creation by the Word which is the absolute expression of the Truth, and the theory of the material creation by sound-vibration in the ether correspond and are two logical poles of the same idea. They both belong to the same ancient Vedic system.

“This, then, is the supreme Word, Speech of our speech. It is vibration of pure Existence, instinct with the perceptive and originative power of infinite and omnipotent consciousness, shaped by the Mind behind mind into the inevitable word of the Truth of things, out of whatever substance on whatever plane, the form or physical expression emerges by its creative agency. The Supermind using the Word is the creative Logos.”

Now the author's conclusions from the above passage are that the original creative Word, the Logos of Supermind, by its own vibrations of Truth perception and discernment produced corresponding vibrations of Truth perception and discernment of a unitary consciousness but still of a lesser degree

on the planes of Overmind and Intuitive mind; those in their turn produced corresponding thought-vibrations and various types of thought-forms on the mental plane; these again produced corresponding vibrations of Sensations and Emotions and then Sensation-forms and Emotion-forms on the vital; these in their turn produced corresponding seed-sounds and root-sounds of the etheric substance which culminated in the creation of material forms. But then the question is: Why are there so many types of speeches and various languages in the same species of speech?¹ The answer is that the one unitarian and integral consciousness of Supermind, for the purposes of play and variation, in its first descent into overmind and intuitive mind formed itself into several types of formative and synthetic consciousness which are represented by the various Rishis and spiritual Mystics; these in their descent into the Mind and further down carried the types still further, with the result that the types continue even in the physical. But the difference is not in essence but only in quality and adds to the richness of variety. It is the Science of Philology now that should pursue its investigation on the lines of Sri Aurobindo's ideas and find the law and process that governed the original human speech; also those of the different species of speeches like the Aryan, the Semitic, etc., and of the different languages in each of these species of speech.

In the beginning of the Aryan speech, when Nature was engaged to teach the Aryan man the first lessons of the art of speech, and he had not yet learned to form ideas or to understand the idea behind a word, an object of sense could arouse in him a sound corresponding to the sensation and emotion that were produced in him by the object. While the condition of the ordinary mass of men was this, there was in their midst the extraordinary man, the Rishi, whose process of arrival on earth could not be accounted for except by the grace of an all-loving, all-knowing and all-powerful Supreme who created the Rishi on earth out of himself to guide man in his early periods of evolution. This Rishi was able to create or rather bring down the word not from the plane of Supermind, but from the plane of Intuition or Overmind and it had all the powers of a creative word as described in the passage above. Thus while the word was to the ordinary mass of men a sound arousing sensation and emotion, to the Rishi and the Aryan sacrificer it was a creative word. With this word the Rishi began to transform the Aryan sacrificer to the type of his own self by initiating him into the mysteries of Nature and Super-Nature.

On account of the clue and the data available in Sanskrit, the new Science

¹ Any Vedic research institutes or any Universities which want to take up research in the philological method of the Veda, may, if they like, correspond with the Ashram for help.

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of Philology can be worked out by scholars in Vedic and classical Sanskrit. But when that part of this Science which deals with the psychology of the word is to be dealt with, mere scholasticism may not help. A faculty of identifying with other planes of existence also may be required.

NARAYANA C. REDDY

“CLASSICAL” AND “ROMANTIC”

*(An Expansion of Notes given to the First Year Poetry Class
at the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre)*

XI

IN rounding off our survey we may cite a passage by Havelock Ellis on three famous personalities of the stage: it indicates with a fine imagination some essential qualities of the three strands we have traced in our subject.

“The word classic suggests to some people the coolly artificial, the conventionally unreal. RISTORI was at the farthest remove from that. She was the adorable revelation of what the classic really means: the attainment of the essential in dramatic art by the road of a simplicity and a naturalness from which all superfluity and extravagance have fallen away, so that every movement is under control and every gesture significant. In classic art such as this, simplicity is one with dignity, and the last utterance of poignant intensity is brought within reach. Salvini was very different. He was not classic. He carried human passion to the utmost limits of expression on the basis of a robust physical force, and seemed to have an immense reservoir of emotion to feed his art. It was not his restraint that impressed one but the superb and never forced expansion of his energy. And finally there was Chaliapin, neither the classic perfection of art, nor the exuberant embodiment of romantic emotional energy, but with the seal on him of a serene and mysterious power that was aloof from the world.”

We may make use of Ellis’s impressionism without committing ourselves literally to its classification of the three artists concerned or to its ascription to them of the qualities defined. The Classicism of the Graeco-Roman poets and of Dante and Milton is the art Ellis attributes to Ristori. The Elizabethans—in one mode Marlowe and his fellow-dramatists, in the other Spenser and, in both, Shakespeare—practise what he sees as Salvini’s art. The peak-point of the later Romanticism, the English poetry of the time of Wordsworth, carries the art that he conceives to be Chaliapin’s. For it passes beyond the cadre not only of Classicism but also of Elizabethan poetry. And this it does not merely because it is a Romanticism of the creative Intelligence rather than of the creative Life Force—an Intelligence differently coloured than the

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Classical, far more complex and brooding as well as instinct with “things not easily expressible”. It exceeds the old cadre also because it lives really not by its moods and motives that are Romantic in the modern way or with an affinity to the Elizabethan, so much as, in Sri Aurobindo’s words, “by its greater and more characteristic element, by its half spiritual turn, by Wordsworth’s force of ethical thought and communion with Nature, by Shelley’s transcendentalism, Keats’ worship of beauty, Byron’s Titanism and force of personality, Coleridge’s supernaturalism or, as it should more properly be called, his eye for other nature, Blake’s command of the inner psychic realms.” Fundamentally neither Classical nor Romantic, it blends the Classical and Romantic moods and motives, manners and techniques, functions partly from the plane of the old Classical poets and seems to catch that of the old Romantic ones by plunging the creative Intelligence into intense imaginative emotion—and achieves its own individuality most through raising by both imaginative emotionalism and a subtilisation of Classicism’s inspired reason its modern complex curiosity of mind into a directness, serene and mysterious, of spiritual power exceeding the world we know in sensation, feeling and thought. It does not reject this world, it embraces and transforms its appearances and values—but from within and beyond it; it is a pervasion of Nature and life by a vision and experience aloof from their externalities, a revelation indeed of these externalities as the body of the Divine yet by an in-drawn or up-poised kindling with the Divine’s secret consciousness.

No doubt, the nebulous and indefinite went considerably with that kindling because of the age’s unreadiness for the strange power that seized the English Romantics. A more precise intellectual age had to intervene and even an extreme stress on the objective and material had to fall through scientific development and an exaggerated turn take place towards the crudely vitalistic—in order that a more mind-touched as well as matter-tinged foundation might be prepared for a return of the spiritual light to concretise in our being and in our literature its patterns of supernal Beauty and Truth. Yes, the mysticism of the English Romantics had many defects due either to flaws in their own temperaments or to shortcomings in the *Zeitgeist*. Again, the poetry it created did not sustain itself at such length as did that of Classicism or what the old Romanticism had produced: therefore none of its poets can be taken cumulatively as the equal of Homer or Dante, Shakespeare or even Spenser. However, its best work is genuinely of the first order—and the significance of that work is paramount by reason of the very nature, as explained by Sri Aurobindo, of poetry.

To quote Sri Aurobindo: “Poetry, even when it is dominated by intellectual tendency and motive, cannot really live and work by intellect alone;

it is not created nor wholly shaped by reason and judgment, but is an intuitive seeing and an inspired hearing. But intuition and inspiration are not only spiritual in their essence, they are the characteristic means of all spiritual vision and utterance; they are rays from a greater and intenser Light than the tempered clarity of our intellectual understanding. They may be turned fruitfully to a use which is not their last or most intrinsic purpose,—used, in poetry, to give a deeper and more luminous force and a heightened beauty to the perceptions of outward life or to the inner but still surface movements of emotion and passion or the power of thought to perceive certain individual and universal truths which enlighten or which raise to a greater meaning the sensible appearances of the inner and outer life of Nature and man. But every power in the end finds itself drawn towards its own proper home and own highest capacity, and the spiritual faculties of hearing and seeing must climb at last to the expression of things spiritual and eternal and their power and working in temporal things and must find in that interpretation their own richest account, largest and most satisfied action, purest acme of native capacity. An ideal and spiritual poetry revealing the spirit in itself and in things, the unseen in the seen or above and behind it, unveiling ranges of existence which the physical mind ignores, pointing man himself to capacities of godhead in being, truth, beauty, power, joy which are beyond the highest of his common or his yet realised values of existence, is the last potentiality of this creative, interpretative power of the human mind. When the eye of the poet has seen life externally or with a more vital inwardness, has risen to the clarities and wide-nesses of a thought which intimately perceives and understands it, when his word has caught some revealing speech and rhythm of what he has seen, much has been seized, but not the whole possible field of vision; this other and greater realm still remains open for a last transcendence.”

Now, the best work of modern Romanticism embodies for the first time in occidental literature the greater light falling with some sort of directness upon the poetic mind—or, rather, the direct utterance of that light takes place on one side of the varicoloured phenomenon that is modern Romanticism. Here Romanticism, properly speaking, ceases, but we may continue to employ that name because some tendency towards that side is present, mixed with several others, in most of the remaining parts. It is with an eye to this tendency that Baudelaire seems to have defined the Romantic as not only “colour” and “intimacy” but also “spirituality” and “aspiration towards the infinite”.

The soul acting, however elementarily on the whole, in its own right, with a directness of spiritual substance and style rather than in terms proper to the physical mind, vital mind, intellectual mind: that is the reason for considering the significance of Romantic poetry paramount. Of course, one who looks

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askance at mysticism would not agree. He would join hands with that critic of fine aesthetic taste and fascinating scholarship but limited psychological insight, whom we have often mentioned and who has little sympathy with the mystically orientated imagination of a Romantic like Coleridge and with this Romantic's metaphysical distinction between Imagination and Fancy. Apropos Coleridge's letter to Thelwall in 1797—"The universe itself, what but an immense heap of little things?...My mind feels as if it ached to behold and know something *great*, something *one* and *indivisible*. And it is only in the faith of that, that rocks or waterfalls, mountains or caverns, give me the sense of sublimity or majesty! But in this faith *all things* counterfeit infinity"—apropos these words Lucas has written: "To minds without this mystical yearning it seems as strange to want the whole universe to have one essence as to want it to have only one colour—say, bright pink. It is no doubt possible to believe that the world about us is the Book of God, in which all phenomena are but symbols of Him; the Fancy playing with those symbols as a child that cannot read, the Imagination reading them as wholes by which in moments of vision it communicates with Him. It is possible to believe it: but why should one? Because of the wish to; and if one has not the faintest wish? I believe, though it cannot be proved, that this mystic eagerness for unity is due ultimately to a loss of nerve. As man has grown more individual and intelligent, he has grown more divided and solitary. Men are not lemmings—

Alone the sun arises, and alone
Spring the great streams.

But at moments, realizing that 'nous sommes irrémédiablement seuls', the mind grows sick and giddy and runs for refuge to the mystic's trance—or the totalitarian state."

The sarcasm about "one essence" and "only one colour—say, bright pink"—is utterly jejune. The Unity for which Coleridge ached and which Imagination as distinct from Fancy was supposed to discern or achieve did not abrogate multiplicity and difference: in fact, Coleridge emphatically declared that without dissolving or submerging them the Unity reigned. And, after all, the intuition of such Unity is at the back of all our thinkings and doings. Do we not regard all men as partaking of a common essence of human nature? Do we not regard even an individual as somehow integrating a thousand different things into a single-toned essential being? Even a work of art is never appreciated unless a basic all-unifying essentiality is perceived: the more Classical a work the more evident and explicit, though not more potent or precious, this essentiality. Whether we hold atheistic and materialistic views or the philosophy of minds

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like Coleridge we always proceed as if a Unity existed and acted within diversities without annulling them. It is only extreme mystics of the One who metaphysicise about and seek for a featureless cosmos-annihilating "bright pink". Romantic mysticism gloried, on the contrary, in a million shades and even gave them the utmost prominence it could while sensing within them what Shelley termed "one harmonious soul of many a soul".

To equate mysticism with "loss of nerve" is sheer prejudice. No doubt, Coleridge happened to be a man who produced the impression of suffering from such a loss—but when he wrote that letter and the *Ancient Mariner* and the first part of *Christabel* he was full of life and had not surrendered his will to laudanum: his vitality was almost always a-dance, as Hazlitt and others have recorded. Even *Kubla Khan*, the poem that came to him during an opium dream, was penned at a time when his nerves were very far indeed from being enfeebled by drug-taking. To describe Wordsworth at the peak of his power as running, sick and giddy, for refuge to the trance of the mystic is simply to indulge in nonsense. If ever there was a man who combined a superb sensitivity with an austere and poised strength of character and an innate happiness, it was the poet who spoke of being again and again visited by "that serene and blessed mood" when

we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul,

or who composed the lines:

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears.

And as for Shelley, although he sometimes described himself as one who

can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour,

he has also indicated the true situation of a soul whose ardours were so great that nothing prized by ordinary mortals could satisfy the desires and hopes of a force in him like the "wild West Wind" and who therefore felt baulked. Has he not cried to that Wind,

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud,

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and has he not asked with intense imagination that elemental fury to bear him towards fulfilment:

Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!—

and was it a wan weakling who declared:

my spirit's bark is driven,
Far from the shore, far from the trembling thron
Whose sails were never to the tempest given.

What about Blake? Many in his own day considered him mad, but nobody thought him a sick or feeble mad man. The contemporary verdict on him in the point concerning us is well summed up by T. Earle Welby: “Few men have been so sane or made so much of a success of life on their own terms. He chose to live chiefly in the other world, but he always knew what he was about in this; his just contempt for mere reason did not prevent him from following it in worldly matters. And as he lived a busy, purposeful, happy life so he died the happiest of deaths, making the rafters of his poor room ring with the songs of joy he improvised and sang on his death-bed.” Even Keats who was once supposed to have been snuffed out by a critic's article and to have languished into extinction with hopeless love is now known to have been a plucky man quite ready to face his own shortcomings and to strive energetically to surmount them, a man with a fund of humour and great power of endurance. His early sentimental vein has nothing essentially to do with the mysticism of Beauty with which his *Endymion* is sensuously a-wash. The celebrated Odes, with their stronger fibre, have the same mystical tinge and the unfinished *Hyperion*, where the discovery of the divine Idea, Power and living norm of Beauty creating, sustaining and developing the universe is taken up more explicitly, shows him at his strongest. To confuse with loss of nerve the high-strung temperament of the poet, and the fever of idealistic aspiration, is pretty poor psychology. In *Hyperion* both that temperament and that fever are there, but we can feel strength in the very texture and movement of the verse as well as in individual lines like

Be thou therefore in the van
Of circumstance; yea, seize the arrow's barb
Before the tense string murmur,

and

To bear all naked truths
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
That is the top of sovereignty.

Are these the accents of a man who has made a desperate nerve-stricken plunge towards the mystically imaginative vision?

Lucas's conception of mysticism is another instance of his lack of psychological acumen. It reminds us of a criticism of mystics penned by Leonard Woolf, to which Sri Aurobindo gave a reply in a letter to a disciple. What concerns us from this reply is the rebuttal of Woolf's argument that mysticism and mystics have always risen in times of decadence, of the ebb of life and their loud "quacking" is a symptom of the decadence. Sri Aurobindo's comment runs: "This argument is absolutely untrue. In the East the great spiritual movements have arisen in the full flood of a people's life and culture or on a rising tide and they have themselves given a powerful impulse of expression and richness to its thought and Art and life; in Greece the mystics and the mysteries were there at the prehistoric beginning and in the middle (Pythagoras was one of the greatest of mystics) and not only in the ebb and decline; the mystic cults flourished in Rome when its culture was at high tide; many great spiritual personalities of Italy, France, Spain sprang up in a life that was rich, vivid and not in the least touched with decadence. This hasty and stupid generalisation has no truth in it and therefore no value."

We may add that even mystics who wanted everything to be "bright pink" were not marked by any loss of nerve either before or after taking to spiritual practice and *samadhi*. Buddha who preached Nirvana was a most majestic and radiant presence, enjoying and disseminating an ineffable equanimity, and his limitless calm was not inconsistent with an indefatigable energy so that he strikes us as perhaps the most dynamic spiritual personality who ever worked for Love, Truth and Righteousness and created a new epoch. Shankara, the other supreme apostle of the featureless Infinite, packed more dynamism into a short life of thirty-one years marching up and down India for intellectual battle than any atheist or materialist obsessed with a manifold teeming cosmos (or chaos). Nor did Buddha or Shankara turn mystic by a loss of nerve: a deep and compassionate realisation like Buddha's of world-woe was hardly a case for the psychoneurologist's clinic, while Shankara was almost a born monist of the Spirit. Their monism was indeed "bright pink" rather than anaemic white, and stood for energy instead of enervation. And what about Plotinus, the master of the "Alone"? The wise and peaceful figure that emerges from the

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Enneads and from the account of Porphyry is not in the least of a man becoming a mystic through loss of nerve or showing any symptoms of such a malady in his trance-swept life.

The suggestion that if the great Romantics who were mystically inclined had not turned towards mysticism they would have craved for some version of the totalitarian state as an alternative is egregious. The Romantic Movement, with or without the passion for the One omnipresent who is from everlasting, was fiery with love of liberty. If Wordsworth had not been a pantheist he would still have written:

We must be free or die who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake.

No amount of conservatism in his old age made him abjure the gospel of true liberty as distinguished from thoughtless license. Those who remained liberals to their dying day can be suspected even less of desiring to be tyrannised over and to have their individuality annulled, and sticking to liberalism only because mysticism had already smoothed out their fret and fear. One may pertinently ask how the mystical and the liberal could go together if the mystic's trance helped the same malady for which the totalitarian state would also provide a cure. By sheer affinity the politics would veer away from love of freedom.

Perhaps Lucas is prejudiced against the mysticism of the Romantics because, though he has uttered many a sensitive appraisal of Romantic poetry *qua* poetry, he is Classically-minded and finds true strength and solace in what he cleverly labels as “the romantic classicism of Greece, the romantic Realism of Iceland and of Hardy, the gaily realistic Classicism of eighteenth-century France”. But the greatest Classics, even while untinged by the mystic's vision and rapture, were yet deeply religious and felt their finest poetry, whether religious in theme or no, to be a channel through which blew the breath of the Divine. If the word of the greatest Classics is to be credited, the beliefs of the mystics cannot be delusions. Mysticism consists merely in trying to live out intimately the sense which the Classics have of the Divine and in making that the all-shaping centre of our life and in intuiting everywhere “the one Spirit's plastic stress”.

Maybe Lucas is under the apprehension that a cult of mystically Romantic poetry would spell a depreciation of Classical verse. But to consider the significance of such poetry paramount does not render Classical verse negligible nor the rest of Romantic work itself, whether old or modern, fit for neglect. For one thing, there is not enough of the new utterance and not enough of variety in whatever there is of it: so a lover of poetry would not be quite satisfied, he

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would strain his eyes towards the Classical creations as well as the Elizabethan abundance, not to mention the modern Romantic work that is not directly spiritual. Further, from the purely poetic viewpoint, the Classical and the Elizabethan and this portion of modern Romanticism are as excellent as the soul's speech of, to use a broad phrase of Sri Aurobindo's, "the inmost in the inmost way": the lover of poetry could hardly bear to ignore them. Then we have to note that the peculiar mode of word and rhythm distinguishing such speech is not confined to the explicitly spiritual or even the suggestively spiritual and can take up the substance and style proper to any plane—the Graeco-Roman Intelligence's, the Elizabethan Life Force's, the many-dimensional modern mind's—and, uplifting them, charge them with unfathomable value and vibration so as to put them well-nigh on a par with what that speech carries. Just as the spiritual theme in itself does not ensure speech in the "inmost way", so the Divine, the Infinite, the Eternal, the essential One do not need to be indicated for the mode of word and rhythm to be the Spirit's own. The most famous line of Virgil—

Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt—

which is untranslatable with a truly effective literalness but to which a literal *à peu près* is C. Day Lewis's

Tears in the nature of things, hearts touched by human transience—

is a sovereign example of this mode without involving the Divine. Nor is the Infinite recognisable clearly or obscurely in Shakespeare's

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain

or the Eternal in his lines to Sleep:

Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the shipboy's eyes and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge?

And where is the essential One in that other passage on insomnia, where Macbeth, after killing Duncan during sleep, reports the hearing of a dreadful voice addressing him by all the three names by which he is known:

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Still it cried, ‘Sleep no more!’ to all the house:
‘Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more!’

Also, it would be a rather irresponsible imagination which would identify the Supreme Spirit in Marlowe’s lines about Helen:

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?—

or else in a more general poetic sweep like Leopardi’s

Insano indegno mistero delle cose.

The insane and ignoble mystery of things. (*Sri Aurobindo*)

Surely the basic soul-thrill is present in all true poetry, but on that account all poetry should not unreservedly be considered spiritual. We must keep certain distinctions if we are not to be gaseous. In both Shakespeare and Marlowe there is a dealing with reactions of our vitalistic being or the thoughts that spring out in the life-mind under the pressure of sensation, passion, emotion. No transcendental view of things is involved, though a touch of the occult comes in the Macbeth-lines. Virgil’s verse has also no such view, even if it does rise to a universal level out of a passage related to particular objects and incidents. The phrase of Leopardi, a wild indignant pessimism instead of the Virgilian majestic sadness, holds no recognisably spiritual notion, either. As Sri Aurobindo observes about the absolute poetic word and rhythm which in such citations are of the same quality as in the occasional master-articulation of the Spirit in Wordsworth or Shelley: “It is not any strict adhesion to a transcendental view of things that constitutes this kind of poetry, but something behind not belonging to the mind or the vital and physical consciousness and with that a certain quality of power in the language and the rhythm which helps to bring out that deeper something.” Hence non-mystical poetry has effects which we can ill afford to neglect in our enthusiasm for the mystical which, off and on in modern Romanticism, expresses in the inmost way the secrets that are inmost.

Nevertheless, if the Spirit is the fundamental reality and if all evolution tends towards manifesting it, the suggestion of the Spirit and even more the revelation of it are the ultimate call upon poetic genius. Particularly precious is the answer to such a call if, in the suggestion and revelation of what is above and beyond and behind the apparent world and its external or superficial occur-

rences and its vital or mental depths immediately at the back of these phenomena, all of mind and life and matter itself tends to discover, as in the finest expression of the mystical by modern Romanticism, not its dissolution into figures and values alien to it but its own final beauty and truth.

Of course, we are talking of the basic vision, word-turn, rhythm-thrill that are spiritual and that have got embodied in a recognisable though yet incipient form in modern Romanticism. All these basic factors are a matter of plane of consciousness. But if we restrict ourselves to mere ways of articulation, then, while we would still have to urge that the chief determinant of the Classical or the Romantic is the plane of consciousness and that even the prevalent way of articulation peculiar to either is due to this plane, we should grant that the way is not confined to it. As between the planes respectively of Graeco-Roman Classicism and Elizabethan Romanticism, the ways are bound to differ in the main because the pure creative Intelligence and the sheer creative Life Force have on the whole distinct attitudes and gestures of self-manifestation. Even the way of the new Romanticism, by the characteristically modern intelligence behind it, is bound to differ on the whole from those of both these poetic phenomena. But the spiritual consciousness as such is not one plane among many: it is a plane which while being above all the rest can bring a greater vitality of its own no less than mentality and also one expressive way of mentality as well as another: the way typical of Classicism is open to its supra-Classical consciousness just as much as that which distinguishes the new Romanticism. In fact the new Romanticism itself shows several ways in its articulation when it, as it were, surpasses the plane of the modern Intelligence and grows directly a voice of the Spirit. If the unfathomable value and vibration which the Spirit's own voice imports into poetry can be imported into Classical poetry without a transcendental view of life being expressed, surely the Classical way of articulation can be adopted by the Spirit for expressing such a view. What impedes the Spirit's complete expression is the Classical kind of Intelligence and not the Classical way of articulation. This Intelligence is mostly drawn into this way: the way itself is not a monopoly of it and can be taken up with ease by a plane of consciousness which, as we have said, is in its essence supra-modern and not merely supra-Graeco-Roman or supra-Elizabethan and can therefore talk in Classical style just as naturally as in any other.

Stylistic Classicism is not in the least alien to the Spirit. And where modern Romanticism rises into spiritual utterance it is often stylistically Classical. When Shelley writes:

Life like a dome of many-coloured glass
Stains the white radiance of eternity,

“CLASSICAL” AND “ROMANTIC”

he is certainly not Classical in style; but when he precedes these lines with

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly,

we might be listening to a Sophocles in a truly spiritual instead of merely religious mood. Wordsworth writing

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears

or even

Thou over whom thy immortality
Broods like the Day

is not in style Classical: writing

...Thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality

he might have been a Milton letting the creative Intelligence be replaced by a light from beyond it. Thus, Classicism, in manner though not in matter, will be part of the spiritual speech whose primary genuine outburst in the West came at the apex of modern Romanticism—an outburst which must be granted paramount significance in a total computation of “Classical” and “Romantic”.

(Concluded)

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Published by

P. Counouma, Pondicherry

Yearly Inland Subscription: Rs. 10. Single Copy: Re 1.

Foreign- £0-16-0; \$ 2.50

Printed at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press,

Pondicherry 676/9/56/1000