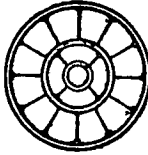


# MOTHER INDIA

MAY, 1957

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. IX

No. 4

---

*"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"*

---

## CONTENTS

		<i>Page</i>
COURAGE (An Unpublished Letter)	... <i>Sri Aurobindo</i>	... 1
THE MESSAGE OF APRIL 24	... <i>Amalkiran</i>	... 2
MANDUKYA UPANISHAD	... <i>Adhyetā</i>	... 5
THE WORLD IN FUTURE	... <i>Amulya Charan Banerji</i>	... 13
AWAIT THE DAWN (Poem)	... <i>Norman Dowsett</i>	... 17
FRENZY OF WORK (Poem)	... <i>Har Krishan Singh</i>	... 18
GLIMPSES OF MALLARMÉ	... <i>K. D. Sethna</i>	... 19
IS OUR CHRONOLOGY FOR ANCIENT INDIA CORRECT?	... <i>K. D. Sethna</i>	... 31

## Students' Section

### A MYSTIC SETTING

(An Example in Composition for a  
Higher English Class in the Sri  
Aurobindo Ashram School)

... *A Teacher* ... 45

### LYRICS FOR THE LITTLE ONES

The Little Ones

... *Pujalal* ... 47

Our Aspiration

... „ ... 48

THE FOUR AIDS (Poem)

... *Tim* ... 49

## COURAGE

*(An Unpublished Letter of Sri Aurobindo)*

*Q. A psychological problem. X and Y, a sadhak and a sadhika, are sitting on a bench on the Pier, with their feet up. Suddenly a Tamilian comes along and says, "Feet down". The man wakes up from his reverie, puts his feet down and asks his companion to do the same. There is a protest : "Why ?" The man replies : "The Tamilian must be the guard and it may be against the rules to keep the feet up." But the woman argues : "See, he does not say anything to those people behind, sitting in the same manner ! He may be a drunkard, and you have obeyed him out of cowardice." Well, is it really cowardice on the man's part ?*

Obviously what X ought to have done was to go bald-headed for the Tamilian, bang up his eyes, smash his nose, extract some of his teeth, break his jaw and fling him into the sea. Afterwards if the police came to arrest X, disable half the force and slaughter the Inspector. Then Y would have come to X in Jail and wept admiringly over the mighty hero...

If X thought it was against rules and the man was a guard (as a matter of fact benches are usually supposed to be sat upon with the feet down) there was no cowardice in complying. Rules ought to be respected—the haughty self-assertive disregard of civic rules is worthy only of savages.

Apart from that there is a passive quiet courage which becomes aggressive at need and is not partial to shindies and there is the aggressive courage. To show the latter on every occasion is Irish, but not indispensable. Cowardice comes in only when you do or abstain from doing out of a sense of fear.

Fear is of course a vital and physical thing. Many people who have shown great courage were not physically or even vitally brave, yet by force of mind they pushed themselves into all sorts of battle and danger. Henry IV of France, a great fighter and victor, was an example. Just because his body consciousness was in a panic he forced it to go where the danger was thickest.

*(From Nirodbaran's Correspondence)*

21-9-1936

## THE MESSAGE OF APRIL 24

THIS Message of the Mother—

“In the eternity of becoming, each Avatar is only the announcer, the fore-runner of a more perfect realisation”—

has prompted in some minds the question : Is the work of establishing the Supermind on earth not the work of the culminating Avatar, not the fulfilment of earth-existence but only a step further, like so many earlier steps, on an endless path where every realisation proves to be imperfect in comparison to what comes after it ?

Behind this question there are a number of misconceptions. It is indeed true that no end can be set to the Divine's manifestation on earth. If the Divine is the Infinite, then His manifestation can never be exhausted : depth after depth must keep disclosing itself. When the Supermind, the Vijnana-plane, has established its splendour amongst us, it will serve as the beginning of a movement towards establishing the wonder that is the Ananda-plane. After that, other secrets of the Supreme will work out their revelation. But we must not overlook a great difference between the Supermind's manifestation and the manifestation of divine powers that have preceded it. And we must not omit to note that the Mother's April Message, in its complete form, has a second sentence running :<sup>1</sup>

“And yet men have always the tendency to deify the Avatar of the past in opposition to the Avatar of the future.”

This sentence makes us throw a glance backward at man's spiritual history and it suggests in relation to the Supermind the error of sticking to past realisations as if they were ultimate instead of preparatory of the Supermind's epiphany. The opposing tendency spoken of can take two forms. One is to deny the supramental revelation and make a jealous cult of what Rishi and Saint and Prophet have taught in ages gone. The other is to consider this revelation of today nothing save the old truth retold in novel terms and therefore fit for acceptance by those who like novelty but not imperative for acceptance by all.

Of course, as we have said, the supramental realisation also is not final. And the Mother's second sentence does not imply its finality. But by the word “past” contraposed to the word “future” it brings the generality of the

<sup>1</sup> See the *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1957.

first sentence to a certain particularisation which, without making a fresh fetish of today against tomorrow, flashes out the need of opening the eyes to the new Day of God that has dawned.

The new Day can be seen in proper focus by divesting the epithet "supramental" of all looseness of significance. Every Yoga has sought for what is "supra", or superior, to the mental. But Sri Aurobindo attaches a special meaning to the epithet he has brought into use. People not intimate with his thought understand by it one of two things. Either they apply it to an infinite and eternal Silence exceeding all cosmic activity and making the whole cosmos seem an inexplicably created enigma that has no basic reality—or else they apply it to a spiritual Force beyond the mind, standing against the background of that Silence and governing its own creation, this universe in which the souls of creatures rise from birth to birth but in which, despite all spirituality, a certain imperfection is inherent and irreducible. The first conception culminates in a sense of *Maya*, World-Illusion; the second in a sense of *Lila*, World-Play. But both point in the end to a fulfilment above the earth—the one to a merger in the sheer Absolute, the other to a heavenly abiding within the Godhead.

According to Sri Aurobindo, the Supreme is totally defined by neither of these conceptions. Each has certainly a validity in experience. The sense of World-Illusion comes by experience of the utter freedom of the Divine from the universe of forms, an entire independence that can be asserted by turning away from the phenomena of body, life and mind as if they were trifles and even phantoms adding nothing to the essential self-existence of the Spirit. The sense of World-Play comes by experience of a constant sustainment of phenomena by that self-existence as if they emerged from its own being and lived by its conscious force and expressed, overtly or covertly, its boundless delight. But the Supreme, for Sri Aurobindo, is not only the utter freedom above cosmic existence, not only the inalienable divine presence within cosmos and the Lord and Lover of it : He also renders possible a fulfilment of the terrestrial adventure in its own terms of mind, life and body. The Supreme holds a divine mentality, a divine vitality, a divine physicality awaiting to manifest by a descent from above where they stand in open glory and by an emergence from below where they lie hidden in the profundities of all that appears the very opposite of the Divine. The Supreme, as unfolding from His absolute freedom this threefold Truth of Nature and dynamising this Truth in an evolutionary self-expression, is the Supermind. By the Supermind a godlike evolution in the most literal sense can result: the formation of an earthly being who by his very nature shall be free from ignorance, incapacity and the deathward movement that is all embodied life at even its most puissant.

## MOTHER INDIA

Once the Supermind is realised on the earth we have no longer a disparity between Spirit and World. Nothing of Here and Now will fall short of the Divine who is infinite and eternal. The division of basic reality from phenomenon, of the Creator from the creation, will be abolished without putting away form and becoming. Thus a radical change will take place which will distinguish the supramental realisation from all others. Hence to say that this realisation is not final is never the same thing as to say that the realisations before the Supermind's advent are not final but part of an endless process of world-perfection. As Sri Aurobindo puts it, there is conversion before the Supermind and progression after it. Until the supramental change has occurred, something of the phenomenal and the created remains imperfect and needs to be converted. With the occurrence of that change, what remains is only the inexhaustible exploration of the perfect : what remains is the "more perfect" in the sense of more quantity, as it were, of the perfection hidden in the Divine and not the "more perfect" in the sense of a superior quality. After the supramental realisation the Divine cannot be diviner but He can still be various and show design on miraculous design of ordered flawlessness in an eternity of becoming.

This fact should also clarify the problem of Avatarhood. Avatarhood, essentially manifesting the supreme Godhead, takes place from various planes of being by an incarnation of the central Divine Personality poised on a plane. It can take place from the Mind plane to establish the rule of an ideal and Spirit-touched Dharma answering to the finest mental aspiration ; or from the Overmind plane to bring a many-sided direct impulsion from a spiritual state that is vaster than the mental and beyond all merely ethico-religious rule. Again, it can take place straight from the supreme Truth-Consciousness, the Supermind, where the ultimate marvel of the Transcendent is organised for time-creation and the all-transformative archetype of earth-existence is dynamic. The Avatarhood from the Supermind carries not only in the inward but also in the outward the utter Godhead and all potentialities of future Avatarhood are continuous with those which it manifests and come not so much from a higher plane as from a plane in its own background. A new form or incarnation for a new manifestation is no longer a necessity. It is the intuitive inkling of this absence of further embodiment, rather than the anomalous idea of putting a term to the Infinite's manifestation on earth, that has led Hinduism to speak of Kalki as the last Avatar.

AMALKIRAN

# MANDUKYA UPANISHAD

## A COMMENTARY

### II

THE followers of Shankara argue that if the condition of absolute existence is that of an infinite divine oneness, there can be no room for our ordinary human ignorance, *Avidyā*, which we have to outgrow by means of God-realisation. In other words, they ask how God can fully remain God, an infinite divine being, if the Ignorance is not an illusory but a real state produced by the Self as the creator ; for a real Ignorance would seem to mean that God is not everything and therefore not infinite unless we say, absurdly enough, that the Ignorance which has to be transcended is also a part of divine being and consciousness and not ignorant at all, even in appearance. The conclusion is : we must hold that Brahman is not comprehensive of the Ignorance, and let our minds do what they can with the bewildering riddle of a non-existent universe appearing as an empirical entity.

But, really speaking, there is no need to resort to such drastic measures : the steady vision of the Upanishads perceived a simple solution of the ordinary mentality's inability to conceive the infinite Essence and the finite phenomenon as co-existent. The bedrock of spiritual experience is the intuition of the one and inexhaustible Essence dwelling equally in everything, its full spiritual infinity being somehow present in the innermost of every infinitesimal point of the so-called Illusion. All the schools of Indian mysticism agree that the illimitable deity of whose Self everything is a phenomenon is lodged "in the recess of life, in the heart of things, in the cavern of being."<sup>1</sup> But once we grasp that the spiritual Essence is such that It exists in all Its plenitude in the depth of everything we do not necessarily imply that the infinite Self has become less by being manifested and apparently differentiated, if we have the Upanishadic insight into the mathematics of Infinity, according to which the very nature of infinity is such that it is inexhaustible and therefore never diminished, however much we may deduct from it. The one innermost Infinite can deploy Itself endlessly because of Its infinity and, just because

<sup>1</sup> Katha Upanishad I. 2. 12 (Sri Aurobindo's translation).



of Its infinity, retain an infinite of Itself in spite of Its endless deployments. Paradoxically, God, being infinite, does not become less nor is His spaceless and timeless fullness impaired because, phenomenally speaking, the Ignorance is not divine. As to how and why this Ignorance is created, the question can only be solved with complete satisfaction by the same supramental omnipotence and omniscience which creates it. But there is no call to regard the universe as a foundationless shadow which has no place in the conscious being of Brahman : even by mental logic this much is defensible that an interminable manifestation of whatsoever It wills, even a thousand million Ignorances, is possible to an illimitable Essence without the latter suffering the slightest diminution. To quote the words of the Vedantic mystics themselves, as prefixed to the Isha : “The Full is That ; the Full is This ; the Full is taken from the Full ; when the Full is taken from the Full, what remains is still the Full.” Can there be a plainer indication that the Brahmic Essence which is in the heart of all manifestation remains, as the Mandukya puts it, “the unconditioned, the immutability never affected” by apparent variations of quantity and quality, extension and duration, because Its infinity is never used up or instabilised ? Shankarites with their dilemmatic prejudices failed to appreciate the profound significance of this spiritual mathematics : hence their peculiar view of the problem of Maya in place of the comprehensive monism of the Upanishads which could, without the least intellectual compromise, embrace by its spiritual concept of the Brahmic Essence pluralism even to the last and outermost degree of plurality.

For Maya originally meant creative wisdom, “the energy of the stuff of knowledge” which measures out, defines and enumerates the divine Conscious-Force—*Chit-Tapas*—by which the potentialities of the unmanifest Absolute stand formulated in Nature or *Prakriti*. It was looked upon not as a mirage but as a miracle, not a witless mystery but a divine paradox with a purpose perceived directly by the sages in their meditations as simultaneously the self-expressive and self-enveloping power of One who, according to the Svetasvatara Upanishad, “fashions all form though Himself formless, from whom comes the world in the beginning and whither it goes in the end.” As the Taittiriya Upanishad repeatedly asserts, the cosmic multiplicity and movement are originated by the primeval Unity by an act of conscious energy out of Its plenitude of Bliss.<sup>1</sup> “Brahman is Bliss; from Bliss are verily these creatures born; by Bliss they live and grow; and into Bliss again they return.”<sup>2</sup> Everything is ensouled and embodied in the Maya of that Bliss<sup>3</sup> which consti-

<sup>1</sup> Taittiriya II. Chap. 6-9.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid III. Chap 6.    <sup>3</sup> Anandamaya Purusha: Taittiriya. II Chap 5

tutes the very essentiality of divine Being and is not dependent on stimuli, objects and expectations though it may deploy itself internally in infinite self-multiplication. Everything, therefore, has a secret counterpart of the Bliss which operates through the seed-Logos. The aim of life is to realise through the initial figures of loss, pain and imperfection the truth of the Beatitude eternally focused in the multiple oneness of the causal Will of Prajna, and so confer, as Sri Aurobindo says, a novel value on the powers of the Spirit. The material universe is a process of Darkness gradually beholding itself as Light divinely self-concealed for the joy of being humanly self-discovered.

Having seen how the Upanishads equally accepted and reconciled the noumenal and the phenomenal, we are in a position to grasp the exact meaning of that most controversial term *akshara* or immutable as applied to the Self. Surely it does not imply an inherent inability to project a universe, for the Upanishads declare in one voice that the Self has in fact achieved this projection. It can only mean that the nature of the Self is such as to keep always Its sense of infinite oneness, even if It manifests a play of multiplicity so that It never ceases to possess the self-sufficient beatitude proper to such oneness, enabling It, as the Chhandogya<sup>1</sup> says, to remain pure of that restless desire and hankering and instability which is the badge of all that is contingent and not conscious of an infinite and self-sufficient unity of Delight. The problem is then easily solved, for, according to mathematics of infinity, Atman can retain the consciousness and delight of an infinite and self-sufficient oneness in spite of manifesting a lower grade of being which becomes forgetful of its transcendent source while that source is all the time aware of the act by which Its own Self assumes, by means of Its immeasurable possibilities, the role of the spatio-temporal cosmos. Indeed, notwithstanding all that It makes valid in Its self-conceived terms of endless Space and Time, Its infinity is able to conserve, beyond both these terms, an unbounded Selfhood which, by its very transcendence of spatio-temporality, has not to run in the course of the three dimensions or the three times but holds them altogether and at once, thus combining with Its multiple and progressive manifestation an ideal and perpetual potential of stability. In this sense It enjoys an eternal immutability of infinite fullness and oneness, an illimitable constant of blissful self-possession by which It remains in an equipoise of immobility even while indulging in the most indefatigable movement of creation. In view of the subsequent misunderstanding of the epithet "immutable", it is interesting to note how the Mundaka<sup>2</sup> even feels a scruple in saying that all existences are born from the Immutable, lest the disciple should be puzzled how the mobile universe could emerge from

<sup>1</sup> Chhandogya VII—23-26.

<sup>2</sup> II. I. (1,2,3,4).

that which seems to be an infinite rest. So, in order to imply that by Immutability it does not mean an impotent passivity but a state of transcendental mystery which is creative as well as unchangeable, it adds that the divine Purusha from whom everything takes its birth is really "higher than the highest Immutable"—that is to say, one who manages to remain unchangeable without being limited to static unproductiveness, so that His infinite Self within all creatures does not exclude the Self as the Creator but divinely embraces in His immutable conscious being all this ebb and flow of existence.

With this idea in mind we must approach, if we are to appreciate fully its consistency, the profound division made by the Upanishads of ultimate Reality into the higher and the lower hemispheres of Brahman, *parārdha* and *Aparārdha*, which constitutes the Knowledge and the Ignorance, *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*, the double status of the Self and the Lord as distinguished from the double status of the Dreamer and the Waking-soul. The higher Brahman comprehends in His Knowledge the Ignorance of the lower Brahman but in His own ultra-mental way of light to which *Avidyā* is not the forgetfulness of the One but the play of multiplicity on the firm basis of unity. The higher Brahman is the original Atman who remains immutable and infinite despite manifesting the immensities of the lower Brahman over which He presides as the Lord. The synthetic objective of the ancient yoga was to see in the terms of the higher the values of the lower being which gets absorbed in the many, puts the One behind it and imagines that each is in all but not all in each and that each acts independently and not in secret unity with the rest of existence. Indeed, there were many who favoured an intransigent flight into the Supracosmic, but for the most calm-considering, *dhīra*, among the ancients the regeneration and not the rejection of the mental consciousness of multiplicity was the Truth and Bliss and Immortality; for, as the Isha beautifully expresses it, "he who sees everywhere the Self in all existences and all existences in the Self, shrinks not thereafter from aught. He in whom it is the Self-Being that has become all existences that are Becomings, for he has the perfect knowledge, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have grief who sees everywhere oneness?"<sup>1</sup> It is exactly this sort of manifold oneness which is taught in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad when it says that, though the universe has emanated from Atman who is the invisible king and witness of it, there can be no duality in Atman's essential Consciousness, for all things are Its own infinite Self variously formulated: "It does not see another, hear another or know another"; indeed It cannot at all be said to know or be conscious of Itself or another in the knowledge-values of the Ignorance because for It the knower and all that is known

<sup>1</sup> 6,3

are consciously one in Essence. But Its Bliss is not founded on the rejection of the world which It has emanated : It embraces and enjoys it as at once its Lord and its Self : as its Self It effaces, essentially, the opposition between the Lord and the creation—as its Lord It saves this identity from being an exclusive and vacant zero. At the height of spiritual experience is the utter Intangible of the fourth state, into whose basic experience of boundless Identity one can absorb oneself to the exclusion of the three other states which support both the cosmos and its Creator. But it is precisely because the Self and the Lord are simultaneous in the being of the higher Brahman that the Absolute is not an exclusive and vacant zero—a fact illustrated and borne out by the analogy of the mystic word OM which in spite of its three syllables is pronounced as one sound and the fulfilment of which is the goal “declared by all the Vedas”—that is to say, the realisation of the single Self and at the same time the divine possession of Its three planes of manifestation—the causal and ultra-mental, the subtle and internal, the gross and external, figured respectively as the Sun, the Moon and the Earth in the Prasna Upanishad.

The fifth section of the Prasna Upanishad not only elucidates the connection between the teachings of the Mandukya and the Isha but also throws a flood of light on the intimate relations which both bear to the poetry of the Vedic Sacrifice so that the Vedas are shown to be more Vedantic than we have supposed and the Vedanta more Vedic than we have suspected. The Vedic symbols which have generally been taken as part of a semi-barbarous ritual centred round the worship of the Sun and the various solar powers operative in Nature, stand out as mere veils, from the vulgar eye, of a spiritual experience stated by the Upanishads in translucent language when the age of Mysteries was over and the mind of man was likely to forget the esoteric side of the religion of a more imaginative and less intellectual phase of the ancient Indian culture. A glimpse of the world-perspective of these Mysteries as reconstructed by Sri Aurobindo in his exhaustive analysis of Vedic symbolism is given us as through the key-hole of a sanctum by the fifth section of the Prasna which answers the question put by Satyakama to his Master : “To what does a man attain who meditates on OM until death ?” The Master replies that OM is both the higher and the lower Brahman so that one can attain to one or the other of them according to one’s knowledge and use of the three aspects of the Veda—the *Rik*, the *Yajus* and the *Sāma*, corresponding to the three levels of manifested being. It is known to scholars that the Rik meant the illumined word of praise, the Yajus the illumined word as actively guiding the sacrifice, while the Sama was the musical counterpart of them both, the word of harmony which fulfilled, as it were, the divine desire of sacrifice in man, and, deriving from the same root as *samattwa*, was indicative of a state of “sameness” or

communion with the godhead to which the sacrifice was offered. Judging from the Prasna, the Rik seems to mean the Veda as considered to consist of inspired prayers, marking the first stage of Yoga, the Yajus a practical application of the Vedic secrets, and the Sama a complete internal self-surrender to the divine Being leading the ego to dissolve in a transport of soul-music on being touched by the knowledge that is born of love. When one devotes one's life to God, yet without a very dynamic will behind one's Yoga, one is supposed to have followed the Riks only and utilised by meditation the first letter A of the sacred word: "one getteth by it knowledge but one soon returneth to the earth; and him the Riks lead to the world of men and there perfected in austerity, continence and faith he experienceth the greatness of the Spirit."<sup>1</sup> The first and second letters together are said to lead to the middle or Moon-world which they represent and which, as its name Soma suggests, forms the subtle pleasure of conceptive desires foreshadowing the divine delight which is the concealed *raison d'être* of all that seems desirable: "he in the world of the Moon experienceth the majesty of the Spirit but he returneth again."<sup>2</sup> But when the third letter is combined with the other two, the triple character symbolises the world of which the Moon is a mere reflection, the world in which "the inner and the outer and the middle actions of the Spirit are made whole in their perfect using so that the soul knows and is not shaken,"<sup>3</sup> the world of the Sun which, unlike the Moon, frees one from the obligation of rebirth on the Earth and through which, "perfected in its light" and purged of all evil "as a snake putteth off its skin", the Yogi attains, by means of meditation on the completed OM and following the Sama-sense of the Veda, to Brahmaloaka or the world of Brahman with whose "densely concentrated consciousness" he sees the highest Purusha "dwelling in His kingdom": "the man of knowledge passes to Him by OM, even to the supreme Spirit that is calm and ageless and fearless and immortal."<sup>4</sup>

So the Sun, which is called in the Vedas "the eye of the gods" and "the divine creator", is that luminous power of the Spirit by which It omnisciently harmonises Its "inner and outer and middle actions" in the universe. It is the face of the godhead turned towards the world, the outlook of the supreme Essence on Its manifold becomings and Its inlook on their secret nature by means of Its awareness of being the One who has Himself become the Many. It is the Kavi of the Isha and the Prajna of the Mandukya, called also the Purusha of the principle of Vijnana in the fourth section of the Prasna.<sup>5</sup> When a man ceases to dream, says the Prasna, he sinks into a state bordering on divine beatitude in which everything gets gathered-up into a self which is

<sup>1</sup> 3.<sup>2</sup> 4.<sup>3</sup> 6.<sup>4</sup> 5<sup>5</sup> IV. 9.

greater than the intellect and the ego-personality, *buddhi* and *ahankāra*.<sup>1</sup> This self which is not mental but ultra-mental uses the intellect and the ego as its figureheads, for it is the causal Logos who has his basis of bliss in the ultimate Immutable.<sup>2</sup> The Taittiriya Upanishad<sup>3</sup> also says that the mental self in man is secretly pervaded and guided by another, that of Vijnana, characterised by his irresistible resolution of what is to be done (*sraddhā*), his spontaneous infallibility of movement (*ritam*), his full possession of the truth which binds the mortal to the Immortal (*satyam*),<sup>4</sup> his integrality of being uniting all differences (*yoga*), and lastly his foundation in vastness (*maha*).

It is remarkable how these appellations stand for exactly the same things which are attributed to the solar deity in the Vedas. The Sun there is also called *satyam* and *ritam*; instead of being endowed with *maha* it manifests in *mahat swar*, the heaven of the great light, and is entitled *brihat* which also means the vast, and like Vijnana it is of a consciously undivided essence, the son of Aditi the infinite Mother. Upwards the Sun of Vijnana opens into the Purusha of Bliss<sup>5</sup> who with this his "glorious golden sheath"<sup>6</sup> finds his foundation in the pure Self;<sup>7</sup> downwards its radiance touches the mental consciousness and, though dissipated by the refractive surface of the mind, is still the hidden truth behind all the ideative approximations of the latter.<sup>8</sup> It thus shares the activities of both the Self and the mind and stands forth as a link of connection when the mortal turns towards the birthless and deathless Immortality of the Atman proper. The Sun, therefore, represents in the Vedas as well as the Upanishads the status of consciousness symbolised

<sup>1</sup> IV 6,7,8

<sup>2</sup> IV 9, 10 Corresponding to Vijnana the Vedantic word derived from the term Prajna is Prajnana "Prajnana," explains Sri Aurobindo, "is the consciousness that cognises all things as objects confronting its observation, in the divine mind it is Knowledge as their source, possessor and witness Vijnana is comprehensive Knowledge containing, penetrating into things, pervading them in consciousness by a sort of identification with their truth." In the human mind Vijnana is the understanding of the meaning, nature and law of things in their relation to one another as if they formed a universal organic unity which includes even the witness who confronts the objects of his knowledge it is, in different ways, the essence of Science, Art and Philosophy.

<sup>3</sup> Taittiriya II. Chap. 4.

<sup>4</sup> For this special meaning of the word "satyam", vide Chhandogya VIII. 3. (5).

<sup>5</sup> Called "Anandamaya Purusha" in the Taittiriya II. 5, and the principle of *Maya* or *Priyam* in the Vedas.

<sup>6</sup> Mundaka II 2 (9).

<sup>7</sup> Hence the Brihadaranyaka describes the pure Self in terms of Vijnana

<sup>8</sup> Hence the later mistake of calling the Intellect Vijnana. the intellect is the lower buddhi, the scattered form of the higher Buddhi which is the true Vijnana.

## MOTHER INDIA

by the last letter of OM, which on being uttered, after the first has been spoken singly and the second together with the first, completes the full utterance of that word and serves as the entrance to the utter Absolute hymned as early as the Vedic times by the seer Dirghatamas as “the sole Existent whom the sages called by many names—Varuna, Mitra, Agni, Yama and Matariswan.”<sup>1</sup>

*(To be continued)*

*Adhyetā*

<sup>1</sup> Rig Veda I. 164-46.

## THE WORLD IN FUTURE

It is said that none can bathe in the same river twice. If there is no current in the river, apparently a man can take a bath twice. But really it is impossible to bathe in the same river more than once. For, on account of the current the river is in a state of flux. The world, in a like manner, is constantly changing. Hence it is termed *jagat* in Sanskrit, the literal connotation of which is ever-going *i.e.* ever-changing. The change of the world may not be perceptible within a brief period or even within a long time to a casual observer. But the change takes place all the same. This is the reading of history. The world moves more rapidly in abnormal times and less rapidly in normal times. The difference between the speeds of the ordinary and extraordinary times is quite noticeable. It is patent that as the result of the two great world wars there has been the birth of a "New World". There have been changes not only outwardly but also ideologically. Indeed the mental outlook of the people changed phenomenally no less than the material conditions of the places and the people.

Though the world is at present divided into two camps I make bold to say that it is only a passing phase and soon or late sanity will prevail and then "the war-weary world" will definitely realise that it is utterly futile to launch upon warfare and "that peace hath her victories no less renowned than those of war". As it is darkest before the dawn, so the dark clouds of war appearing on the horizon are mere precursors of the advent of a New Era—the Era of peace and prosperity. The world is now sick of war, too conscious of the prodigal destruction of men and capital goods by war. What still lurks in the mind of militarists is the suspicion that one party might attack the other for gaining world-supremacy. When the two camps will understand that there is no foundation at all for this suspicion or apprehension, they will contact each other and the more they come in contact with each other the more will they realise that this fear complex is absolutely groundless. They will then "live and let live" and establish to the rest of the world the soundness of the "doctrine of co-existence". With this idea gaining ground war will be gradually eliminated from the face of the earth.

The tendency of human unity is growing fast. Of course, Science has helped in this direction by making the meeting of men of different nationalities easier, less costly and possible within astoundingly short time. When there



is any fear of famine, food is sent from the surplus area to the deficit area to ward off famine. The U.N. Organisation has several departments. All the departments are directed towards establishment of friendship and amity amongst the member-states. If there is any ill-feeling between two members the Security Council is there to intervene and restore friendship. The benefits derivable from the membership of the U.N. are so great that even China feels that she cannot afford to be away from the fold. This Organisation will grow and be stronger day by day and may in time to come form the nucleus of the future Government of the World. It is likely that just as we find today the United States of America, so Churchill's dream may be realised by the formation of the United States of Europe and then Nehru's dream of the United States Asia may be an accomplished fact. All these may pave in the end the way to the birth of the United States of the world. Thus the pious wishes of the authors of the U.N. may be realised even sooner than expected by the great statesmen who founded this Organisation.

This will be brought about more by evolution than by revolution. Revolution takes place only when the natural evolution is checked by some adventitious circumstances. Revolution then makes up the deficiency by rapid strides. When the evolving will be all round the world-state will come into being as a natural consequence. Nature wants unification and the World Empire will issue out of her continuous strivings. There may be setbacks, —but they will help rather than hinder the realisation of the dreams of the saints and seers of the nations. The Creator surely had a plan and purpose in creating this world. This was evidently to turn it into a "Kingdom of Heaven on earth". That is to say, a blissful state where harmony reigns. Without unification harmony is unthinkable. Therefore unification of the people of the world is the consummation towards which Nature is moving steadily. Thus Nature assisted by the thought-leaders of the world will execute the plan and fulfil the purpose of the Maker of the Universe and bring about complete human unity.

If war takes place despite these natural tendencies, the devastations will be far greater than in the last two wars and it may be that the face of the earth will be changed and its inhabitants completely effaced.

Now, most of the religions of the world are "off colour". This is due to the fact that their forms are declining. But the spirit remains all the same. Naturally there is unanimity of spirit in all the religions. This spirit is the essence of the religions. This is called "the eternal verity". There we find the principle of human unity and religious unity. When the essence of all the religions will coalesce we shall have a religion acceptable to all the nations of the world. The tendency towards unity is already in vogue and so we find

## THE WORLD IN FUTURE

that denominationalism is on the decrease and eclecticism is on the increase in the world. The new religion in the making will put more emphasis on the Spirit than on the form. It will be more spiritual than ritualistic. It will stabilise world peace in that its sole principle will be fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man.

To bring about unity among the nations a common language would be helpful. It will be the medium for persons of all the nations. As the different nations will come into closer contact with one another the necessity for such a language will be more acutely felt and gradually this World Language will evolve and grow. This will gradually unify the world into a Family of Nations. Contact and a common medium of exchange of views are indispensable for unification. International trade and commerce also bring the nations together. At present English is the language of commerce. Some form of English may even have a wider use and avert mutual misunderstanding. When a common language will spread each nation will be able to explain its position to the other more satisfactorily than now and bitterness and hatred will gradually disappear. Introduction of a common language is a great *desideratum*. Its necessity itself will bring it forth.

If the supply of land remains limited as now, *i.e.* if there be no new discovery of virgin land or land for living on, the price of land will be ever-increasing in consequence of the growth of population. The price of finished goods will no doubt increase to some extent, but that of the raw materials will increase to a still greater extent. Therefore, the best investment that man should have of his surplus money is investment in land. The demand for products of the soil will increase *pari passu* with the growth of the population and the planting of an ever-increasing number of machines for turning the land products into manufactured goods. The supply of land being limited and the population being on the increase the demand for land and its products will gradually increase resulting in an all-round rise of prices.

Europe is no longer the hub of the world. The centre of political and economic activities has shifted from the shores of the Atlantic to those of the Pacific—from London to New York. Everything is in the melting pot. The old order is fast changing. The Middle East and the Far East will shortly have greater roles to play in shaping the destiny of man. The recent events in Poland and Hungary are pointers showing that the first spell of popularity of Communism is on the wane. Communism itself has changed in other countries both in form and spirit as indeed it has, even in Russia. Democratisation is in the offing in the area known as the Soviet Bloc. Capitalistic countries too are changing their attitude. Henceforth there will be greater ideological agreement among nations and therefore they will understand each other better.

## MOTHER INDIA

They will meet half-way and India may operate as the *Half-Way House*.

This is my reading and survey of the main trends. Man and Nature are at work. They are executing the will of the Maker and therefore consciously or unconsciously following His plan and fulfilling His purpose. "We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future". Thus observed Sri Aurobindo expressing his implicit faith in the evolutionary character of the society. It is therefore hoped that this planet of ours will be a much better place to live in the future.

As morning shows the day, so the abortion of the several crises within the last decade leads us to think that the spirit of the Satya Yuga is working powerfully in the mental plane and that it greatly influenced the leaders of thought and thus averted the catastrophe more than once since the termination of the Second World War. We may fairly conclude that a better time is ahead and that the advent of the Golden Age is not a mere utopian dream.

AMULYA CHARAN BANERJI

## AWAIT THE DAWN

SHRINK not from danger nor the fell consequence  
Of flaming life—look with immortal eyes  
Upon thy fate and know that other Powers  
Shape our Destiny beyond the skies.

What curve of Circumstance is thine to hold  
Alone—? She only has such power and sway—  
She stands alone upon the Peaks of Gold,  
Above our Night—awaiting the Dawn of Day.

She knows our flounderings in the mud and mire  
Where even gods have fallen from their seat;  
Still does She urge the growing world aspire,  
For Victory is bursting through defeat.

NORMAN DOWSETT

## FRENZY OF WORK

RECKLESS you run in a swelled frenzy of work,  
To build castles of cloud you spend your prime—  
Only to multiply your grief and grime.  
For ego-ends you plan many a lurk  
Whose bitter consequence you seek to burk,  
Yet hope the chink of your false coin shall chime  
With the all-overriding scheme of Time:  
There is no end to this selfward-turning arc.

Straighten your crooked and biased tape-measure's end  
And judge your deeds by the Infinite's yard-stick;  
All shall fall over-worn like the serpent-skin  
Or prove a sham like a juggler's clever rope-trick  
Unless willed by the All and the soul within—  
Your mind and body's worship of the Beyond.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

## GLIMPSES OF MALLARMÉ\*

(Continued from the April issue)

THE poetry towards which we are pointing beyond Mallarmé beckons us not only past Valéry's curious "pensée" but also past Rilke's imaging of delicate thought-shades seized by an intricately sensitive and penetrative temperament. The early Rilke concentrated often on the sheer object and made it speak out the poet's own mood-depths. This was Symbolism with a Mallarméan tinge, but even so Symbolist a poem of his as *Der Panther* (*The Panther*) has not a direct impact of occult reality through the depths of the mood: it has only an intense subjective suggestion, the seeing man and the seen animal fusing and at the end vanishing into a faint yet finely dramatic half-hint of a philosophical attitude. Or else we have an explicit philosophy embodying itself in a symbol and standing out at the end as a profoundly poetic picture passing into a suggestion of intense subjectivity: a memorable example is *Der Schwan* (*The Swan*):

Diese Mühsal, durch noch Ungetanes  
schwer und wie gebunden hinzugehn,  
gleicht dem ungeschaffnen Gang des Schwanes.

Und das Sterben, dieses Nichtmehrfassen  
jenes Grunds, auf dem wir täglich stehn,  
seinem ängstlichen Sich-Niederlassen—;

in die Wasser, die ihn sanft empfangen  
und die sich, wie glücklich und vergangen,  
unter ihm zurückziehn, Flut un Flut;  
während er unendlich still und sicher  
immer mündiger und königlicher  
und gelassener zu ziehn geruht.

In C.F. MacIntyre's English:

This misery that through the still-undone  
must pass, bound and heavily weighed down,  
is like the awkward walking of the swan.

## MOTHER INDIA

And death, where we no longer comprehend  
the very ground on which we daily stand,  
is like his anxious letting-himself-go

into the water, soft against his breast,  
which now how easily together flows  
behind him in a little wake of waves...  
while he, infinitely silent, self-possessed,  
and ever more mature, is pleased to move  
serenely on in his majestic way.

This is much closer to the later Yeats than to Mallarmé, though the manner of the start and of the working out is not Yeatsian in its tactics: the symbol follows the thought rather than the other way round but the psychological level of the vision is the same in general, the imaginative intelligence etching with a keen thought-stylus an exquisite or vigorous pattern of symbol. The pattern in these particular verses is indicated by MacIntyre thus: "The swan represents both life and death. As he enters the water we are put under the spell of a truly Rilkean moment: the entrance of an awkward being into that mystery in which it not only becomes more beautiful, but in which its forward movement seems to be the mature fulfilment of the meaning of life."

The early Rilke has also other turns of symbolled thought. At times the symbol is a summons for decision, for "engagement" (to use an Existentialist term), a call on the will and not merely on the understanding: witness the sonnet about the archaic torso of Apollo. The result is superb poetry yet non-Mallarméan in final posture. The later Rilke, sweeping both outward from the object as if into some aura of it and inward from the subject as if into some psychological world-space (weltinnerraum), has a more mystic articulation, but the Symbolism is thought-woofed, though the threads are at once gauzy and complex, as in one of his last poems translated by Walter Kauffman:

Dove that remained outside, outside the dovecote,  
back in its sphere and home, one with the day and night,  
it knows the secrecy when the most remote  
terror is fused into deeply felt flight.

Of all the doves the always most protected,  
never endangered most, does not know tenderness;  
richest of all hearts is the resurrected:  
turning back liberates, freedom rejoices.

GLIMPSES OF MALLARMÉ

Over the nowhere arches the everywhere.  
Oh, the ball that is thrown, that we dare,  
does it still fill our hands, differently than before?  
By the weight of the return it is more.

No less beyond Eliot than beyond Rilke we move—Eliot who derives partly from post-Mallarméan Symbolism and partly from the desolate mental aftermath of World War I and combines his modernism with a semi-medieval Christianity whose emblems, lyricised, flit in and out amidst the intellectualised diction in his most mature poetry. We may cite from *Four Quartets* the lyric on the pentecostal flame come to change egoistic and profane into dedicatory and sacred passion. It starts—

The dove descending breaks the air  
With flame of incandescent terror  
Of which the tongues declare  
The one discharge from sin and error.  
The only hope or else despair  
Lies in the choice of pyre or pyre—  
To be redeemed from fire by fire,

and concludes—

Who then devised the torment? Love.  
Love is the unfamiliar Name  
Behind the hands that wove  
The intolerable shirt of flame  
Which human power cannot remove.  
We only live, only suspire  
Consumed by either fire or fire.

Much more do we go beyond the young French poet, Pierre Emmanuel, who is perhaps the most powerful religious voice in the verse of contemporary France: he abounds in an apocalyptic imagination seeing the entire face of the Earth as the face of an ever-tormented Jesus, and even the world's Evil, in the figure of tyrants and oppressors, as an inverted symbol of Christ's mysterious undeniable kingship. Eliot bases his Dove-lyric on the truth of the mystic William Law's saying: "The dark disordered fire of our soul can as well be made the foundation of Heaven as it is of Hell." Emmanuel has a similar vision, but he pushes farther and reads not just the potentiality of



## MOTHER INDIA

the Divine Love in its opposite: he reads too the very presence of the pentecostal Dove as a masterful mercy within the violent entanglements of those in whom resistance to Evil and aspiration towards Good have died. The Dove may appear to be some *oiseau de malheur* but the suppressed soul in the fallen is its living singing witness and its strategy of Grace is a saviour power at work in the worst darkness :

O bourreaux, j'ai pitié de vos peines...L'enfer  
ne connaît point labeur égal à votre haine !  
N'êtes vous donc point las de vous défigurer  
en vain ? Que pouvez-vous, haineux désespérés  
contre l'amour de vos victimes ? La Colombe  
se joue de vous, elle est en votre âme, elle naît  
de vos mains torturant l'âme au-delà de l'âme  
et vos yeux la cherchent encore aveuglement  
Qu'elle n'est plus qu'un point dans la prunelle ardente  
de la Nuit constellée de pleurs qui veille en vous...

(Hangmen, I have pity for your pains...All hell  
knows not a labour equal to your hate !  
Have you not tired of self-disfigurement  
in vain ? What can you, haters desperate  
against the love in your victims' breast ? The Dove  
makes sport of you, it's in your soul, it's born  
from your hands torturing the soul beyond the soul  
and your eyes seek it still with their blindnesses  
When but a vanishing speck in the flame-touched pupil  
of Night, enstarred with tears, at watch in you ... )

Much of Emmanuel's *Cantique de la Pentecote* has a passionate grandeur, but, for all the unrhymed run of its Alexandrines, it is oratorical poetry harking back to Hugo and its charge of symbol is in the traditional religious style adapted to a modernist boldness.

Past Wallace Stevens too we go—America's most accomplished bard of profound philosophising by way of terse symbolled thought, often influenced by Mallarmé. While distrusting Reason like Mallarmé, Stevens feels like his French predecessor "a warmth in the blood for the pure idea". But he is concerned at the same time with Platonic ethers and terrestrial confusions, depths of midnight and breadths of midday. He has well characterised himself in a bird-image :

GLIMPSES OF MALLARMÉ

A passionately niggling nightingale...  
To make a new intelligence prevail ;

and he vividly sets up for us, again in bird-imagery, at the end of a passage in his *Esthétique du Mal* the need of our times :

Here in the west indifferent crickets chant  
Through our indifferent crises. Yet we require  
Another chant, an incantation, as in  
Another and later genesis music  
That buffets the shapes of its possible halcyon  
Against the haggardie.

Stevens distinguishes from the mere chattering of poetasters unlit by any sense of values the real song which carries the various glimmerings of what he elsewhere calls "a paradise of meaning", forms of the fabled bird halcyon that calms the winds and the waters, the real song striking with creative imagination against the modern world's fatigue, anxiety and terror which Stevens symbolises by an apt coinage, "haggardie", with its suggestion—as a critic has noted—of at once the wild hawk and things haggard from "want of rest".

However, we feel that fine poetry as often the work is of Stevens it has not the ultimate secret of the incantation he desires. This incantation we catch on moving towards a type of verse in which both the clear and the mysterious belong to a masterful height of realised spiritual consciousness, the work of Sri Aurobindo. When the clear is achieved, then unlike as in the later Yeats and other post-Mallarméans the shades and shimmers of the Beyond are not caught into an intellectual chiaroscuro but what looks such is rather the art-pattern of some lucid-linguaged revelatory power other than the sharp-phrased interpretative intellect. A philosophical atmosphere is there, yet shot with a luminosity and wideness of significance exceeding thought, as in the free-verse piece *Ascent* where Sri Aurobindo first asks the "Spirit immortal" to soar

Away from the turning Wheel, breaking the magical Circle,  
out of "the grey and the little", "the cry and the struggle", into the Silence

Higher than Heaven, wider than the universe,  
In a pure glory of being,  
In a bright stillness of self-seeing,

## MOTHER INDIA

and then calls on it to outgrow even the Alone and the Absolute and penetrate the Supreme which embraces both Time and Timelessness :

Single and free, yet innumerably living,  
All in thyself and thyself in all dwelling,  
Act in the world with thy being beyond it...  
Outclimbing the summits of Nature,  
Transcending and uplifting the soul of the finite,  
Rise with the world in thy bosom,  
O Word gathered into the heart of the Ineffable.  
One with the Eternal, live in his infinity,  
Drowned in the Absolute, found in the Godhead,  
Swan of the supreme and spaceless ether wandering winged  
through the universe,  
Spirit immortal.

This, in one of its manifestations, is what Sri Aurobindo in his critical essays has designated as “overhead poetry”, an utterance hailing in mystical experience from an unknown immensity of light and force and bliss and knowledge from above the brain-clamped mind, a supra-intellectual magnitude whose presence even our outermost self recognises vaguely in its instinctive belief that the Godhead is somewhere up in the sky.

The overhead is the top range of our occult-spiritual being which lies behind and beyond the man we know, even the man the Jungian psychoanalysts know, and its manifestation is not limited to a transfiguration of philosophic thought culminating in a sudden symbol such as, in the above passage, the world-wandering yet world-transcending Swan which is the all-fulfilling counterpart to Mallarmé’s ice-bound bird of flights unflown. In passing, we may remark that Sri Aurobindo’s line has, like Mallarmé’s, a revelatory violence : “spaceless ether” is a challenging phrase, suggestive of a marvellous spiritual existence by its very self-contradiction for the trenchant intellect. If we seek a conceptive understanding we must attend to the old Indian metaphysical vision of the Divine and His manifestation. The one Self of all can be a sheer transcendence, timeless and spaceless, with the universal multiplicity indiscernibly submerged in it. When this Eternal and Infinite who is free of everything makes himself the base and continent of everything as well as the in-dweller and the very stuff of all, his first poise—the One in whom all beings exist—is self-existence with multiplicity self-discerned by it, not subject to Time and Space and, in that non-subjection, timeless and spaceless but supporting Time and Space as figures of its Consciousness, not bound

## GLIMPSES OF MALLARMÉ

by anything it creates and holds and becomes but ever exceeding its universe. This poise, of the single who is multiple yet not divided as in the cosmos, the ancient Yogis name *Akasha Brahman*, Brahman who is the ether containing all objects, not a physical and measurable but an indivisible encompassing and pervading ether of vast being, consciousness and bliss. The word "ether" suggests the concreteness, however subtle, of the spiritually Real, the supreme Origin, grown ready for manifestation, and the word "Swan" reinforces that non-abstract character as well as vivifies the beauty, purity, liberty of the soul that after surpassing Nature comes back to inhabit and traverse, possess and enjoy it without receiving the slightest stain or check.

To continue : the overhead is not confined to philosophic thought trans-figured and finally kindling up into a vision of mystic reality. It can do its whole thinking by means of symbols of the occult and spiritual, as in Sri Aurobindo's

All things hang here between God's yes and no...  
The white head and black tail of the mystic drake,  
The swift and the lame foot, wing strong, wing broken  
Sustaining the body of the uncertain world,  
A great surreal dragon in the skies.

Or it can place directly before us in a pure air of the Unknown a denizen of the supra-intellectual, something beyond thought yet keenly drawn for the mind's eye, as in Sri Aurobindo's passage about the heaven-descended heaven-attended Savitri's winged companion :

Almost they saw who lived within her light  
Her playmate in the sempiternal spheres  
Descended from its unattainable realms  
In her attracting advent's luminous wake,  
The white-fire dragon bird of endless bliss  
Drifting with burning wings above her days :  
Heaven's tranquil shield guarded the missioned child.

Or else the overhead can put us in the presence of the occultly spiritual with a sheerness divinely enigmatic and give us a super-Mallarméan Symbolism with no help conceded to the intellect, though the intellect cannot but feel a significant unity behind the burst of changing colour and fluctuant image, as in Sri Aurobindo's *Bird of Fire* :

## MOTHER INDIA

Gold-white wings a throb in the vastness, the bird of flame went  
glimmering over a sunfire curve to the haze of the west  
Skimming, a messenger sail, the sapphire-summer waste of a soundless  
wayless burning sea.  
Now in the eve of the waning world the colour and splendour returning  
drift through a blue-flicker air back to my breast,  
Flame and shimmer staining the rapture-white foam-vest of the waters  
of Eternity.

Gold-white wings of the miraculous bird of fire, late and slow have you  
come from the Timeless. Angel, here unto me  
Bringst thou for travailing earth a spirit silent and free or His crimson  
passion of love divine,—  
White-ray-jar of the spuming rose-red wine drawn from the vats brimming  
with light-blaze, the vats of ecstasy,  
Pressed by the sudden and violent feet of the Dancer in Time from His  
sun-grape fruit of a deathless vine.

White-rose altar the eternal Silence built, make now my nature wide, an  
intimate guest of His solitude,  
But golden above it the body of One in Her diamond sphere with Her halo  
of star-bloom and passion-ray !  
Rich and red is thy breast, O bird, like the blood of a soul climbing the  
hard crag-teeth world, wounded and nude,  
A ruby of flame-petalled love in the silver-gold altar-vase of moon-edged  
night and rising day.

O Flame who art Time's last boon of the sacrifice, offering-flower held by  
the finite's gods to the Infinite,  
O marvel bird with the burning wings of light and the unbarred lids that  
look beyond all space,  
One strange leap of thy mystic stress breaking the barriers of mind and  
life, arrives at its luminous term thy flight;  
Invading the secret clasp of the Silence and crimson Fire thou frontest  
eyes in a timeless Face.

Actual mystic vision is at work here, laying bare the concretely experienced activity of a living vehicle of the gold fire of the Divine Knowledge, the white fire of the Divine Will, the crimson fire of the Divine Love. Like all realities of the mystic domain it is more to be seen by the inner intuitive eye than

## GLIMPSES OF MALLARMÉ

thought about and its activity is to be heard by the inner intuitive ear through the verse-movement. As in all poetry the overhead verse-movement comes to our assistance with a very marked artistry. A striking instance is in the passage quoted before *The Bird of Fire*, where the noun-and-adjective combination accumulating through four consecutive line-endings is intended to create, as Sri Aurobindo has remarked, "a large luminous trailing repetitive movement like the flight of the Bird with its dragon-tail of white fire."

The overhead Super-Symbolism as well as other species of poetry from "above-mind" is distinguished not only by a new intensity of vision and a new intensity of word: it is distinguished also and pre-eminently by a new intensity of rhythm. There are several grades here and, at the highest, the rhythm is a movement of sound as if out of an immense endlessness of experience-thrill belonging to some uttermost superhuman secrecy where the smallest detail is consciously vibrant with a Presence that is from everlasting to everlasting. This life-rhythm, as it were, of the Divine and Deathless charges the lofty vision with a most moving reality and value, and the inmost tracts of our being get shaken and start responding in an incalculable way whose sovereignty the mind cannot challenge: rather the mind acquires a sort of halo of novel understanding. Similarly this life-rhythm fills the felicitous word with overtones and undertones of suggestion opening up the listening intelligence to an infinity of meaning that is not vague but massive and gripping though the intelligence may not be able altogether to cope with the vast weight and the intimate power. In all poetry the rhythm has a momentous function and is the ultimate sign of true inspiration, but all rhythm is not the direct carrier of the very heart-beat, as it were, of the Eternal: it transmits that beat from a distance while here the beat is heard at close quarters. Another manner of putting the difference is that while this heart-beat is behind the rhythm of all poetry it gets into the rhythm itself when the poetry is the highest overhead, making the poetry a supporting body for its profundity and grandeur. Even the lesser overhead levels carry the beat at a proximity which, if not immediate, is still unlike the distant-heard pulsation, in having no other sound mixed with that mighty music. For together with that music there is a supreme silence blotting out all inferior noises and throwing into various degrees of relief the Word of words. This silence is as important as the speech and makes the speech what it is; indeed the latter wells out of the former and the former is responsible for not only effacing the inferior noises and producing the necessary environment for their opposite but also for releasing from itself, for divulging from its own abyss, the sovereign song. For this silence is not the featureless void into which the soul often yearns to leap beyond the teeming thought: it is a plenitude, the Alone which is the All and out of which break the widest wings of what

Gerard Hopkins calls "the rise, the roll, the carol, the creation". The overhead poet is actually what Mallarmé strove to be: "Musician of Silence".

In his own way Mallarmé was such a musician, but the silence was not totally pure: at times he kept sufficiently away the voices of the ordinary life, but he did it with an effort and the very tension of their removal held the ghosts, so to speak, behind. The effort came from the fact that he was not drawn up enough into the mysticism that summoned him; and so, despite the aspiration towards the silence and despite even some degree of its achievement, his mystical music was from afar. The farness was surely other than the distance across which the Eternal floats into all poetry, for, in the latter the common sounds blend palpably and not, as in Mallarmé's verse, like a ghost, with the inner utterance. And because of his dissimilar farness he stands out from among the poets of his day as the "purest" and the profoundest and gave to his contemporaries the impression of being hieratic, not only by an uncompromising devotion to the cult of his art but also by his concentrated practice of the art of a cult—the two activities inextricably fused. Nothing less than this fusion was eulogised when his countrymen called him "le type absolu du Poète" and the greatest German poets after him, Stefan George and Rainer Maria Rilke, hailed his genius, the one in the last line of his tribute to the city of Paris where in youth he had listened to the Symbolists—

Da schirmten held und sänger das Geheimnis,  
Villiers sich hoch genug für einen thron,  
Verlaine in fall und busse fromm und kindlich,  
Und für sein denkbild blutend Mallarmé—

(Hero and singer shielded there the secret,  
Villiers proud enough to be a king,  
Verlaine in sin and penitence saint and childlike,  
Bleeding for his ideal Mallarmé—<sup>1</sup>)

the other in a letter : "The most sublime, the most condensed poet of our age." At rare times, even the farness, already diminished in part by its dissimilarity, thrills into closeness and then the overhead turn and tone seem to be Mallarmé's. But a certain hurdle to the overhead is his sense of the silence as the annulment of all sound, a *Néant* in which all music is "drowned in the Absolute" and not simultaneously "found in the Godhead" in a new form as that Absolute's self-disclosing harmony. The Platonic Ideas themselves are to him a vision

<sup>1</sup> C. M. Bowra's translation.

that makes the tongue fall hushed because nothing he can articulate is capable of expressing them adequately : hence his song which was a constant attempt to express them was a paradoxical process and set up a complex which never got quite resolved. Yet, for all the hurdles, great music leapt out from him—even on rare occasions the overhead accent.

Perhaps much of the opening quatrain of *Le Cygne* and undoubtedly the line about the swan's transparent glacier is a snatch of overhead verse. There are a few other lines that have the same quality in a different shape : for example, the one about eternity in the sonnet on Poe,

Tel qu'en Lui-même l'éternité le change

(At last to Himself he is changed by eternity)

and the one about death in the sonnet on Verlaine,

Un peu profond ruisseau calmnié la mort,

(So shallow a runnel—deeply slandered death,)

or else

Et l'avare silence et la massive nuit,

(The miser silence and the massive night,)

or

De scintillations sitôt le septuor.

(At once of scintillations the septet.)

Some of Mallarmé's contemporaries also arrive as if by accident at the overhead: there is in Rimbaud's *Bateau Ivre* that visionary bird-phrase which seems the hopeful far-seeing correlate to the despair with which the present is seen by Mallarmé's swan-line :

Est-ce en ces nuits sans fond que tu dors et t'exiles,  
Million d'oiseaux d'or, ô futur Vigueur ?



## MOTHER INDIA

(Sleepst thou an exile in these fathomless nights,  
Million of golden birds, O Vigour unborn ?)

Yes, at rare moments French poets—and more frequently some English singers—strike up into the overhead depths, but by and large those depths are still unfathomed nights in which a “Vigour unborn” is asleep. These writers, adepts as they are in poetry proper, are yet no more than brilliant novices in mystic seerhood. But among the novices Mallarmé with his directness of the subliminal has a special place of honour.

His mysticism may be open to censure—even apart from its odd intermixture with materialism—as life-shunning, as too aesthetically remote and even in its retreat from life it may be criticised for not sovereignly compassing in a silenceward call those aspects of the multi-mooded Divine that appealed to him and that Sri Aurobindo has described as being realised by a master of Yoga before the dynamic omnipotence is reached :

Across a void retreating sky he glimpsed  
Through a last glimmer and drift of vanishing stars  
The superconscient realms of motionless peace  
Where judgment ceases and the word is mute  
And the Unconceived lies pathless and alone.

Mallarmé's mysticism may be regarded as incomplete from several view-points, but we cannot deny the penetrating subtlety of his inspiration as well as the ultra-intellectual direction in which he moved—two factors that have turned the whole current of French and even all modernist poetry into a new channel, a new channel which has been diversely dug by his successors with a technical freedom of force stimulated considerably by the liberty and audacity with which he treated a language so academically guarded as French. And when his works are sought to be minimised as unintelligible and freakish instead of being appreciated as the speech of a novel significance, we may repeat Sri Aurobindo's question in the letter from which we have already taken many a guiding hint : “Then why did they have so much influence on the finest French poetry and why is modernist poetry trying to burrow into the subliminal in order to catch something even one quarter as fine as his language, images and mystic suggestions ?”

*(Concluded)*

K. D. SETHNA

## IS OUR CHRONOLOGY FOR ANCIENT INDIA CORRECT?

(Some Criticisms and Suggestions)

9

AN astronomically-minded reader has doubted whether our logic in regard to Varāhamihira's passage on the Saptarishis and Yudhishtira or our interpretation of certain astronomical references in his works is sufficient to fix his Śaka Era in 551 or 550 B.C. and his own date in the time of the traditional Vikramāditya, founder of the Era of 57 B.C. It is urged that there is a very important astronomical statement of his, which goes against such a chronology. The statement in question is about the beginning of the Uttarāyaṇa (winter solstice) and the Dakṣiṇāyana (summer solstice) as actually observed by him in his time and as recorded in the works of his predecessors like Pulīśa, Parāśara and Garga.

It happens that S. Narayana Sastri<sup>1</sup> dealt with this very matter in 1917. So we cannot do better than make his treatment our basis and, wherever possible, his own words too. We shall change only some part of the sequence of his arguments and give our astronomical readings from the diagrammatic table he has provided<sup>2</sup> rather than from his text which is not free from misprints.<sup>3</sup>

In Chapter III, verse 2, of the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*, Varāhamihira has four stanzas which N. Chidambaram Iyer, one of the best South Indian astronomers, translates thus :

1. "At one time, the sun's southward course (Dakṣiṇāyana) commenced on his reaching the middle of Aśleshā (the ninth constellation), and its northward course (Uttarāyana) on its reaching the beginning of Dhanishṭhā (the twenty-third constellation, the Delphin of European astronomers). This must have been the case as we find it so recorded in ancient books.

2. Whereas at present the one course of the sun (Dakṣiṇāyana) commences at the beginning of Cancer (Karkaṭaka), and the other (Uttarāyana) at the beginning of Capricornus (Makara). That it is so, and different from what it was at one time, can easily be ascertained from actual observation as follows :

<sup>1</sup> *The Mistaken Greek Synchronism in Indian History*, pp. 200-225.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* also Swamikanu Pillar's *Indian Chronology*, p. 233

<sup>3</sup> Readers not interested in astronomical technicalities may skip this section and go straight to the next a few pages ahead.

3. Either from observing some distant point in the horizon where the sun rises or sets, or from observing the ingress and the egress of the end of shadow of a perpendicular rod placed at the centre of a big horizontal circle, the change in the sun's course can be detected.

4. If the sun should change his course before reaching Makara (Capricornus) he will bring evil on the west and south; and if he should do so before reaching Karkāṭaka (Cancer), he will bring evil on the south and east."

Varāhamihira's commentator Bhaṭṭotpala, in explaining the above passage in his *Viṛti* to the *Bṛhat Saṃhita*, makes us understand that, expressed in degrees (*Bhāgas*), minutes (*Kalās*) and seconds (*Vikalās*), the Dakṣiṇāyana (*Kāṭakāyana*) with the sun in the middle of Āśleshā (*Āvilyam*) took place in the time of Parāśara and Garga when the sun reached 113 degrees 20 minutes of the ecliptic or about the 24th day of Āḍi; and the Uttarāyana with the sun in the very beginning of Dhanishṭhā or Śravishṭhā (*Aviṭṭam*) when the sun reached 293 degrees 20 minutes or about the 24th day of Tai. For, according to the *Parāśara-Tantra*, as quoted by Bhaṭṭotpala, "The period of time taken up by the Sun in travelling from the first point of Śravishṭhā (*Aviṭṭam*) to the latter half of Revati (or more correctly to the first point of the third *pāda* of Revati is called Śīsira-Ritu (the Dewy Season); that taken for travelling from the latter half of Revati to the end of Rohiṇī is called Vasanta-Ritu (the Spring Season); and that taken in travelling from the first point of Mṛgaśīrsha to the end of the second *pāda* of (*Āśleshā Āvilyam*) is called Grīshma-Rtu (the Summer Season). Similarly the period of time occupied by the Sun in moving from the first point of the third *pāda* of Āśleshā to the end of Hastā is called Varshā-Ritu (the Rainy Season); to the end of the second *pāda* of Jyeshṭha (*Keṭṭai*) is called Śarad-Ritu (the Autumnal Season); and that period again occupied by the Sun in passing from the first point of the third *pāda* of Jyeshṭha to the end of Śravaṇa (*Tiruwoṇam*) is called Hemanta-Ritu (the Winter Season)."

Here we may take warning from Bhāskarāchārya, a much later astronomer, that his predecessors in the science of astronomy were acquainted only with very crude instruments to measure the motion of the planets and we must therefore take their calculation as being merely approximate, and it may vary to the extent of a Nakshatra *pāda* or 3 degrees 20 minutes this side or that. So "Revatyanta" or "the end of Revati" in the above passage must be taken to mean the last point of the second *pāda* of Revati or the first point of the third *pāda* of Revati, since each Ritu occupies only 4 ½ Nakshatras.

A second consideration, more immediate to the matter, is that the information given in the *Bṛhat Saṃhita* which is a rough work on astrology has to be checked by what is said in the same author's *Pañchasiddhāntikā* which is

a more scientific work on astronomy. In Chapter III, verse 59, of the latter book Varāhamihira distinctly states :

आश्लेषार्धादासीद्यदा निवृत्तिः किलोष्णकिरणस्य ।

युक्तमयनं तदाऽऽसीत्, साम्प्रतमयन पुनर्वसुतः ॥५९॥

Here the important expression is *Punarvasutaḥ*—“from Punarvasu”. Obviously the constellation or asterism Punarvasu must be considered as a whole, as one block, if the sun is to be seen as moving from it. Then we can start the sun from its beginning or from its end : either of the two extremities can serve. Neither logically nor philologically can any intermediate position in it be taken. And in the two extreme *pādas* of the four, each of which has a first point and a last, we have to start the sun either from the first point of the first *pāda* or from the last point of the fourth. Varāhamihira certainly could not have meant the former, for, the Karkaṭaka-Rāśi (Cancer) which is involved in the Dakṣiṇāyana in his time has itself its commencement with the fourth *pāda* of Punarvasu, and the first *pāda* of Punarvasu could never correspond to “the beginning of Cancer” (*Karkaṭakādi*) mentioned in the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*. Hence only the last point of the last *pāda* must have been intended and we have to understand the Dakṣiṇāyana to have commenced when the sun stood on the common point which is the last of Punarvasu and the first of the next asterism Pushyā : *i.e.*, 93 degrees 20 minutes of the ecliptic.

Pandit Sudhākara Dvivedi, no doubt, feels the difficulty of making *Punarvasutaḥ* mean anything else than either “from the beginning of Punarvasu” or “from the end of Punarvasu”, but, unwilling to interpret the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* or astrological portion of Varāhamihira’s work in the light of the more scientific and astronomical portion, he takes the summer solstice to have commenced in Varāhamihira’s time when the sun reached the common point which is the very last of the third *pāda* and the very first of the fourth *pāda* of Punarvasu. So the learned scholiast tries to explain away *Punarvasutaḥ* by a comment which we may translate : “Even though by the term Punarvasu the *pāda* is not shown, the word of the *Saṃhitā* as laid down by the Āchārya implies three-quarters (three *pādas*) of Punarvasu.” This is merely a gratuitous assumptions : neither “the Language of the Gods” nor the logic of men will allow any such explanation. So we should translate the passage of the *Pañchasiddhāntikā* :

“The Dakṣiṇāyana then took place when the sun returned from the middle of Āsleshā ; now it commences from the last point of Punarvasu.”

This stanza, which is also quoted by Bhaṭṭotpala in his commentary on the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā* (Vide Chapter II, p. 41 under “Siddhānta Bheda”) clearly shows that while the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*’s indication about the Dakṣiṇāyana in the time of Pulīsa as in that of Parāśara is literally acceptable, the indication about it in Varāhamihira’s time (*sāmpratam*) has to be taken subject to the correction available in the *Pañchasiddhāntikā* and therefore interpreted as 93 degrees 20 minutes of the ecliptic. Similarly a correction has to be applied to the indication about the Uttarāyaṇa in Varāhamihira’s time. As said in Chapter II. v. 63 of *Pañchasiddhāntikā* and in Chapter III. p.23, under “Tatra Grahagaṇite”, of Bhaṭṭhotpala’s commentary on the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, the Uttarāyaṇa took place when the sun reached not the very first point of the second *pāda* of Uttarāshādha, as the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā* may suggest, but the middle of Uttarāshādha (*Uttarādam*) : i.e., 273 degrees 20 minutes of the ecliptic.

These corrections draw our attention to the vagueness of the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*’s expressions कर्कटकाद्य (*Karkaṭakādyam*) and मृगादित (*Mṛgādītaḥ*) standing respectively for “the beginning of Cancer (Karkaṭaka)” and “the beginning of Capricornus (Makara)”. For, if the last point of the fourth *pāda* of Punarvasu is connected with the Karkaṭaka-Rāśi although this Rāśi itself starts earlier in the same *pāda*, the word *ādi* which is in both the expressions from the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā* and which means “the beginning” is not necessarily indicative of the very first point of the beginning but only some point in the first portion of a thing. The very first point is not absolutely ruled out ; and in the case of Dhanishṭhā the expression has to be literally understood, since no modification is suggested in the *Pañchasiddhāntikā*. But in general a less strict alternative must be regarded as being open. And, in fact, we actually find in literature that *ādi* can on occasion mean nothing more than the first portion of a thing and need not always signify the very first point of the commencement. Thus in the expression कल्यादौ नन्दनामान केचिदासन् महोमुह quoted by Colonel Wilford and Dr. H. H. Wilson from the Introduction to the Commentary of *Mudrārākshasa* in dealing with the question of the age of Chandragupta Maurya, the word कल्यादौ —“In the beginning of Kali”—cannot in any sense be interpreted to mean “In the very commencement or starting-point of the Kali Yuga”, as that would place the reign of the Nandas in 3102 B.C. or at any other date, like 1177 B.C. of V. Gopala Aiyar, assumed by Orientalists as the starting-point of the Kali Yuga; for it is distinctly stated in all the Purāṇas and uniformly admitted by all the Orientalists that three dynasties—the Brāhadratha, the Pradyota and the Śāisunāga—ruled for either roughly 1500 or 1000 years after the commencement of the Kali Yuga.

Now, with the data from Varāhamihira clearly understood, we may proceed to give chronological content to them with the help of information about our own time. According to the latest discoveries and the most accurate calculations as recorded in modern almanacs, Hindu and European, the year 1917-1918<sup>1</sup> in which Narayana Sastri wrote and which corresponded to Pingala of the year 5018 of the Kali Yuga had the summer solstice when the sun reached the beginning of the first *pāda* of Ārdrā (*Tiruvādirai*) *i.e.*, 67 degrees 28 minutes or about the 8th day of Āni; and it had the winter solstice when the sun reached the beginning of the third *pāda* of Mūla, *i.e.*, 247 degrees 28 minutes or about the 8th day of Mārgazhi. From these materials we can easily calculate the interval of time, not only between Parāśara and Varāhamihira, but also between Parāśara and ourselves on the one hand and Varāhamihira and ourselves on the other, if only we know the rate of Ayana Chalana or the precession of the equinoxes.

Chidambaram Iyer<sup>2</sup>, while discussing several vexed questions of Indian astronomy, quotes various authorities and shows what the rate of the precession of the equinoxes is according to various Hindu astronomers. According to Ganeśa Daivajña's *Graha-Lāghava*, the rate is 60 seconds per annum. It is 59 seconds according to Manjulāchārya's *Mānasa-Grantha*. The *Sūrya-Siddhānta* makes it 54 seconds, while Varāhamihira makes it 50 seconds. Modern astronomers put it at 50.26 seconds. The difference between Varāhamihira and these astronomers is so very little that there will be a difference of only about 10 years in calculating a difference amounting to 100,000; we shall be content to calculate the rate as it at present obtains—that is, 50.26 seconds per annum.

Now, if in Parāśara's time the Dakṣiṇāyayna occurred when the sun reached the very first point of the third *pāda* of Āśleshā, 113 degrees 20 minutes of the ecliptic, and if in 1917 it occurred when the sun was in the first portion of the first *pāda* of Ārdra, 67 degrees 28 minutes of the ecliptic, the difference between the two points amounts to 45 degrees 52 minutes or 165120 seconds. Taking the rate of the precession of the equinoxes to be 50.26 seconds per annum, 165120 seconds will give us  $165120 \times \frac{100}{5026} = 3285 \frac{1519}{5026}$  or 3285 years in round figures. Parāśara must have lived 3285 years before 1917 : that is, 3285-1917—1368 B.C. This result almost tallies with the result 1391 B.C. reached by Davies in whose day the prevailing idea was that the precession of the equinoxes had a retrograde motion at the rate of 50 seconds per annum.

The same result can be arrived at if we take the Uttarāyaṇa. If in Parāśara's

<sup>1</sup> See *The Tamil Calendar for 1917-1918*, edited by Jyotirbhushanām T.S. Visvanatha Srautigaḷ, B.A.

<sup>2</sup> "The Hindu Zodiac" in the *Theosophist*, Vol. IV, No. 7, pp. 176-180.

time it happened when the sun was on the first point of the first *pāda* of Dhani-shthā or 293 degrees 20 minutes while in 1917 it happened when the sun was in the first part of the third *pāda* of Mūla or 247 degrees 28 minutes, the difference between the two is again exactly 45 degrees 52 minutes or 165120 seconds.

Likewise from the same materials we can find out the interval of time between Varāhamihira and ourselves. As the summer solstice took place in his day when the sun was at the end of Punarvasu, 93 degrees 20 minutes and in 1917 at 67 degrees 29 minutes, the difference is equal to 25 degrees 52 minutes or 93120 seconds. Taking, as before, the rate of the precession of the equinoxes to be 50.26 seconds per annum, we get  $93120 \times \frac{100}{5026} = 1852 \frac{3842}{5026}$  or 1853 years in round figures. Consequently Varāhamihira must have lived in 1917-1853—64 A.D. The two winter solstices—273 degrees 20 minutes and 247 degrees 28 minutes—yield precisely the same difference in degrees, minutes and seconds and the same number of years for the interval of time between Varāhamihira and ourselves.

But our Orientalists interpret the expression *Sāmpratam ayanam Savituḥ Karkaṭakādya* etc. in verse 2 of Chapter III of the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* as meaning that the summer and winter solstices in Varahamihira's time took place when the sun reached exactly the first point of Karkaṭaka (Cancer) and the first point of Makara (Capricornus) respectively. This amounts to saying that the Dakshināyana commenced when the sun reached the very first point of the fourth *pāda* of Punarvasu at the end of three-quarters (three *pādas*), exactly 90 degrees of the ecliptic, and the Uttarāyana when the sun reached the very first point of the second *pāda* of Uttarāshādha, exactly 270 degrees. Then for the Dakshināyana the difference between Parāśara's time and Varāhamihira's will be got by deducting 90 degrees from 113 degrees 20 minutes : 23 degrees 20 minutes or 84000 seconds. This will give us  $84000 \times \frac{100}{5026} = 1671 \frac{1554}{5026}$  or 1671 years in round figures. Again, the difference between Varāhamihira's time and 1917 for the Dakshināyana will be got by deducting 67 degrees 28 minutes from 90 degrees : 22 degrees 32 minutes or 81120 seconds. In other words,  $81120 \times \frac{100}{5026} = 1614 \frac{36}{5026}$  or 1614 in round figures. Accordingly Varāhamihira will have to be placed in 1917-1614—303 A.D. instead of in 64 A.D.

When the *Pañchasiddhāntikā*'s correction of the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* is kept in mind, it becomes impossible to place Varāhamihira later than 64 A.D. However, he may be carried backward by 240 years, the maximum limit of a Nakshatra-*pāda*, within which the calculations of our ancient astronomers are said to vary on account of the crude state of their astronomical instruments. With this lati-

tude of 240 years permitted, we can date him between 64 A.D. as the lower limit and 176 B.C. as the upper. We cannot date him in 505 A.D. by taking the epoch of 427 Śaka given in the *Pañchasiddhāntikā* as referring to the Śaka Era of 78 A.D. Even the other date, 303 A.D. arrived at by Orientalists, does not directly justify a reference to that Śaka Era. Hence Varāhamihira's Śaka Era must be 551 or 550 B.C. as inferred by us from all indications available, and the epoch of this book must be 124 or 123 B.C. and the date of his death in 509 Śaka according to Amaraja must be 42 or 41 B.C.

10

Placing the first Western Satraps—Nahapana and Chashtana—round about 500 B.C. on the strength of Varāhamihira's Saka Era, we have found the twenty-five years between 522 and 497 B.C. to be the reign-period of the Andhra-Satavahana king Gautamiputra Satakarni. This makes short work of the current view that the Maurya dynasty which comes much before the Andhras was founded between 325 and 315 B.C. But merely to discredit that view is not sufficient. The appositeness of our own view to the problem of Sandrocottus must be shown. For, if Sandrocottus cannot be Chandragupta Maurya, he must lend himself to another identification. Does any new identification emerge in consequence of the reign-period we have given Gautamiputra ?

The general consensus of the Puranas makes Gautamiputra the 23rd Andhra and after him the consensus is for 7 more kings, thus bringing the total to 30.<sup>1</sup> But one version of the Vayu Purana gives a king named Satakarni whose proper place is demonstrated by Pargiter, after considering all the Puranas available, to be between the 1st and the 3rd kings after Gautamiputra.<sup>2</sup> Pargiter remarks : "A line found in only one MS should not be rejected straight away, hence I have included him in the list...if he is genuine, we may suppose that the total 30 is a round number." As there is no reason to reject him we may tabulate from Pargiter the list, with the reign-years, as follows<sup>3</sup> : Puloma 28 , Satakarni 29, Sivasri 7, Sivaskandha Satakarni 3, Yajnasri Satakarni 29, Vijaya 6, Chandrasri Satakarni 10, Pulomavi 7. The total comes to 119. But on consulting Sastri's *Kings of Magadha* we find some variants<sup>4</sup> : 32 or 34 for Puloma, 7 for Sivaskandha, 19 for Yajnasri, 3 for Chandrasri. Our choice should depend on conforming the total of all the

<sup>1</sup> Pargiter, *The Dynasties of the Kali Age*, pp. 36-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p 37

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p 36.

<sup>4</sup> Pp 101-103.



31 Andhras to one or other of the Puranic totals : 300, 411, 412, 456, 460. If, as we have already shown, the Andhra dynasty started in 798 B.C. (inclusive) and reigned up to Gautamiputra's death in 497 B.C. for 302 years, the total open to us with the addition of the periods of the last 8 Andhras, with their fairly limited average and their none too large variants, can only be 411 or 412. Counting from the year 302 (inclusive, of course, because in it Puloma ascended the throne on Gautamiputra's death) we get a remainder of 110 or 111 years for the post-Gautamiputra Andhras. As Pargiter<sup>1</sup> admits his 3 for Sivaskandha to be more or less conjectural while Sastri gives 7 confidently from his sources and Sircar<sup>2</sup> accepts the same number, we may adopt the 4 extra years even if the total is raised to  $119 + 4 = 123$ . To bring it down we may choose 19 for Yajnasri and 3 for Chandrasri, so that we get 17 less, pulling the total down to 106, and then take 32 instead of 28 for Puloma, thus adding 4 and bringing up the total to 110. But the inscription<sup>3</sup> of the last Andhra king, Pulomavi, discovered at Myakadoni in the Bellary District, is dated in his 8th regnal year. So we have to count one year more for him and reach the total 111.

111 years from 497 B.C. (inclusive) brings us to 387 B.C. as marking the termination of the Andhra dynasty. This date is perfectly in keeping with all Puranic evidence. One astronomical condition has to be observed in tallying any result about the end of the Andhras with what the Puranas say about them. A similar condition holds in regard to the beginning of the Andhras. For, the Puranas<sup>4</sup>, after mentioning that at the birth of Parikshit which coincides with the Mahabharata War in 3138 B.C. the Saptarishi (the constellation, Great Bear) were conjoined with the lunar asterism Magha for 100 years, go on to say :

Āndhrāmśe tu chatur-vimśe bhaviṣyanti śatam samāḥ.

This means : "In a part of the Andhras they will be in the 24th asterism for 100 years." Pargiter prefers the reading "Āndhrante" to "Āndhrāmśe", and translates it here as elsewhere by : "at the end of the Andhras". We have shown previously that in the absence of the clear genitive "Ānthrāntam" as well as for other reasons the word should mean in the Puranas : "in the time at whose end are the Andhras". But, with "Āndhrāmśe", we get  $3138 - 2400 = 738$  B.C. as the date before which a part of the Andhra dynasty has already

<sup>1</sup> P. 25, note 7 ; p. 71. note 19.

<sup>2</sup> *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> *Epigraphia Indica*, XIV, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup> Vayu Purana, 99.423 ; also Brahmanda Purana (*Vide* Pargiter, *Op.cit.*, p. 61, note 92).

reigned, while with “Āndhrante” in our sense we get it as the date at which this dynasty starts. The second is in direct conflict with the statement of the Matsya Purana (271.39) that the Pulomas and Andhras come 836 years after the point of time indicated in verses just preceding this statement—namely, Mahapadma’s coronation : the starting-time of the Pulomas and Andhras is therefore 798 B.C. If 798 B.C. is their starting-time, 738 B.C. would be precisely the date we need : 60 years will have elapsed, a period which can truly be called “a part of the Andhras” who ruled for 412 years according to our computation. Pargiter’s translation will be shown as even chronologically impossible when we have studied the Puranic astronomical condition about the end of the Andhras.

In fulfilling this condition we have again to consider the Saptarishis. Here a little clarification is needed, for, instead of Maghā we find a different name. We must keep in mind that three points are employed by the Puranas in their chronology, whether in connection with the Great Bear or with time-periods in general : Parikshit, Mahapadma, the Andhras. The Saptarishi cycle is taken not from its first century completed—that is, not from 3076 B.C.—but from its first century initiated—that is, from 3176 B.C. And this century is the one which includes the birth of Parikshit, the Maghā century. It is with reference to the same century that, as we have seen, the time of “a part of the Andhras” is declared to be the 24th century. Now after a mention of the intervals from Parikshit’s birth to Mahapadma’s coronation and from that coronation to the commencement of the Andhras and from Parikshit’s birth to that commencement, comes the statement in the Matsya Purana<sup>1</sup> :

Saptarṣya stadā prāmsu pradīpten-agninā samāh (I)  
saptavimśati bhāviyānām āndhrāṇantu yadā punah (II)

“The Seven Rishis were then in the high brilliant Agni. 27 centuries afterwards, amongst the very Andhras the cycle repeats itself.” Evidently, this statement, following immediately on the one about the time intervening between Parikshit’s birth and the advent of the Andhra dynasty, bears on the situation of the Saptarishis at that birth and then tells us of their getting into the same situation after completing one whole cycle of 2700 years. Some copies<sup>2</sup> of the Matsya Purana read for “pradīpten-agninā” either “pradīpten-agninā” or “pratāpten-agninā” or else “pradīpta ch-agni vai”. All point to the same thing through their corrupt forms.

<sup>1</sup> 271, 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 59, note 43

But in some copies<sup>1</sup> of the Vayu Purana we read: “pratīpe rojñi”, “pratīpe rāja”, “pratīpam rījñi”. Instead of regarding these readings as mistakes for “pradipten-agni” Pargiter amends them to “Pratīpe rājñi”, which would mean: “while Pratipa was king”. “Pratipa” happens to be the name of an ancestor of Parikshit, and Pargiter asks us to believe that the Great Bear’s cycle is said by the Puranas to have begun with Pratipa. It is unintelligible how in a context where Parikshit is mentioned as the starting-point of the chronology Pratipa could suddenly enter. The Brahmanda Purana, according to Pargiter’s own admission,<sup>2</sup> has the phrase “pitrye pārīkṣite”. It is well-known that when speaking of the junction of the Dwapara and the Kali ages, which was in the same century in which Parikshit was born, Vriddha Garga puts the Seven Rishis in the asterism Pitris. The Pitris are taken by both Colebrooke and Cunningham,<sup>3</sup> in consonance with all Indian views, as identical with Maghā. The Puranas are obviously talking of Parikshit and Maghā when they are talking of the Seven Rishis being in “the high brilliant Agni”. Pargiter’s amendment would result in the statement: “The Great Bear was then while Pratipa was king”—a meaningless phrase. Pargiter<sup>4</sup> confers meaning on it by an interpolation and writes: “The Great Bear was situated equally with regard to the lunar constellation Puṣya while Pratipa was king.” What is “prāmsu” is suspected by him<sup>5</sup> to be really “Puṣye” because if Pratipa is mentioned and not any lunar constellation it is necessary to the sense that a lunar constellation should be somewhere in the passage.

Mankad<sup>6</sup> objects that the sloka where “prāmsu” occurs is not the one which contains anything even vaguely suggestive of Pratipa and so, even if one or the other be admissible, the connecting up of Pratipa with Puṣya is illegitimate. Jayaswal<sup>7</sup> comments that if Pargiter had realised the significance of Agni in the verses he would have indulged in no guess-work, for *Agni* is there to denote a Nakshatra just as *Pitrye* is in the Brahmanda Purana: the presiding deities have been named instead of the Nakshatras. Pargiter’s interpolation is in every way absolutely arbitrary.

But all his fantasy takes birth because, besides failing to gauge the import of Agni, he took 836 years to be the interval between Mahapadma’s coronation and the end of the Andhra dynasty and 1050 years to have passed from Parikshit

<sup>1</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 59, note 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Essays*, II, p. 303; *A Book of Indian Eras*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>4</sup> *Op.cit.*, p. 75; also note 2 on the same page.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 59, note 41.

<sup>6</sup> *Puranic Chronology*, p. 292

<sup>7</sup> *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, vol III, p. 249.

to Mahapadma's coronation: if now the passage is taken to refer to Parikshit's time there would be a much greater interval than  $1050+836=1886$  years between Parikshit and the last Andhra, for Pargiter has translated the next passage: "At the end of the Andhras, who will be in the 27th century afterwards the cycle repeats itself." The 27th century must be considered to have been counted from some starting-point beyond Parikshit. Pargiter<sup>1</sup> deducts 1886 years from 2700 and remarks that the remainder 814 must be allowed for the interval between Pratipa and Parikshit. This, however, has strange implications. Pargiter<sup>2</sup> calls Pratipa the ancestor of Parikshit in the seventh degree. But then each of Parikshit's predecessors up to Pratipa gets an average of nearly 116 years, a length of life utterly repugnant to Pargiter's own penchant<sup>3</sup> for granting kings a reign-period of no more than 18 years and hence a life-span too of moderate length. Again, there is his other translation:<sup>4</sup> "The Great Bear was conjoined with Maghās in Parikshit's time 100 years. It will be in (*i.e.*, conjoined with) the 24th constellation 100 years at the termination of the Andhras." To this translation he attaches a note<sup>5</sup>: "Apparently, either no. 24 in the order of reckoning the lunar constellations, or the 24th after the Maghās." Whether we think 2400 years to have terminated with the end of the Andhras or with the Andhras beginning at the end of it, the sense seems inevitable that the 24th constellation is counted from Maghā, for otherwise not Maghā but an equivalent number would have been mentioned. Even if we take the alternative suggested by Pargiter, the context of the Great Bear makes it logical to believe that the 24th constellation from the one with which the Great Bear's cycle started is meant: the order of reckoning cannot have anything else as its point of departure. But then we have a contradiction: in one place Pargiter takes the Andhras to have ended 27 centuries after the beginning of the cycle with Puṣya and now he offers us 24 centuries. Nor is this the full sum of the confusion. Whether we go backward from the end of the Andhras by 27 centuries or by 24 we shall never reach Puṣya; for, while 27 centuries demand, according to Pargiter, our going backward by 814 years from Parikshit and Maghā and 24 centuries call, according to him, for our going 514 years backward, Puṣya happens to be no more than two centuries before Maghā ! Any table<sup>6</sup> of the constellations should tell us that between

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 75, note 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, note 3.

*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition (Journal of the Royal Indian Asiatic Society, 1911, pp. 479 f, 675 f.)*

<sup>4</sup> *Op.cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, note 9.

<sup>6</sup> Cunningham, *A Book of Indian Eras*, p. 117.

Maghā and Puṣyā only one constellation—namely, Āsleshā—intervenes if we adopt, as we must with the Saptarishi, a retrograde motion, or else twenty-four constellations intervene if we go forward. In either case we do not get 814 years or even 514. Pargiter himself seems aware of the retrograde motion required and also of the proximity of Puṣya to Maghā: he<sup>1</sup> writes, “Puṣya as the constellation in Pratipa’s time might tally with Maghā in Parikshit’s time about a century and a half later.” Yes, Pargiter shows commendable knowledge here, but a colossal giving of the lie to himself is involved.

His entire attempt at amendment turns out to be deplorable. Besides, unlike Maghā which often occurs in the Puranas, Puṣya is nowhere to be found in them. It is simply dragged in by Pargiter to prop up a translation which lands him in a fix. We may reject without the slightest hesitation his fanciful reading of Puṣya and Pratipa and of the Puranic chronology and his translation of “Āndhrante”. Our own reading as well as rendering is thoroughly vindicated. The only problem before us is to understand why Maghā is equated, as it most certainly is, with “the high brilliant Agni” which presides over the asterism Krittika.

Even if we fail to understand, the equation will hold by sheer force of the context. But there is no need to admit failure. Narayana Sastrī has pointed out that according to one astronomical nomenclature the hundred years between 3176 and 3076 are called the Maghā century while according to another they are called the Krittika century and he refers us to the table given by Cunningham on page 17 of *The Book of Indian Eras*, where two systems of astronomy are presented in different columns and Maghā is put in the same line as Krittika. Mankad<sup>2</sup> has drawn attention to some astronomical facts from which we may conjecture the cause of one school starting with Krittika and the other with Maghā. The Great Bear, as modern Astronomy assures us, is never really seen moving : its movement seems to have been imagined for chronological purposes. The upper part of the Great Bear consists of four stars at almost the four corners of a square—say, *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, with *c* standing below *a* and *d* below *b*. If *a* and *b* are taken as the first stars to rise in the night-sky, the asterism with which the Great Bear will be seen as conjoined according to the traditional operation of drawing a line south and north from one connecting them will be Krittika. But if *a* and *c* are taken as the first stars, the asterism will be Maghā. Now there are two readings in the Puranas<sup>3</sup> about the rising of the Great Bear. One has the words “uditau niśi” which Pargiter renders by “risen at night”

<sup>1</sup> *Op.cit.*, p. 59, note 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Puranic Chronology*, pp. 329-31.

<sup>3</sup> Pargiter, *Op. cit.*, p. 60, line 18 and note 80 ; p. 75 and note 7.

or "risen in the sky": the other has "uttarā diśi" which he translates by "in the northern region" and which would be better translated by "in the northern direction." Mankad tells us that "udītau niśi" would direct us to Krittika, "uttarā diśi" to Maghā. All depends, therefore, on what pair of stars is regarded as constituting the pointers. Both the asterisms can be considered as beginning the Saptarishi Era. So "the high brilliant Agni" can be considered an alternative to Maghā and taken to refer to an identical time. Thus our problem gets solved.

To return to the Andhras : we may ask where exactly in time they will be if the Seven Rishis repeat their cycle amongst them. Deducting 2700 years from 3176 B.C. we arrive at 476 B.C. We have made the Andhras end in 387 B.C. Hence the duration of the dynasty would include 476 B.C. and the statement that the cycle is repeated amongst them is justified. Or if we go by Parikshit's birth which is the point given us and deduct 2700 from 3138 B.C. we get 438 B.C. which still falls "amongst the Andhras".

We may now attend directly to the question : Does any new identification of Sandrocottus emerge in consequence of the reign-period we have granted Gautamiputra ? To frame any identification of him properly we must have a dynasty ruling at Pataliputra in Magadha and beginning with a name which may answer to his. According to all historians the next great dynasty to the Andhras is that of the Guptas and this dynasty is acknowledged to have been Magadhan and to have ruled at Pataliputra. It is also held by all historians that between the last Andhra Pulomavi and the first Gupta there was a period whose duration cannot be correctly estimated but is certainly not more than a hundred years. Modern histories give nearly a century because of the chronology generally fixed for the Andhras as well as the Guptas. Once the whole chronological basis is altered, the time-span may change: what remains unchanged is the fact of a fair interval. A fair interval seems indicated also in the Puranas. Their historical portions about the kings of Magadha stop with the Andhra dynasty and provide us, in the midst of some apparent confusion, with only a general list of several lines of kings some of whom reigned simultaneously and some in succession. Among these are mentioned the Guptas in just two verses<sup>1</sup>;

Anu-gaṅga prayāgamcha sāketam magadhamstathā  
Etān Janapadān sarvān bhokshyante guptavamśajāh.

Pargiter's translation<sup>2</sup> runs: "(Kings) born of the Gupta race will enjoy all these territories, namely, along the Ganges, Prayāga, Sāketa and the Magadhas."

<sup>1</sup> Pargiter, *Op.cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

The territories are not sufficient to make the full empire of the Guptas as developed in the course of their long career, but, according to Raychaudhuri<sup>1</sup> in agreement with Allan, they are exactly what we should think to be the kingdom of the first Gupta. Jayaswal<sup>2</sup> takes a different view about them: "As to the Guptas having been mentioned as ruling over a small tract—the Gangetic valley up to Allāhābād only—it seems that about the time the Purānic chronicles came to an end, the Gupta Empire had contracted into those limits; and as the Guptas were still reigning, no details as to their number and reign-periods could be given." Whatever the correct opinion, all historical pointers are towards the Gupta dynasty of Magadha as the one we should interrogate in our attempt at finding a new identification of Sandrocottus. And here the first suggestive thing is that this dynasty began with a king named Chandragupta. The second which is even more worth remarking is that after Chandragupta Maurya this is the only Magadhan king whose name can next be equated to Sandrocottus and that by following the Puranic chronology we find him coming exactly in a period which can be considered the time of Alexander the Great. Is there a fortuitous coincidence here? The stamp of truth seems to be on such a precise adjustment.

But, as we have made it our policy to give fair play to every argument against the Puranic chronology, we must next weigh the similitudes asserted by modern historians between the Greek accounts of Sandrocottus and the Indian of Chandragupta Maurya. After noting how far the comparison can hold we shall consider whether the Greek accounts tally better with what we can gather about Chandra of the Gupta dynasty.

*(To be continued)*

K. D. SETHNA

<sup>1</sup> *The Political History of Ancient India*, p. 361.

<sup>2</sup> *The Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. 3, p. 251.

# Students' Section

---

## A MYSTIC SETTING

(An example in composition for a Higher English Class in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram)

SOON after the Balcony Darshan we were to start for our much-looked-for excursion. The morning was lovely and its call delightfully insistent. But though the party was small and homogeneous and needed no ceremonial equipment, we were about half an hour behind the scheduled time. Some had to finish their flower-work and perhaps try to catch a glimpse of the Mother before starting, some wanted to have blessing-touch of the Samadhi, others were obliged to leave mundane directions to their servants. At last on the saddle, we cycled fast across the town. But the places which had so often appeared drab did not seem now devoid of a simple grace. The old crammed houses were 'dingy' and the *maladive* streets were relieved by some new buildings that were shining out like fresh leaves among pale decaying ones. It was evident that the unseen rays of the Ashram had pierced into the dormant spirit of the people and been working a slow change in their traditional outlook on life.

As soon as we reached the open, Nature greeted us with awakened eyes. The green rice-fields were waving in the light, birds singing from the bushes, trees murmuring and, over them all, the fine crimson rays of the sun shining. One could still feel a pervading hush out of which all these sights and sounds seemed to emerge. Insanctively we perceived the hush entering our being and all speech died on our lips: we were like statues moving on.

But my mind began to feed on the green life around. I cannot explain why this smooth greenness exerts such a powerful fascination over me. It penetrates into my very blood or, to put it in another way, my whole being goes out to become one with the universal greenness. Wordsworthian? But what is not Wordsworthian is that these verdant festivals of Nature always remind me of my childhood visits to my maternal uncle's place, though my own native place was far more beautiful. The dark waters of the moat around the houses running tortuously through the cane-creepers, bamboo groves, thick and thin



## MOTHER INDIA

curtains of trees and wild plants with their strange odour had a singular attraction for my young romantic soul. The lone pond in the midst of paddy fields shimmering white in the noonday sun or the Ashwatha tree's secret-laden breeze on the bank had a soothing dream-effect on my eyes. But the life-giving rice-fields with their tranquil greenness undulating far away to lap the horizoned austere dusky hills moved me to a rare feeling of bondage fading into freedom.

We had advanced thus for a while when through the shady palm-groves and grey pine-forests the sea broke into our view. The sparkling laughter of its waves melted our silence into a rapturous thrill and our heart responded to the call of the Infinite in the radiant surges. As we went on, the eyes scanned the horizon for some lonely ship that would come to carry all voyagers home. At last we reached our destination. It was the Red Hills, rust-coloured bare rock cleft by mountain torrents. At the entrance we were greeted by a tiny green guardian snake. Its bright eyes and silent tongue hinted, it seemed, that we must approach with a reverent attitude the ancient hills if we expected to find any hidden treasure. As we neared the rocks, various shapes, separate or in groups, moved across our vision. Some looked like figures we had seen in Ajanta, some like those witnessed at Nalanda, some resembled elusive moods carved on temple-stones. At places they were so many statues absorbed in a timeless meditation. Our steps, in spite of ourselves, became slow and conscious. At other places a serried pillared rock gave the impression of some ancient amphitheatre from where the gods witnessed our mortal scene.

Then we climbed up, and to our great surprise we saw a table-land on the top, stretching for miles and miles all covered with green vegetation and studded with hermit groves. Distant moving figures were seen threading this solitude in search of their livelihood. A silence broken now and then by invisible sounds cast an unbidden mystic spell on us. We sat down and began to enjoy this bright silence. By its magic touch a door opened somewhere within us and we became aware of a Presence that seemed to have accompanied us all along and only now made itself perceptible.

Below again there was the sea skirting the woodland with its foam-white girdle. The blue-domed vastitude above, the measureless oceanic movement below and the emerald wavy landscape widening into a nowhere: that was the sight that held us and we forgot for a moment our very physical existence, we became as it were a part of the Infinite!

A TEACHER

## LYRICS FOR THE LITTLE ONES

### THY LITTLE ONES

We are Thy little ones, we all;  
Thou art our Mother great;  
We've come to Thee at Thy sweet call,  
O Guardian of our fate.

Thy heart of boundless love's our home,  
A heaven of heavens high;  
In Thy Edens of delight we roam,  
And bluest skies we fly.

We are free from care and full of cheer,  
Safe in Thy saviour arms;  
No evil can ever dare to near;  
Immune are we from harms.

Thou art our own and we are Thine,  
O earth-born Love supreme !  
Bless us with Thy gracious smile divine,  
O Goddess of our dream !

MOTHER INDIA

OUR ASPIRATION

O TAKE us in Thy arms, Sweet Mother !  
O take us in Thy arms of love;  
Protect us from all harms, Sweet Mother !  
And place us in Thy Eden's grove.

We'll live with Thee, and with none other;  
We'll walk and talk alone with Thee;  
We'll play and work with Thee, Sweet Mother !  
All day, all night, all happily.

Our soul shall be Thy Temple-home,  
Our love shall be Thy simple seat;  
Our prayers call, come, Mother ! come;  
And let us kiss Thy lovely feet.

PUNJALAL

## THE FOUR AIDS

THIRSTING for Knowledge the Aspirant turns,  
To the SHASTRAS for wisdom to gain;  
Aspiring deeply within his heart  
For the Divine he has sought in vain.

With personal effort — UTSAHA — he finds,  
That he needs a Guru's right touch,  
To awaken within him the sleeping powers  
He sets out in the Guru's search.

Often on the rough path he meets  
Disasters, disappointments deep;  
He finds fake Teachers many a time,  
Who make him suffer and weep.

When the time is ripe, to him appears  
The true GURU his path to light,  
Friend, Lover, Master, Guide in one  
He turns to live in his sight.

By self-consecration and surrender sweet  
His burdens are slowly lifted;  
For with the Grace and Presence and Power  
The mystic Master is gifted.

MOTHER INDIA

The Aspirant now can be sure of his goal,  
With Time or KALA — his Aid,  
No matter how long he may have to wait,  
He knows he'll be fully repaid.

Indebted deeply are we to our GURUS,  
Mother and Sri Aurobindo who are one;  
They have hewn Perfection's path — a labour  
The Divine alone could have done.

TIM