

MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

SPECIAL NUMBER

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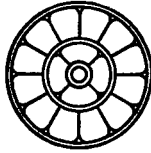
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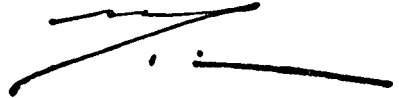


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute,

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



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MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XXVIII

No. 2

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail."

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WORDS OF THE MOTHER

JUSTICE is the strict logical determinism of the movements of Universal Nature...

The Divine Grace alone has the power to intervene and change the course of Universal Justice.

The great work of the Avatar is to manifest the Divine Grace upon earth. To be a disciple of the Avatar is to become an instrument of the Divine Grace. The Mother is the great dispensatrix—through identity—of the Divine Grace with a perfect knowledge—through identity—of the absolute mechanism of Universal Justice.

And through her mediation each movement of sincere and confident aspiration towards the Divine calls down in response the intervention of the Grace.

January 15, 1933.

...truly, sincerely, I tell you, and I have a sufficiently long experience of life, I know nothing so grotesque as people who are satisfied with themselves. It is truly ridiculous. They make themselves utterly ridiculous. There are people like that; some of them came to see Sri Aurobindo telling him all that they were capable of, all that they had done and all they could do, all that they had realised—and so Sri Aurobindo looked at them very seriously and replied: “Oh! you are too perfect to be here. It would be better for you to go away.”

October 28, 1953

AN UNPUBLISHED TALK OF THE MOTHER ON AUROVILLE

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH

(This talk is perhaps the earliest one of considerable length on the subject. A number of things have changed since its time, but certain fundamentals remain. And it has a great value from the historical and developmental viewpoint.)

June 23, 1965

HAVE you heard of Auroville?...

For a long time, I had a plan of the "ideal town", but that was during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime, with Sri Aurobindo living at the centre. Afterwards, I was no longer interested. Then the idea of Auroville (I gave the name Auroville) was taken up again, but from the other end: instead of the formation having to find the place, it was the place (near the lake) which gave birth to the formation, and until now I took only a very minor interest in it, for I had received nothing directly. Then our little Huta took it into her head to have a house there, by the lake, and to have a house for me next to hers—and to offer it to me. And she wrote me all her dreams: one or two sentences suddenly stirred an old, old memory of something which had tried to manifest—a creation—when I was very small and which had again started trying to manifest at the very beginning of the century, when I was with Théon. Then all that was forgotten. It came back with this letter: all at once, I had my plan for Auroville. Now I have my whole plan, I am waiting for Roger to draw the detailed plans, for I had said from the beginning: "Roger will be the architect", and wrote to Roger. When he came here last year, he went to see Chandigarh, the town built by Le Corbusier, up there, in the Punjab, and he was not very happy (it seems to me quite ordinary—I know nothing about it, I did not see—I only saw some photographs which were very bad); and while he was talking to me, I could see that he felt: "Oh! if only I had a town to build!..." So I wrote to him: "If you want, I have a town to build"—he is happy, happy, he is coming. When he comes, I shall show him my plan and he will build the town. My plan is very simple.

The place is up there, on the Madras road, on top of the hill. (*Mother takes a paper and begins to draw.*) We have here (naturally, it is not like that in Nature, we shall have to adapt ourselves—it is like that up there on the ideal plane), here, a central point. This central point is a park which I saw when I was very small—perhaps the most beautiful thing in the world from the point of view of physical, material Nature—a park with water and trees, like all parks, and flowers, but not many, (flowers in the form of creepers), palms and ferns (all varieties of palms), water (if possible running water) and possibly a small cascade. From the practical point of

view, it would be very good: at the far end, outside the park, we could build reservoirs which would be used to supply water to the residents.

So in this park, I saw the "Pavilion of Love" (but I dislike this word, for man has turned it into something grotesque)—I am speaking of the principle of Divine Love. But that has changed: it will be "The Mother's Pavilion", but not this (*Mother points to herself*)—the Mother, the true Mother, the principle of the Mother (I say "Mother" because Sri Aurobindo used that word, otherwise I would have put something else, I would have put "creative principle" or "principle of realisation" or—I do not know...). It will be a small building, not a big one, with only a meditation room downstairs, but with columns and probably a circular shape (I say probably, because I am leaving that for Roger to decide). Upstairs, the first floor will be a room and the roof will be a covered terrace. You know the ancient Indo-Moghul miniatures, with palaces where there are terraces with small roofs supported by columns? You know those old miniatures? I have had hundreds of them in my hands.... But this pavilion is very, very beautiful, a small pavilion like this, with a roof on a terrace, and low walls against which one puts couches to sit on, to meditate in the open air in the evening, at night. And below, downstairs, on the ground, a meditation room, simply—something quite bare. There would probably be at the farther end something which would be a living light (perhaps the symbol in the living light), a constant light. Otherwise, a very peaceful, very silent place.

Adjacent to it, there would be a small dwelling (a small dwelling which would nevertheless have three floors), but not large-sized, and it would be the house of Huta, who would serve as a guardian—she would be the guardian of the pavilion (she wrote me a very nice letter but she did not understand all that, of course).

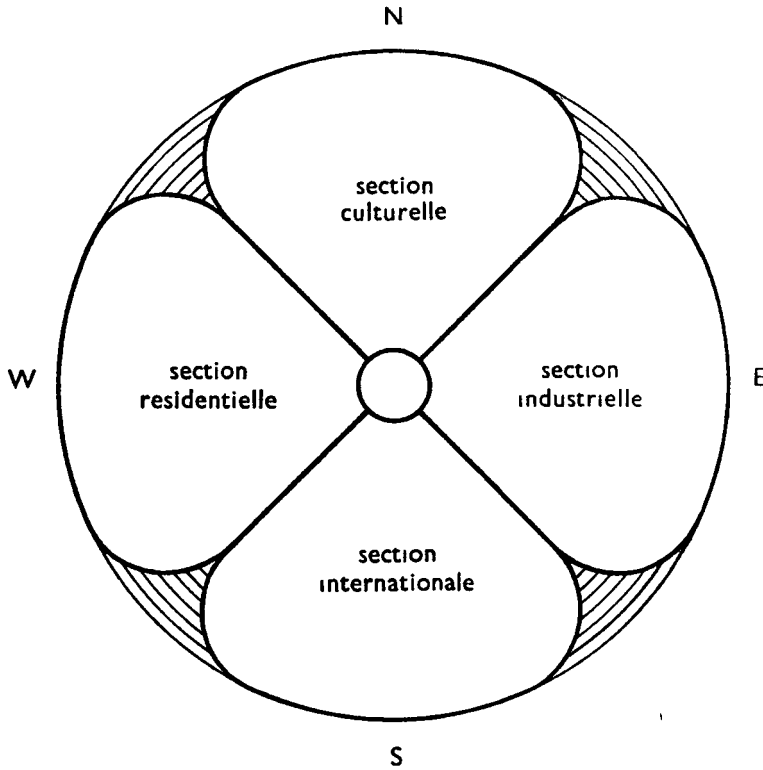
That is the centre.

All around, there is a circular road isolating the park from the rest of the town. There would probably be a gateway (indeed, there must be one) in the park. A gateway with the guardian of the gate. The guardian of the gate is a new girl who has come from Africa and who wrote me a letter telling me that she wished to be the guardian of Auroville in order to let only the "servants of Truth" enter (*laughing*),¹ it is a very nice plan. So I shall probably put her there as guardian of the park, with a small house on the road at the entrance.

But the interesting thing is that around this central point, there are four big sections, like four big petals (*Mother draws*), but the corners of the petals are rounded and there are small intermediate zones—four big sections and four zones.... Naturally it is only in the air; on the ground, there will be an approximation.

We have four big sections: the cultural section, to the North, that is to say, going towards Madras; to the East, the industrial section; to the South, the international section; and to the West, that is to say, towards the lake, the residential section.

¹ Apropos of this phrase please see "Editor's Note" at the end. (Editor)



To make myself clear: the residential section, where there will be the houses of the people who have already subscribed and of all the others who are coming in large numbers to have a plot in Auroville—it will be next to the lake.

The international section. We have already approached a certain number of ambassadors and countries so that each may have its pavilion—a pavilion of all countries (it was an old idea); some have already accepted, in short, it is on the way. Each pavilion has its own garden with, as far as possible, a representation of the plants and products of the country which it represents. If they have enough money and enough space, they can also have a sort of small museum or permanent exhibition of the country's works. The buildings must be constructed according to the architecture of each country—it should be like an information document. So, depending on the money they wish to spend, they can also have lodgings for students, conference-rooms, etc., some of each country's cooking, a restaurant of each country—they can have all sorts of developments.

Then the industrial section. Already many people, including the Government of Madras (the Madras Government is loaning money), want to open industries, which will be on a special basis. This industrial section is to the East and it is very big, there is much space; it will go down towards the sea. Indeed, to the North of Pondicherry,

there is quite a large space which is totally uninhabited and uncultivated; it is on the seaside, going up the coast towards the North. So this industrial section would go down towards the sea, and if possible there would be a kind of wharf (not exactly a port but a place where boats can come alongside), and all these industries, with the necessary inland transportation, would have the possibility of exporting directly. And there, there would be a big hotel (Roger has already made a plan for it; we wanted to build the hotel here, on the location of the "Messageries Maritimes", but after having said yes, the owner said no—it is very good, it will be better over there), a big hotel to receive visitors from outside. Already quite a number of industries have registered for this section, I do not know if there will be enough space, but we shall manage.

Then, to the North (this is where there is the most space, naturally), going towards Madras, the cultural section. There, an auditorium (the auditorium which I have dreamt of building for a long time; plans had already been made), an auditorium with a concert-hall and a grand organ, the best of its kind today (it seems they are making wonderful things). I want a grand organ. There will also be a stage with wings (a rotating stage, etc., the best of its kind). So, a magnificent auditorium, there. There will be a library, there will be a museum with all sorts of exhibitions (not inside the auditorium: they are extra); there will be a film-studio, a film-school; there will be a gliding-club (we already almost have the authorisation of the Government and the promise, so it is already well on the way). Then towards Madras, where there is much space: a stadium. We want this stadium to be the most modern and the most perfect possible, with the idea (it is an idea I have had for a long time) that twelve years (the Olympic Games take place every four years), twelve years after 1968 (in '68 the Olympiads are taking place in Mexico), twelve years later, we would hold the Olympic Games in India, there. So we need space.

Between these sections, there are intermediate zones, four intermediate zones: one for public services (post office, etc), one zone for transport (railway station and possibly an aerodrome), one zone for food (that one would be near the lake and would include dairies, hen-houses, orchards, cultivated lands, etc.—it would spread and combine with the Lake Estate: what they wanted to do separately would be done within the framework of Auroville); then a fourth zone (I have said: public services, transport, food) and the fourth zone: shops. We do not need many shops, but a few are necessary in order to obtain what we do not produce. They are like districts, you see.

And you will be there at the centre ?

Huta hopes so. (*Mother laughs.*) I did not say no, I did not say yes; I told her: "The Lord will decide." It depends on my state of health. A removal, no—I am here because of the Samadhi, I shall stay here, that is quite sure; but I can go there on a visit (it is not so far, it takes five minutes by car). But Huta wants to be quiet, silent, aloof, and that is quite possible in her park, surrounded by a road, with someone to

stop people from coming in—one can stay very quiet—but if I am there, that is the end of it!—there would be collective meditations, etc. That is to say that if I get a sign (first the physical sign), then the inner command to go out, I shall drive there and spend an hour, an afternoon—I can do that now and then. We still have time because, before everything is ready, years will elapse.

That is to say that the disciples will stay here.

Ah! the Ashram stays here—the Ashram stays here, I stay here, that is understood. Auroville is...

A satellite.

Yes, it is the contact with the outside world. The centre on my drawing is a symbolic centre.

But that is what Huta expects: she wants a house where she would be all alone next to a house where I would be all alone—the second part is a dream, because myself all alone...you only have to see what is happening! It is true, you see, so it does not agree with the "all alone". Solitude must be found within, it is the only way. But as far as living is concerned, I shall certainly not go and live there, because the Samadhi is here; but I could go there on a visit. For example, I could go there for an inauguration or for certain ceremonies—we shall see, it will be years from now.

In short, Auroville is more for outside.

Ah! yes, it is a town! Consequently, it is the whole contact with outside. An attempt to realise on earth a more ideal life.

In the old formation which I had made, there had to be a hill and a river. There had to be a hill, because Sri Aurobindo's house was on top of the hill. But Sri Aurobindo was there at the centre. It was arranged according to the plan of my symbol, that is to say, a point in the middle, with Sri Aurobindo and all that concerned Sri Aurobindo's life, and four big petals (which were not the same as on this drawing, it was something else), and twelve all around (the town itself), and around that, there was the residence of the disciples (you know my symbol: instead of lines, there are bands; well, the last circular band formed the place for the disciples' residence) and each one had his own house and garden—a small house and a garden for each one. There was some means of transport; I am not sure if it was individual transport or collective transport—like those small open tramcars in the mountains, you know—going in all directions to take the disciples back towards the centre of the town. And surrounding all that, there was a wall, with a gateway and guardians at the gate, and one could not enter without authorisation. There was no money—within the walls, no money; at the various entrances, there were banks or counters of some sort, where people could deposit their money and receive tickets in exchange, with which they could obtain lodging, food, this, that. But no money—the tickets were only for visitors, who could not enter without a permit. It was a tremendous organisation.... No

money, I did not want any money.

Look! In my plan I forgot one thing: I wanted to build a housing estate, but the housing estate was to be part of the industrial section (perhaps an extension at the fringe of the industrial section).

Outside the walls, in my first formation, there was on one side an industrial town, and on the other, fields, farms, etc., to supply the town. But that represented a real country—not a big country, but a country. Now it is much reduced; it is no longer my symbol, there are only four zones and there are no walls. And there will be money. You see, the other formation was truly an ideal endeavour.... But I counted on many years before trying to start; at that time I thought twenty-four years. But now it is much more modest, it is a transitional endeavour, and it is much more realisable—the other plan was...I almost had the land: it was in the time of Sir Akbar, you remember, from Hyderabad. They sent me some photographs of the State of Hyderabad and there, in those photographs, I found my ideal spot: an isolated hill (quite a big hill) and below it, a large, flowing river. I told him: "I want this place" and he arranged the matter (everything was arranged, they sent me the plans, the papers and everything, saying that they were giving it to the Ashram), but they laid down one condition (it was virgin forest, uncultivated land); the place was given on condition, naturally, that we would cultivate it—but the products must be utilised on the spot; for example, the crops, the wood must be utilised on the spot, not transported, nothing could leave the State of Hyderabad. There was even N., who was a navigator, who said that he would obtain a sailing boat from England to go up the river to fetch the products and bring them to us here—everything was very well planned! So they laid down this condition. I asked if it was not possible to have it removed, then Sir Akbar died and that was the end of it, the matter was dropped. Afterwards, I was glad that it was not done because, now that Sri Aurobindo has departed, I cannot leave Pondicherry—I could only leave Pondicherry with him (provided that he would have accepted to live in his ideal town). At that time, I had spoken of this project to Raymond, the person who built Golconde; and he was enthusiastic, he told me: "As soon as you start to build, call me, I shall come." I had shown him my plan (it was according to my enlarged symbol), he was most enthusiastic, he thought it was magnificent.

It was dropped. But the other one, which is just a small intermediate attempt, we can try.

I have no illusions as to the fact that it will keep its original purity, but we shall try something.

Much depends on the financial organisation of the project.

For the time being, Nava is taking care of that, because he receives the money through the Sri Aurobindo Society and he bought the land—a fair amount of land has already been bought. It is going well. Naturally, the difficulty is to find enough money but, for example, the pavilions—each country will bear the expenses for its own

pavilion; the industries—each industry will provide the money for its own business; the residents—each one will give the money necessary for his land. The Government (Madras has already given us the promise) will give between 60 and 80% (one part grant, that is to say, gift, one part loan, free of interest and repayable over ten years, twenty years, forty years—a long-term repayment). Nava knows all about it, he has already had quite a few results. But according to whether the money comes in quickly or comes in little by little, it will go more or less quickly. From the construction point of view, it will depend on Roger's plasticity; the details are all the same to me—only I would like this pavilion to be very beautiful—I can see it. As I have seen it, I have had the vision of it, so I shall try to make him understand what I have seen. And the park too, I have seen it—these are old visions which I had repeatedly. But that is not difficult.

The greatest difficulty is the water, because there is no river nearby, up there; but they are already trying to channel the rivers; there was even a project to channel water from the Himalaya across the whole of India (L. had made a plan and had spoken about it in Delhi; they objected that it would be rather expensive, obviously!). But, well, even without such grandiose things, something must be done to supply the water; it will be the greatest difficulty; that will take the most time. All the rest (light, power) will be done on the spot in the industrial section—but water cannot be made! The Americans have seriously thought of discovering a way to use sea-water, because the earth no longer has enough drinking water for man (the water which they call "fresh"—it is ironical); the amount of water is insufficient for the needs of man, so they have already started chemical experiments on a large scale to transform sea-water and make it utilisable—obviously, it would be the solution of the problem.

But that already exists.

It exists, but not on a sufficiently large scale.

Yes, it does in Israel.

Do they do that in Israel? Do they use sea-water? Obviously, that would be the solution—the sea is there

We shall see.

It would have to be brought up.

A yachting club would be rather nice!

Ah! certainly, with the industrial section.

Near your port, there.

It will not be a "port" but, well.... Yes, the visitors' hotel with a yachting club nearby, that is an idea I shall add that. (*Mother writes it down.*)

It will surely be a success.

Now look! A shower of letters, my child! From everywhere, from all countries, people are writing to me: "At last! This is the project I was waiting for", etc. A shower.

There is also a gliding club. We have already been promised an instructor and a glider—it is a promise. It will be in the industrial section, on top of the hill. Naturally, the yacht club will be on the sea, not on the lake; but I had thought (because there is much talk of deepening the lake, it is almost filled up), I was thinking of a hydroplane station, there.

We can also have a boat on the lake.

Not if there are hydroplanes. It is not big enough to have a boat. But it would be very good for a hydroplane station. But that depends: if we have an aerodrome, it is unnecessary; if we do not have an aerodrome.... But already, in the Lake Estate project, there was an aerodrome. Samer, who has become a Squadron Leader, has sent me a plan for an aerodrome too, but for small planes, while we want an aerodrome which can assure a regular service to Madras, a passenger aerodrome. There has already been much talk about it, there were discussions between Air India and another company; then they could not come to an agreement—all sorts of petty, foolish difficulties. But all that, with the growth of Auroville, will drop quite naturally—people will be only too glad to have an aerodrome.

No, there are two difficulties. Small sums of money we have (precisely: what the Government can loan, what people give to have a plot—it is coming). But it takes massive sums, you see, it takes billions to build a town!

EDITOR'S NOTE

A little clarification seems needed of the phrase in the Talk which says that Huta "wished to be the guardian of Auroville in order to let only the 'servants of Truth' enter". The reference is evidently to the use Huta would like to make of her guardianship of the Mother's pavilion of Truth and Love, for the guardianship itself was not chosen by her but decided by the Mother and the chosen individual actually felt unworthy of the role and was disturbed by people's opinions on the matter. These points emerge clearly from two letters in the Mother's own handwriting:

"The pure love from your heart and soul is all that is required to make you worthy of being the guardian of the Truth Pavilion."

"Fear not. The Lord is not influenced by what people say or desire. You will be the guardian of the Pavilion as decided."

THE MOTHER ON OUR YOGA AND ITS GOAL

THE integral Yoga is not an escape from the physical world leaving it irrevocably to its fate. Nor is it an acceptance of the material life as it is with no hope for any decisive change, an acceptance of the world as the final expression of the Divine Will.

The integral Yoga aims at scaling all the degrees of consciousness from the ordinary mental consciousness to a supramental and divine consciousness, and when the ascension is completed, a return to the material world infusing into it the supramental force and consciousness thus attained so that this earth may be gradually transformed into a supramental and divine world.

The integral Yoga turns especially to those who have realised in themselves all that man can realise and yet are not satisfied, for they ask of life things it cannot give. They who yearn for the unknown, aspire for perfection, who ask of themselves agonising questions and have not found definitive answers are precisely those who are ready for the integral Yoga.¹

*

**

The truth I bring will manifest itself and will be embodied upon earth; for it is the earth's and world's inevitable destiny. The question of time is not relevant. In one respect the truth which I say will be manifest is already fully manifest, is already realised and established: there is no question of time there. It is in a consciousness timeless or eternally present. There is a process, a play of translation between that timeless poise and the poise in time that we know here below. The measure of that hiatus is very relative, relative to the consciousness that measures, long or short according to the yardstick each one brings. But that is not the essence of the problem: the essence is that the truth is there active, in the process of *materialisation*, only one should have the eye to see it and the soul to greet it.²

¹ *Bulletin*, November 1954.

² Based on a talk of the Mother in Nolini Kanta Gupta's *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, Part VI

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Continued from the issue of January 1976)

(This new series of answers by the Mother to questions put by the children of the Ashram appeared for the first time in the Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education but in a somewhat fragmentary, incomplete form. The translation of the full text as it was taped, with here and there a few special additions or modifications made by the Mother at the time of its first publication as a book in French, came out in book-form in 1973. We are giving this translation here.)

February 20, 1957

“The limitations of the body are a mould; soul and mind have to pour themselves into them, break them and constantly remould them in wider limits till the formula of agreement is found between this finite and their own infinity.”

(Thoughts and Glimpses, Centenary Edition, Vol. 16, p. 386)

Sweet Mother, what should we understand by “the limitations of the body are a mould”?

If you did not have a body with a precise form, if you were not a formed individuality, fully conscious and having its own qualities, you would all be fused into one another and could not be distinguished. Even going only a little further within, into the most material vital being, there is such a mixture of the vibrations of different people that it is very difficult to distinguish anyone. And if you did not have a body, it would be a sort of...inextricable pulp. Consequently, it is the form, this precise and (apparently) rigid form of the body, which distinguishes you from each other. So this form serves as a mould. (*Addressing the child*) Do you know what a mould is?—Yes! One pours something inside, something liquid or semi-liquid, and when that cools down one can break the mould and get the object in a precise form. Well, the form of the body serves as a mould for the vital and mental forces to take within it a precise form, so that you may become an individual being separate from others.

It is only gradually, very slowly, through the movements of life and a more or less attentive and well-pursued education that you begin to have sensations which are personal to you, feelings which are personal and ideas which are personal. An individualised mind is an extremely rare thing, the result of only a long education; otherwise it is a kind of current of thought passing across your brain and then across another's and the brain of the crowd, and all that is in perpetual movement and has no individuality. One thinks what others are thinking, others think what still others are thinking, and everybody thinks like that in a great mixture, because these are currents, vibrations of thought passing from one to another. If you look at yourself

attentively, you will very quickly grow aware that there are very few thoughts in you which are personal. Whence do you draw them?—From hearsay, from what you have read, what you have learnt; and how many of these thoughts there within you are the result of your own experience, your reflection, your purely personal observation?—Not many.

It is only those who have an intense intellectual life who have the habit of reflecting, observing, putting together ideas which gradually are formed into a mental individual being.

The majority of men—and not only those who are uneducated but even the literate—may have in their heads the most contradictory, the most opposed ideas without even being aware of the contradictions. I have seen numerous examples like that, of people who cherished ideas and even had political, social, religious opinions on all the so-called higher fields of human intelligence, and also absolutely contradictory opinions on the same subject, and who were not aware of that. And if you observe yourself, you will see that you have many ideas which should be linked by a sequence of intermediate ideas arising from a considerable widening of thought in order that they may not stay together in an absurd way.

Hence, before an individuality becomes truly individual and has its own qualities, it must be contained in a vessel, otherwise it would spread out like water and would no longer have any form at all. Some people of a rather lower grade know themselves only by the name they bear. They would not be able to distinguish themselves from their neighbours except by their name. They are asked: “Who are you?”—“My name is this.” A little later they tell you their occupation or about their chief quality. If they are told: “Who are you?”—“I am a painter.”

But at a certain level the only answer is the name.

And what is a name? It is nothing but a word, isn't that so? And what is there behind? Nothing. It is a whole collection of vague things which do not at all represent a person different from his neighbour. He is differentiated only because he has another name. If everybody bore the same name, it would be very difficult to distinguish between one person and another!

I read to you the other day from that book on aviation¹ the story of that slave who, whenever he was asked a question, always answered by his name. But that was already a progress over all those who were given the name of slave—for all it was the same—and they all accepted the same name, and consequently to be the same person. For they had no individuality at all, they had only an occupation; and that occupation being the same for a successive number of slaves, they all had the same name.

One lives by a kind of habit hardly half-conscious—one lives, does not even objectify what one does, why one does it, how one does it. One does it by habit. All those born in a certain *milieu*, a certain country, automatically take on the habit of that *milieu*, not only material habits but habits of thought, habits of feeling and habits of acting. They do it without watching themselves doing so, quite naturally, and if

¹ St.-Exupéry, *Terre des Hommes*

someone points this out to them they are astonished.

In fact one has the habit of sleeping, speaking, eating, moving and one does all this as something quite natural, without being astonished by the why or the how.... And many other things. All the time one does things automatically by force of habit, one does not watch oneself. And so, when one lives in a particular society, one does automatically what is habitually done in that society. And if somebody begins to watch himself acting, watch himself feeling and thinking, he seems to be a kind of phenomenal monster in comparison with the *milieu* he lives in.

Consequently, individuality is not at all a rule, it is an exception, and if you do not have that sort of bag of a special form which is your outer body and your appearance, you all could hardly be distinguished from one another.

Individuality is a conquest. And, as Sri Aurobindo says here, this first conquest is only a first stage, and once you have realised within you something like a personal, independent and conscious being, then what you have to do is to break the form and go farther. For example, if you want to progress mentally, you must break all your mental forms, all your mental constructions to be able to make new ones. Hence, to begin with, a formidable labour is required to individualise oneself, and afterwards one must demolish all that has been done in order to progress. But as you do not watch yourself acting and as it is through habit (naturally not with everyone, let us say it here), the habit of working, reading, developing, trying to do something, just of forming oneself a little, you do it quite naturally and without even watching yourself, as I said.

And it is only when these external forms come into a reciprocal friction that you begin to feel that you are different from others. Else you are this one or that one, according to the name you bear. It is only when there is a friction, when something does not go smoothly, that you become aware of a difference, then you see that you are different, otherwise you are not aware of it and are not so. In fact, you are very, very little different from one another.

How many things in your life are done at least essentially in the same way as others! For instance, sleeping, moving and eating, and all sorts of things like that. Never have you asked yourself why you do a thing in one way and not another. You wouldn't be able to say. If I asked you: "Why do you act in this way and not that?", you wouldn't know what to say. But this is quite simply because you were born in certain conditions and it is the habit in these conditions to be like that. Otherwise, had you been born in another age and other conditions, you would have acted altogether differently without even realising the difference, this would have appeared so natural to you.... For instance—a very, very tiny instance—in the majority of Western countries and even in some Eastern ones, one sews in this way, from right to left; in Japan they sew from left to right. Well, it seems to you quite natural to sew from right to left, doesn't it? You have been taught thus and do not think about it, you sew in that way. You come to Japan, and there you sew before them and it makes them laugh, for they have the habit of sewing the other way. It is the same

thing with writing. You write in this way, from left to right, but there are people who write from top to bottom, and others who write from right to left, and they do so most naturally. I am not speaking of those who have studied, reflected, compared writings. I am not speaking of more or less learned people, no, I am speaking of quite ordinary people, and above all of children who do what is done around them, quite spontaneously and without questioning. But then, when by chance circumstances they are brought face to face with different manners, it is a terrific revelation for them that things can be done otherwise than how they do them.

And these are quite simple things, I mean those which strike you, but this is true to the very least detail. You act in this way because the place and *milieu* in which you live act in this way. And you do not watch yourself acting.

Fundamentally, the source was One, wasn't it? and creation had to be multifold. And that must have presented quite a considerable labour for this multiplicity to become conscious of being multiple.

And if one observes very attentively, perhaps if creation had kept the memory of its origin, it would never have become a diverse multiplicity. There would have been at the centre of each being the sense of perfect unity, and the diversity—perhaps—would never have been expressed.

Through losing the memory of this unity began the possibility of becoming conscious of differences; and when one goes into the unconscious, at the other end, one falls back into a sort of unity unconscious of itself in which the diversity is as unexpressed as in the origin.

At the two ends there is the same absence of diversity. In one case it is through a supreme consciousness of unity, in the other through a perfect unconsciousness of unity.

The fixity of form is the means by which individuality can be formed.
That's all, then.

Just Out

SELECTIONS

from

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THE EGO, THE SOUL, THE SELF

SOME LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

(These are a few excerpts from the second volume of Guidance from Sri Aurobindo: Letters to a Young Sadhak, which will shortly be published.)

Q. I have heard that some sadhaks have a gigantic ego like H's and P's while some have a fat ego like N's. Could I be told about the form of my ego?

A. Your ego is small and not gigantic—not tall and vehement and aggressive like P's, but squat and inertly obstinate—not fat completely, nor thin, but short and roundish and grey in colour.

Q. What do these symbols of the ego stand for?

A. Squat = short in stature but broad and substantial, so difficult to get rid of. Not tall and pre-eminent or flourishingly settled in self-fullness.

Roundish = plenty of it all the same.

Grey = tamasic in tendency, therefore not aggressive, but obstinate in persistence. But these are not symbols, they are the temperamental figures of the ego.

Q. Are there many egos here which are "flourishingly settled in self-fullness"?

A. Plenty of them, but they are not all fat.

Q. What is the solution to the problem of the ego?

A. You have to throw out all the forms in which the ego shows itself.

Q. Is it not possible to rub out the ego completely by a continued application of the Force?

A. It is possible if your consciousness associates itself with the action; then at least one can get rid of its major action and leave only minor traces. To get rid of the ego altogether however comes usually only by the descent of Consciousness from above and its occupation of the whole being aided of course by the rule of the psychic in the nature.

Q. Has the soul a form? A sadhak told me he saw his own psychic being as a woman.

A. The soul is not limited by any form, but the psychic being puts out a form for its expression, just as the mental, vital and subtle physical Purushas do—that is to say, one can see or another person can see one's psychic being in such and such a form. But this kind of seeing is of two kinds—there is the standing characteristic form taken by this being in this life and there are symbolic forms such as when one sees the psychic as a new-born child in the lap of the Mother. If the sadhak in

question really saw his psychic in the form of a woman it can only have been a constructed appearance expressing some quality or attitude of the psychic.

Q. You said, "The soul is not limited by any form, but the psychic puts out a form." With regard to form, what is the difference between the soul and psychic being?

A. As there is in us mind which one does not see in form but is aware of and as there is at the same time a mental being which one can see in form, so there is a soul and a psychic being. The soul is the same always, the psychic being is what it develops in the evolution.

Q. When you say that the psychic being puts out a form, do you imply that it has a subtle-physical form so that one can see it, as an embodied personality--just like a human body?

A. Yes, but it is not limited by the form as the physical consciousness.

Q. After death when the soul returns for a new birth, who moulds the outer mind, vital and physical?

A. It is done by Nature under the influence of the soul. In a certain sense it may be said that the soul does it, because what it sees as needed is drawn in as material and shaped.

Q. What is meant by "shaped"? Is a construction made?

A. Unless material is given form (i.e. shaped) it cannot be used. You can't construct something shapeless.

Q. Is the exterior being too moulded by the soul? Tulsi told me that the inner being is constructed by the soul according to its need for a new manifestation on the earth; but the outer is moulded by Nature as it belongs to Nature.

A. All belongs to Nature—the soul itself acts under the conditions and by the agency of Nature.

Q. What is exactly the difference between an aspect of the Divine (known as the self) and a portion of the Divine (called the soul)?

A. The self feels always its unity with the Divine and is always the same. The soul is a portion of the Divine that comes down into the evolution and evolves a psychic being more and more developed through successive lives until it is ready for the divine realisation here.

Q. If "the self feels always its unity with the Divine", does not the soul too feel the same? Of course the psychic being does not till it attains to a certain consciousness by Yoga.

A. The soul in evolution is only a power for the evolution, it contains everything

in potentiality; but that can only be worked out by the psychic being. It is quite different from the condition of the self.

Q. At present I find that among the parts of my being—the soul, mind, vital and physical—only the first is in relation with the Divine and has love, faith, equality etc. But what is new in this? Every soul contains these qualities even without practising Yoga.

A. Every soul is not awake and active; nor is every soul turned directly to the Divine before practising Yoga. For a long time it seeks the Divine through men and things much more than directly.

Q. Whatever purity, knowledge and force the soul has, are they of its own nature or does it derive them from the higher consciousness?

A. The soul is always pure, but the knowledge and force in it are involved and come out only as the psychic being evolves and grows stronger.

THE MORNING AIR

THE morning air was filled
with sparks of golden light
near to be touched and caught.
And as they sparkled everywhere
they kissed this earth
with their honey-lips
and brought down here
some of the fragrance
and the music
and the gladness
from the prismatic arches
of the realm of gods.

CHRYSTL

TWO UNPUBLISHED PERSONAL LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

I

(This letter, for all its particular personal reference, has a very valuable general bearing. It shows Sri Aurobindo's great compassion as well as his confidence in the spiritual power to cure physical ailments. The grave illness, the subject of the letter, was completely cured without the operation which had been thought absolutely necessary, and the patient, an Ashramite, is still alive after forty-two years.)

ABOUT X's operation I gather from the letter that not only X herself but her husband too is unwilling. The doctors themselves attach conditions which are not very likely to be satisfied in X's case, considering her present state. Of course, if all were agreed there was nothing to be done, they might do it taking the risk—for either death or cure. But we cannot say that it is not dangerous or give any assurance that she would live. She might—but the chances are not favourable.

As for her coming here, I do not see how we can press it on her in her present condition of weakness when a journey might have bad effects—also the care, the diet etc. she needs would not be so easy here, hardly even possible.

I do not know why the doctors speak of cancer as inevitable. There are so many people who carry gall-stones in the bladder for so many years without any development of cancer. It is evident that it is a dangerous illness, not easily curable—but we cannot say positively either that she will not survive. There is no such thing as an incurable illness in reality—for what the doctors call such is only an illness for which they have not yet been able to discover a physical remedy. X has one force on her side, her faith and her will to survive for the sadhana; on the other side is a kind of destiny of the body which is strong but not absolutely unsurmountable. Her faith must be left intact—and we must send force to help her. That is all that we can say at present. If she can by her faith draw down and open to such a force as will counteract the adverse physical forces on her body, then she will survive.

4.12.1933

(This personal letter belongs to a short series written to a sadhak on a long visit to Bombay. Its varied contents are strikingly memorable for several reasons. Not the least of these reasons is that it was written not in reply to any letter of the sadhak but on Sri Aurobindo's own initiative, expressing a care and concern such as a father would spontaneously feel for a child of his.)

Pondicherry

13.12.1938

Amal

I write to get news about your progress in recovery—I hear that you are better; I hope you can confirm it.

I have not yet been able to answer Homi's letter. You can tell him from me that the Mother and I were both extremely well-impressed by Bosanquet's photograph which shows a remarkable personality and great spiritual possibilities. I may be able to write about his (Bosanquet's) letter in a few days. If he comes here, we shall be glad to give him help in his spiritual aspiration.¹

There is nothing much to say on other matters. The Asram increases always, but its finances are as they were which is a mathematical equation of doubtful validity and is not so much an equation as an equivoque.

I have done an enormous amount of work with Savitri. The third section has been recast if not rewritten—so as to give it a more consistent epic swing and amplitude and elevation of level. The fourth section, the Worlds, is undergoing transformation. The "Life" part is in a way finished, though I shall have to go over the ground perhaps some five or six times more to ensure perfection of detail. I am now starting a recasting of the "Mind" part of which I had only made a sort of basic rough draft. I hope that this time the work will stand as more final and definitive.

In sending news of yourself, you will no doubt send news of your mother also. I saw a notice of a remedy (in the "Matin") for hernia which they say has succeeded in America and is introduced in France, very much resembling the defunct Doctor's recovery² (the one who treated Lalita's father), but perhaps more assuredly scientific; it is reported to get rid for good of belts and operations and to have made millions of cures. It will be a great thing for many if it turns out to be reliable.

¹ Bosanquet, the nephew of the well-known writer on philosophy, Bernard Bosanquet, was a young man studying philosophy at Cambridge. He met Amal's brother there and, hearing of Sri Aurobindo, expressed his wish to come in contact with him. He sent, along with his photograph, an autobiographical account of his seekings and ideals. World War II broke out the next year—1939—and Bosanquet joined the army. His letters home showed the horror of war to a soul like his. He died in action not long after. (Editor)

² This word seems a slip of the hurried pen for "discovery". (Editor)

SRI AUROBINDO'S EARLIEST PUBLISHED POEM

Sri Aurobindo once said, in answer to the question, "When did you begin to write poetry?": "When my two brothers and I were in Manchester. I wrote for the Fox family magazine. It was an awful imitation of somebody I don't remember." (Nirodbaran, *Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, Volume 1, page 151)

Recent inquiries made to the Newspaper Library of the British Library, London, have brought the following reply: "The only publication we have bearing a title resembling Fox's Family Magazine is *Fox's Weekly*. It first appeared on 11 January 1883 and was suspended on 8 November 1883. We have searched through all the issues we hold and found only the first four issues contained poetry..."

The nine poems contained in these four issues have been examined. None of them bears the name of its author, but it is clear that only one of them might have been written by the young Sri Aurobindo. This poem, "Light", is reproduced below. We feel little hesitation about attributing it to Sri Aurobindo.

Sri Aurobindo lived in Manchester between 1880 and 1884. In August 1882 he completed his eleventh year.

Our thanks are due to Robert Orton for uncovering this piece which is, in all likelihood, the earliest published poem of Sri Aurobindo.

It may be noted that metrically the poem seems to be in imitation of Shelley's famous lyric "The Cloud" It is, however, hardly "an awful imitation". As for the biblical imagery, it is known that in the house of the Congregationalist minister W.H. Drewett, his guardian, Sri Aurobindo read the Bible "assiduously", although he was never compelled to embrace the Christian faith.

PETER HEEHS

LIGHT

From the quickened womb of the primal gloom,
The sun rolled, black and bare,
Till I wove him a vest for his Ethiop breast,
Of the threads of my golden hair;
And when the broad tent of the firmament
Arose on its airy spars
I pencilled the hue of its matchless blue,
And spangled it around with stars.

I painted the flowers of the Eden bowers,
And their leaves of living green,
And mine were the dyes in the sinless eyes
Of Eden's Virgin queen;

And when the fiend's art in the truthful heart
Had fastened its portal spell,
In the silvery sphere of the first-born tear
To the trembling earth I fell.

When the waves that burst o'er a world accurst
Their work of wrath had sped,
And the Ark's lone few, [the] tried and true,
Came forth among the dead,
With the wondrous gleams of the bridal beams
I bade their terrors cease,
As I wrote on the roll of the storm's dark scroll
God's covenant of peace.

Like a pall at rest on the senseless breast,
Night's funeral shadow slept—
Where shepherd swains on Bethlehem's plains
Their lonely vigils kept,
When I flashed on their sight the heralds bright
Of Heaven's redeeming plan,
As they chanted the morn, the Saviour born—
Joy, joy, to the outcast man!

Equal favour I show to the lofty and low,
On the just and the unjust I descend:
E'en the blind, whose vain spheres roll in darkness and tears,
Feel my smile—the blest smile of a friend.
Nay, the flower of the waste by my love is embraced,
As the rose in the garden of kings:
At the chrysalis bier of the morn I appear,
And lo! the gay butterfly wings.

The desolate morn, like the mourner forlorn,
Conceals all the pride of her charms,
Till I bid the bright hours chase the night from her flowers,
And lead the young day to her arms.
And when the gay rover seeks Eve for her lover,
And sinks to her balmy repose,
I wrap the soft rest by the zephyr-fanned west,
In curtains of amber and rose.

From my sentinel sleep by the night-brooded deep
I gaze with unslumbering eye
When the cynosure star of the mariner
Is blotted out from the sky:
And guided by me through the merciless sea,
Though sped by the hurricane's wings,
His companionless, dark, lone, weltering bark,
[To] the haven home safely he brings.

I waken the flowers in the dew-spangled bowers,
The birds in their chambers of green,
And mountains and plain glow with beauty again,
As they bask in their matinal sheen.
O, if such the glad worth of my presence on earth,
Though fitful and fleeting the while,
What glories must rest on the home of the blessed,
Ever bright with the Deity's smile.¹

¹ In the first line of the last stanza the manuscript reads "birds". This is an obvious typographical error. The word has crept up from the line below and replaced "flowers", which is required by both rhyme and sense. It appears that the printer of *Fox's Weekly*, a journal devoted principally to the wool trade, has made several errors while composing "Light". In two places we have supplied, within square brackets, words which seem to be required by sense or metre, and have once or twice eliminated unnecessary punctuation. — P.H.

SRI AUROBINDO'S HOME IN THE SUBTLE PHYSICAL

A LETTER TO THE MOTHER, WITH THE MOTHER'S REPLY

The Letter

27.2.1963

LAST night Amal told me that you had spoken of "a permanent home of Sri Aurobindo in the subtle physical". At once my mind went back to a dream in last September.

This is how it ran:

I enter the Ashram and see that there is some difference in the building. I say, "Well, something has changed." And I see a staircase and climb. I pass through a corridor upstairs towards a room at the end of it. In this room there are cupboards very high, reaching near to the ceiling. All the walls are lined with such cupboards which have moon-silver panels and glass doors. On top of the cupboards there are lovely vases of various colours and designs—vases such as we never find on earth. I am standing at the door of the room. On the floor I see a carpet one-foot thick, adorned with beautiful designs and I say to myself, "This room with book-cupboards is not Mother's room. It belongs to Sri Aurobindo. All these books are written by him."

Then I look for another room, thinking Mother might be there. I see a room and go to its door. But I find something quite different from what I was expecting. It is not Mother's room. The whole room is made as if of moon-silver. And the furniture consists of two beds, two cupboards, two dressing-tables—everything two. All the furniture is carved out of moon-silver. And the arrangement of things draws from me the exclamation, "How beautiful!" Then I say to myself again, "Some day in the future, Mother and Sri Aurobindo will come and stay here."

So again I search for another room where I may see Mother. I find a third room. This room is not of moon-silver. It is a little golden in colour. The carpet is also as if of gold stuff—very soft, with a flower-design in red. And I see on the carpet four or five low small Japanese tables, all carved in gold. On the tables there are plates with fruits that we never see on earth. And there are some tiny toys on the carpet—rabbits and deer and other animals—as if they were decorations. Then I just kneel down and stretch my hand to touch and pick up one of the toys. Suddenly the toy becomes alive and runs away. All the others also start moving to form a new pattern. Then I know that all these animals are real ones. I say to myself, "Oh, this is the dining room. But where can I see Mother?"

While I am wondering, I hear a voice saying, "Mother is with Sri Aurobindo and very busy. So you won't see her today" I turn back to go away and say, "My God, so much wealth is here—more than the wealth of the whole world, and why is

Mother always telling me I must bring wealth to her?" Then I go down the stairs and—wake up.

Mother, what do you think of my dream? Have I seen something really there? Is it Sri Aurobindo's permanent home?

I may add that the whole dream—everything in it—was bathed in an atmosphere and in a light of moon-silver.

When I told Amal about it, he quoted to me four lines from Sri Aurobindo's poem, *A God's Labour*:

A little more and the new life's doors
Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
In a great world bare and bright.

SEHRA

The Mother's Reply

It is certainly part of His permanent home in the subtle physical—a part of it only. Once, surely, you will meet Him there.

MY LONGING FOR YOU BUILDS

My longing for You steadies itself
on concrete things before it dares
to cross to You on other wings
than thought;
this Temple built to hold
You fast is poured and held by love;
this stand it takes, and sought by hope
to reach You, perilously high,
is firmed by fire to touch You.

All

the ways it takes and seeks in Time
to find You, out of Time and Mind,
will seize and hold You close who ever
out of reach were ever near
and everywhere, are always here.

SEYRIL

Matrimandir Workers Camp
Peace, Auroville

“IMMORTALITY DAY”

SOME LIGHT ON A LITTLE-KNOWN EVENT IN THE ASHRAM'S SPIRITUAL HISTORY

I arrived in the Ashram on December 16, 1927. It was a little more than a year after November 24, 1926, the *Siddhi* Day, the Day of Victory marking the descent of what Sri Aurobindo has called the Overmind, the Krishna Consciousness, the plane of the Great Gods, into the physical being of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. This Victory was to prepare the descent of the supreme divine dynamism that has never directly worked in the world and that Sri Aurobindo has termed the Supermind, the Truth-Consciousness, the spiritual Power holding the secret of Matter's total transformation.

The first sadhak I met was Pujalal who had come to the Pondicherry station to receive me and the girl I had married two months earlier and who afterwards came to be known in the Ashram as Lalita. We were taken to the room of Purani through whom I had corresponded with Sri Aurobindo. Purani had not yet returned from the main Ashram building where he had gone for some daily work entrusted to him. He came soon after. And, along with him and Pujalal, we watched from a north window the Mother take her morning walk on the flat roof of the house some distance away, in which she and Sri Aurobindo had their rooms. She had her long brown hair down and in the morning light she looked a vision of wonderful beauty. Immediately she won our hearts and turned us into disciples.

When she had finished her stroll we sat for a while in Purani's room before being taken to the house close to the main Ashram block, which the Mother had engaged for us. I noticed that a big white tomcat was sitting on Purani's bed. It was introduced to me as “Amar”, the name signifying “Immortal”. An unusual name—but I never knew its relevance till November 25, 1975, my seventy-first birthday. It would seem that this beautiful cat was born on November 26, 1926 and got its name from the event that signalled that day, between which and the Day of Victory my date of birth was sandwiched. I came to know also that “Amar” had been given to Champa, the resident wife of a visiting sadhak, Punamchand, with some definite purpose and that, later, when it died by falling into a well the Mother, on learning the news, said, “Oh!”—an exclamation which meant as if the death were somehow connected with her work as well as with the person to whom the tomcat had been given.

“Immortality Day” was an occasion mentioned to me by a few inmates of the Ashram during the early months of my stay there. But it soon fell into oblivion. Just some weeks back I referred to it in a letter to Udar who has been here for the last thirty-five years or so. He did not know what I was talking about and, when I told him a few things I had heard of, he was surprised that nobody had even hinted to him of them in the past. At the moment perhaps I must be one of the two or three who alone remember that a great occasion led to the designation “Immortality Day”.

On observing the almost universal ignorance about it I made up my mind to have a talk with Champaklal who, according to my memory of the Ashram's early days, had been a participant in the ceremony which had taken place on November 26 forty-nine years before.

A natural chance came when I went up to meet him on my own "bonne fête". In the course of our conversation on various matters relating to his years with the Mother I asked him to tell me all he knew of the Immortality Day. When I said that hardly anybody recalled it, he replied: "How could people know of it when Datta and I were most probably the only persons present on the occasion?" What I gathered from Champaklal, in addition to what I have already said on "Amar", is as follows.

At that time (1926) Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were living in the "Library House", the building to which the principal Ashram gate directly leads. A day or two before November 26, Champaklal arranged flowers on the floor of the Mother's room in the form of the Swastika. The Swastika is the sign of Immortality. The Mother commented that it was remarkable that he should have chosen to make this particular sign on that particular day. Her words seemed to suggest an inner spiritual movement going on, significant of what the Swastika represented. Then on the 26th, in the passage-room where soup used to be prepared, the Mother stood before a basin of water and, holding her hands over it, appeared to pass into the water a spiritual consciousness and power descending into her. She declared that a most important and fundamental event had occurred but it was both very sacred and secret. She asked for some small glass bottles. When they were brought, she poured the occultly charged water into them and gave them to those who were there. According to her, the divine principle of Immortality had been brought down on that day.

This event was not to be made public at the time, but some of the sadhaks could be told. Champaklal must have spoken to Amrita and the latter is likely to have mentioned it to me.

How should we understand the message of the event? Just as November 24 promised with the descent of a delegate consciousness of the Supermind the advent of the true Supramental Divinity, November 26 confirmed to the very last particular of supramentalisation what the earlier occasion had betokened in general: the very last particular is the divinisation of the body. In Indian spirituality, from the beginning, Immortality has stood for much more than personal survival of physical death: it has stood for a realisation of the Divine Consciousness which is infinite and eternal, the supreme God-Self both within and beyond the changeful series of birth and death in which our common terrestrial existence is caught. Immortality, in the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, necessarily includes this experience. When the Overmind came down into his body and the Mother's, the highest range of past realisation of the Immortal Being was compassed not only in the inner consciousness but also in the outermost, with wonderful consequences in the material sheath itself and an earnest of the full and final result which would come by the arrival of the Supramental Truth. The total earnest of the Godlike future was revealed on November 26—a

signal almost incredible to the human mind haunted and obsessed by millennia of mortality. That is why the Mother considered the revelation not only sacred but secret and that is why the memory of it was allowed to remain in the background.

However, in the interests of spiritual history it needs to be brought forward now. Besides, a broad suggestion of the ultimate goal sought for was always given by the writings of the Mother as well as Sri Aurobindo. We may end with a quotation from the Mother:

“When it is said that by the union with the Divine one attains the consciousness of immortality, it means that the consciousness in us is united with that which is immortal and therefore feels itself immortal. We become conscious of the domains where immortality exists. But that does not imply that physical substance is transformed and becomes immortal; for that quite another procedure has to be followed, and you must not only obtain this consciousness first, but bring it down into the material world; you must not only let it work out the transformation of the physical consciousness, but also the transformation of the physical substance which is quite a considerable work.”¹

The Immortality Day was the seed-assurance that this “considerable work” which has been going on ever since will bear flower and fruit on the earth in the time to come.

AMAL KIRAN

¹ *Path to Perfection*, Compiled from the Writings of the Mother by Keshavmurti, p.79.

QUESTIONS

So many questions unanswered!
 I have lain awake in silent nights listening to your name—
 Delved deeper and deeper into the depths—
 But the Unknown remains the same.

Often have I laid my head in your lap,
 Transported, intoxicated by that Touch!
 In your upturned, honeyed palms have I steeped my eyes—
 For hundreds of years I have loved you much!

Oh Mother, am I the lucky one
 Whose hands you held and poured your grace
 And assurance of succour into the heart?
 To my unsolved questions, the answer is your sweet face!

MINNIE N. CANTEENWALLA

A SONNET OF NIRODBARAN WITH SRI AUROBINDO'S CORRECTIONS AND COMMENTS

SONNET

THE atmosphere¹ is filled with a deep hush:
Each moment blossoms on the stalk of time
Into a fragrant flower of crimsoned blush;²
Every hour chimes³ with throbs of Peace sublime.

*ful*⁴

All faces with a joyous silence gleam
Their eyes quiver with expectations keen:
The givers of their life shall now be seen⁵
Mother divine and the Master⁶ supreme.
From far and wide people⁷ in numbers throng
To have⁸ a touch of those white hands of sheen
That shall transform their seeking hearts⁹ within
Into a softly flowing fountain-song.

Is "Master" a trochee or
part of an anapaest ?

The long awaited dawn unfolds¹⁰ its doors:
¹¹They drink the Light from Heaven's golden cores.¹²

12.7.1936

CORRECTIONS AND COMMENTS

- 1 "Atmosphere" seems rather prosaic—I would suggest
The air fills with some deep invading hush.
2. "Flower of crimsoned blush" is an awkward construction. One could have
"Into a fragrant flower's crimson blush."
3. Several faults in this line. The spondee is all right, but this particular trochee
spondee makes a very stumbling movement. Secondly, the internal half rhyme 'chime
sublime' is not admissible. Thirdly, the internal rhyme as between the two lines
'flower, hour' is not admissible. Internal rhymes can come in in a lyrical metre when
done with effect and an evident poetic metre, but here they affect the ear like awkward
accidents. Perhaps you could drop "hour" and link on with "moment" e.g.
Or beats as if a throb of Peace sublime.
4. Joyful is more natural—joyous very easily sounds pseudo-poetic
- 5 The rhyme "keen", "seen" are too similar to "gleam", "supreme". More-
over "expectations keen" sounds artificial and Popish. I would suggest "All eyes
quiver with expectation's ray", and substitute for "shall now be seen" something like
"come forth today" or "are seen today".

6. Both trochee and anapaest. You cannot put a heavy stress on the second syllable of Master which would be necessary for the anapaest and without which there would be a four foot line with two anapaests “and the Māster suprēme”. The trochee would necessitate a stress on “the” which that small and unimportant word could not bear.

7,8. “People” and “to have a touch” are dreadfully flat and prosaic. I would suggest “an eager number throng wanting a touch”.

9. To lighten the movement and give a better style I would suggest “the seeking heart”.

10. “opens” is better.

11. These two lines together as they stand have a very monotonous gait. I would suggest “Light shall be drunk”.

12. How many “cores” do you think Heaven has? Singular, sir, singular!

FULFILMENT

I SEE, O Lord, a hush of Light,
 A gold mingled with streams of white—
 Thy repose, O Lord, in my bosom's unrest,
 A Beauty now lingers that Calm has blest.

Thy Light, O Lord, in my brain and nerves,
 A strength immense Thy Will reserves.
 A Joy content, a bright and pure
 Realm of Self-Truth, Thy depth's allure.

I bow, my Lord, to Thy marvel gaze,
 Thy secret smile my life allays.
 On the world's agelong cry a bliss
 Immortal sets its seal, Thy kiss.

ARVIND HABBU

THE YOGA OF THE GOLDEN CHILD

THE Mother may have started my education long before that, but it took a special turn and intensity in 1960, while I was recording with her the text of the danced poem I had just created, *Le Périple d'Or* (*The Golden Journey*), which expressed a constant relation with her new force. The Mother enjoyed rehearsing the different roles played by the Two-in-One, He and She, as they came from their highest abode down to the terrestrial world in different forms.

The rehearsal often took the form of a happening. The cosmic spectacle that the Mother's consciousness presented to me as she read aloud the first act was much more than I had written. Once for the fraction of a second the whole universe disappeared into a swoon and reappeared on the crest of her creative voice. What a festival, even for my trembling body! This re-creation of the world occurs at each moment in fact, but we do not normally perceive it. Another time I was so entranced by the vision of evolution itself evolving that I could not utter a single syllable.

The Mother simply took up my role and spoke in my place.

When we started the recording of the second act she insisted suddenly, with her strong golden will, that I play the role of the mother and she would delight in that of the child. No protest could change her decision.

So I gathered my courage and began: "My child..." Ignoring my lack of conviction, the Mother folded her great wings, reshaped some lines on her face, put a sordine on her voice and answered, while looking at me with innocent eyes, "Mother..." That is how she gave me my first lesson as her mother. Afterwards she laughingly remarked: "It was quite all right, but you are still weak in this role. You lack experience as a mother!"

Her willingness to be my child greatly exceeded the momentary rehearsal of a play. The following week she began asking me questions, and for years she continued to do so: "What is a dwarf star?" "How does matter look to a physicist?" and "Tell me about the dolphins!"... Then slowly, carefully, as an astronomer points his telescope at a given star, I adjusted my instruments to look in the direction indicated by her, to see what she was seeing with her vision and consciousness and to answer her pressing questions with her own knowledge. Whether I succeeded or not was unimportant. The important thing was to try and try again, gently guided by the Mother, to put myself in the right perspective, to orient myself towards the true consciousness and power.

"In which direction are animals evolving?" and "What are new mathematics?"... The expected answer to her questions was, in substance, always the same: to make more and more conscious and more concrete, stronger, richer, freer the relations between the One and the many in everything.

I was overwhelmed by the Mother's capacity to listen like a child, by the enthusiasm with which she received the answers.

“Oh!” said she, “I had not thought of that before! It is like an open door! I can see through it.” And we looked together at one or another spectacle of evolving earth, a spectacle never limited to a single moment of terrestrial manifestation but extended in time, sometimes laterally, so to say, like a chain of mountains transpierced by thousands of lights, sometimes vertically, supporting a most precious summit.

I had no right to ask a single question. Eventually I risked a shy final one. Her reply came tender and lacing at the same time:

“But *you* know it! I know nothing!”

I stood breathless. The umbilical cord of my total dependance on her had been cut sharply as by a Zen master. I was floating, drifting in space and time, clutching at something which had been my sun and had become my child.

*
**

That is how the Mother came to me as the golden child. Naturally, this new relation with her was accompanied by an important change in my work and sadhana. Whatever I did from then on was to prepare her luminous apocalypse.

I discovered the existence of a newly built passage from the One to the many, through which birth can occur without separation. When the Mother was in Paris she had formed there, with her occult power, a kind of corridor for people to leave their bodies without fear and disturbance. She had now created a very protective crossing through the intermediary worlds for the One to take a living body in the many without ceasing to be conscious of itself as the One. This passage does not lead to a single place but covers the entire earth; and it is not reserved for human beings but serves all life forms.

I could even find anchor points for the incarnating being, where it could fix itself to its mother-to-be months before conception. I experimented also with basic movements of consciousness which would permit communication with the embryo, to help it to start conscious growth and development—that is to say a common new yoga for mother and child on the subtle physical, vital and mental levels.

“Now we have all the necessary elements for the coming of the children of the future,” said the Mother; “but who will be able to do it?”

It was a great triumphal hour when we saw them

“Come crowding down the amber stairs of birth;
Forerunners of a divine multitude...”,

as Sri Aurobindo describes them. I was able to recognize some of them on earth but I understood, with a pang in my heart, that if they came now it would be very difficult for them to stay. Nothing is prepared to receive them.

Together with the Mother I looked forward to a beautiful and stimulating environment where they would feel at home. We called it *Aurodevenir*. Everything I have written about education came out of this common vision and experience. The main characteristic of this garden of becoming should be the presence of as many

windows as possible open on the infinite, vibrating and calling like stars in the night sky.

So I started making holes, holes in everything, in geography and history, in physics and mathematics, in ontology and even in our writing system. A hole—in that case an opening on the infinite for the children of the future to bring down their integral consciousness—does not imply a deterioration or loss of substance. Each offers a new perspective of the whole and changes radically the subject into which it is brought. Once we have learned to see the infinite in everything, we find a lot of space for the new consciousness and the new world to manifest, and they do manifest. If we want to prepare the world as it is now to receive the Mother again, we have to prepare our minds to receive the infinite or, as Sri Aurobindo expresses it, to become “enamoured of the infinite”.

Aurodevenir is first of all made of consciousness. It is the privileged, conscious territory of a society turned towards the future, protective, stimulative, receptive to the special needs of tenderness, love and knowledge of the children of the new age, comprehensive of their extreme vulnerability due to their extreme plasticity, and capable of helping them keep their golden link with the One out of which they come.

The new yoga proposed to us—the yoga of the golden child—might well be the most direct way to meet the Mother again physically. It is an integral yoga, for it demands inner opening to the One, the infinite and the future, as well as practical knowledge and service. We have to make earth beautiful and harmonious for her feet to walk it again. And how can we find the will, the courage, the inspiration to manifest the new world which was her cherished aim—if not for the Mother to return: our golden child?

YVONNE ARTAUD

UDAR REMEMBERS

I

I HAVE been pressed by my brothers and sisters in the Mother to put on record some of the marvellous things She had said to me during my long and intimate association with Her, to which She had granted me the privilege, undeserved, perhaps, by human understanding.

This was once explained by Her and so let this be the first of my anecdotes. The Mother said that I had been with Sri Aurobindo and Herself in many previous births. Once, in Delhi, I had been to someone who was supposed to have the capacity to tell you of your previous births. In my case he became very modest and offered to help me find this out myself. So we went together into a deep meditation and there I experienced my association with Sri Aurobindo and The Mother to be right from the beginning of this world, even when there was no life and there was only rock and sand and sea. When I recounted this story to the Mother, She confirmed it at once. On another occasion when we were rehearsing the drama of Sri Aurobindo, *Perseus the Delverer*, we all went to Her in our stage costumes to show them to Her. I was dressed as a King since the role I had was that of King Cepheus, the father of Andromeda. When The Mother saw me She exclaimed, "Ah, now I remember, seeing you dressed like this, one of the times we were together in a previous life. You were then a Roman Emperor." She did not specify which one and I was too thrilled to ask Her and the moment passed.

There are many such stories I could tell, but let me begin by answering the request of a friend to write on the directions of the Mother with regard to avoiding any sort of waste. She has often stressed the spiritual importance of not wasting anything as such acts only stop the flow of things coming to us. When I first joined the Ashram there was a wonderful organisation there to prevent waste. Bits of soap or candle, empty match boxes, even half-burnt match-sticks, pieces of paper, old envelopes, pieces of cloth, all the things we normally throw away were collected at the Ashram in a very organised manner. There was a special place or a receptacle where each group of things had to be kept and they were then put to use in some form or other. Bits of soap were melted and made into bars of soap for our use. The same with candles. Used envelopes were turned inside out and re-used. Scraps of paper went to the making of hand-made paper. Pieces of cloth were joined together and made into serviceable lengths. It was truly a wonderful training for each of us and can serve as an example to all who read this article.

There is another normal habit that has to be changed by taking the spiritual view of it. Once there was a great shortage of Cement in the Ashram and as I was then in charge of purchases the responsibility for it rested on me. So I asked our Mother to

do something about it as really all our building work had come to a standstill. The suppliers of Cement kept on regretting the lack of stocks. The Mother said She would see to it. Then the Cement began to come in, a regular flood. All our warehouses were full and we could not use the Cement fast enough to meet the inflow. So the departments concerned asked me to stop the supply. I did this without consulting the Mother. The supply stopped. It stopped completely for such a long time that there was again a shortage, worse than before. I went once more to the Mother for Her help and told Her the whole story. She was displeased at my action in stopping the supply. She said to me that when we go to the Divine for help we must be prepared to receive it in whatever measure it comes. If the supplies were large, we should have enlarged our capacity to use them. To have stopped the supply, as I did, showed a great lack of understanding of the Divine's way of working and so was quite unspiritual. The Mother gave me a real scolding for this, as a Mother, of course, and I have always remembered it. I now share that remembrance with others so that they also may benefit by my experience.

There is another story which illustrates a divine working in another way. It was with relation to a great and very important contest between two powerful groups. First one group asked for the Mother's Blessings and Help through me and this She gave in special cards which She asked me to take personally to Delhi and deliver to the persons concerned. Then, just as I was ready to leave, a message came to the Mother asking for Her Blessings for the leader of the other group. The Mother was in a fix, as She Herself explained to me. She said that when anyone sincerely asks for Divine Help, She *cannot* refuse to give it. That is the Law. But how to give Her Blessings to both contending parties? The Mother meditated for some time and prepared a Blessings card for the other party also and told me to take all three cards to Delhi and added that I would be "guided" there. I delivered myself the first two cards as I knew the ones concerned personally. But to the third party, the contending leader, I could not go at once as I did not know him. I went to a friend who knew that party very well. He was much surprised to know of the request for the Mother's Blessings as it was quite out of character. Nevertheless he telephoned the party in my presence and I listened-in to the conversation. When my friend enquired from the party if he had asked for the Mother's Blessings, he denied it hotly and said, "I do not believe in all that nonsense!" Evidently someone else had asked on his behalf.

The Divine Guidance had worked and I did not take the card to that person. Needless to say he lost the contest.

For me what was important in this were two things. One, that the Mother *cannot* refuse Her Blessings and Help to *anyone* who prays to Her in all sincerity. The second is with regard to the way the Divine works. We look to a working only on the surface but the Divine works behind the veil and most often we cannot recognise this working till sometime after, when the work is done. Its way of working is its own and it does not follow our human logic. It has a logic of its own, though it may use some of our blunderings for its own working.

“He has made heaven and earth his instruments,
But the limits fall from him of earth and heaven;
Their law he transcends but uses as his means.”

(*Savitri*, Book VI, Canto 2)

(*To be continued*)

THE EMPEROR-TREE

(9.12.1950-19.11.1973)

WHEREVER I be, in Paris or Pamplona or Prague,
My awareness moves about with the Emperor of Trees,
Overweighed, ever-green in shadowy Aprilling leaves,
Sheltering the timeless sleep of a Godly love.
Motherer of myriad planets and milky ways,
She who had assumed that body of radiating Grace
To meet upon earth, as a mortal wooing her Prince,
The consuming fire of terrestrial transformation...

Fire, indeed, though lotus were his eyes,
Capable of snatching from the nethermost Inconscient's core
The stolen secrets of the solar diamond rays,
Causing a nuclear firework of Consciousness.

He had been steering for inward oceans where Heaven was not...
On a Honey-Moon, down the vortex of Oblivion,
They set a-blaze the Memory's metamorphosed sky
And mirror in Hades the steel-blue lakes where Goddesses revel.

Wherever I be, in Lausanne or Morangis or Naples,
Beside Alpine summits or in supernal Azure caverns,
Schizophrenic, transplanting the Emperor of Trees
I shelter the timeless sleep of my Godly Love...

PRITHWINDRA MUKHERJEE

THE DIVINE MOTHER AND THE CONVERGENCE OF THE WORLD

(With acknowledgments to the Souvenir issue of World Union Conference 1973, we are reproducing this extraordinarily perceptive and penetrative article by Beatrice Bruteau, pointing in terms both philosophical and psychological towards a new consciousness of self and world which would bring about a lasting unity and harmony on earth.)

“There is a Principle which is pure, and which in different places and ages hath different names. It is, however, pure and proceeds from God. It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root and grows, of what nation soever, they become brethren.”

JOHN WOOLMAN

To suggest that the Divine Mother is a universal Principle, confined to no form of religion and familiar to all nations, may seem an insupportable claim. Is not the Divine Mother a strange image to many people, one that is familiar only to certain sects of Hindus? On the surface this would seem to be the case. But beneath the surface there may be a more important truth. Let us see what the Divine Mother means on a level deeper than ethnic cult religion, and then, I believe, we can see how She is a Principle in whom all nations can become brothers.

The Theology of the Divine Mother

We can even begin on the cult level with a consideration of the image of the Mother as a Devi possessing multiple arms whose hands present a wide array of gestures, emblems, and instruments. What does this mean? In the familiar story in the Markandeya Purana, the Goddess appears in the midst of the collective power of the devas and relieves the rage and frustration they are feeling over their failure to subdue the bull-demon, Mahisha. With Her many hands She takes from the assembled devas their respective weapons and emblems of power. Armed with this integrated energy, She readily conquers the demon. Heinrich Zimmer has pointed out that the significance of the story is that the Goddess has reassumed the unitary Power which is Hers by right. It had been diversified among the various devas, while in Her—the Original Energy—it is one.

This myth indicates the path we must follow to the deeper mysteries of the Goddess. The Divine Mother is Shakti, Integral Energy: cosmic and psychic energy, the single energy that creates, preserves, and dissolves the world of particular names and forms. Sometimes Shakti is paired with Shiva and represented as His spouse. In this representation the united couple comprehend the whole of Reality, Shiva symbol-

izing the Transcendent Principle, formless and inactive; Shakti, the Phenomenal Principle, active in a multitude of forms. But this scheme leaves us with a duality, and the highest form of the theology of the Divine Mother is a non-dualism.

A bridge to the non-dualistic conception of the Mother can be found in two famous images of very different types: the "Kali on Shiva-Shava" and the "Sri Yantra." In the former, Kali—the Power of Time—expressing both Her creative and destructive aspects, stands on the prone body of Shiva, who in turn rests upon a corpse Shava. The meaning is that when Shiva is not in contact with Shakti, He is dead. The Shava figure is imaged as a bearded ascetic, the contemplative principle withdrawn entirely from the world, dead to phenomenal expression. The Shiva figure is youthful and alert; He lifts Himself toward the Goddess who dances on His breast. Through His contact with Her He is alive. And She, based on these two, exhibits Her emblems of life and death. The Shaktivadin's interpretation of this picture is that without the Goddess the contemplative principle, or masculine element, is inert. Energy is the source of all, the origin of the phenomenal world, of the conscious plan of its creation, and the principle through which it can be known. Pure contemplation without action is dead contemplation, say the Shakti worshippers, and so is mere feeling without the strength of expression. Without Devi, therefore, the gods (the self-luminous aspects of Ultimate Reality) are powerless. The very divinity of divinity is in Energy.

In the Kujjika Tantra, it is said that "Not Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra create, maintain or destroy; but Brahmi, Vishnavi, Rudrani. Their husbands are but as dead bodies." Similarly, the Jnanarnava: "Pure Sadashiva without Shakti is without motion like a corpse, for without Shakti He can do nothing." The Agastya Samhita tells the story that Shiva performed austerities to obtain the vision of Rama, who told him: "If you wish to know my inner nature, you should worship my transcendent power of delight. Without her I could not for an instant remain in existence; she is my innermost life."

The Sri Yantra, in another way, leads to a complementary conclusion. The mystic diagram, composed of the four-ported square, the circles and lotuses enclosing the nine interlocking triangles centered on the point, represents simultaneously the universe and the human soul, evolution and involution, history and the path of spiritual progress. A devotee using the diagram as an aid to meditation strives to realize how both the universe and he himself have evolved out of the original undifferentiated consciousness through the action of its own power and have become—macrocosmically and microcosmically—this universe of name and form. In terms of his own spiritual pilgrimage, he begins from an ordinary experience of being cut up and divided among the many categories of the phenomenal world (like the intricate pattern of the overlapping triangles) and struggles to recover his lost identity as the living union of Shiva and Shakti at the center of being. He does not seek to escape from the intricacies of the various triangles but to see them in proper order and to realize himself as the Whole; well-ordered multiplicity, rooted in a transcendent central Unity.

However, in this struggle-sadhana—to recover the lost wholeness—the sadhak's

guide is inevitably the Shakti principle itself. The whole story of life takes place within Her, in terms of Her energies. Therefore from the point of view of the aspirant, the Divine Mother is the chief of all divinities. The action which has produced the universe of his perception and the self with which he is presently identified is the action only of Devi. And it is Her action again which will reverse the process, lead him to the realization of the truth, and liberate him.

Thus recognized as holding the primacy in worship, Shakti is seen to extend Her province to the whole universe in every aspect of its being; the bridge to non-dualism is almost complete. As the Mahanirvana Tantra says, everything in the world owes its existence to Her. She is the original, undifferentiated, all-generating divine Substance, an inexhaustible, eternal well of being. She is both the supreme Power that generates the world, and the world so generated, both cause and effect. She is both the energy of execution and the intelligence of planning. And having produced the universe, She pervades it. She is all in all.

Furthermore, She is not only present in the world, but She is present in each individual. The microcosm and the macrocosm are, in their metaphysical structure, images of one another. As Devi illumines the universe, so She shines in the minds of the sages. "She is extremely subtle; the awakener of pure knowledge; the embodiment of all bliss, whose true nature is pure Consciousness," says the Satchakranirupa.

Pure Consciousness, pure Bliss, and pure Being must in fact be the profoundest qualities of the Mother if She is to be the Origin of all beings, of all psyches, and of all experiences. At this level of our meditation on the Mother, we see that She not only absorbs the roles and functions of Shiva, the inactive Witness of the universe, but is identified with Sat-Chit-Ananda, the Absolute Brahman. As Paranjyoti, Supreme Light, Parandhama, Supreme Abode, and Paratpara, Supreme of the Supreme, She is both the Transcendent and the Phenomenal, both contemplative and active, both formless and of manifold forms. A Tantric hymn addresses Saraswati as "Thou who art both form and formlessness.. embodiment of all gunas, yet devoid of attributes." Therefore, worship of Shakti does not mean worship of the limited forms of Her energy which constitute the phenomenal world—especially in their material and vital forms—but rather worship of the transcendent Source of all energies, the Divine Will, Wisdom and Act.

Nevertheless, Devi does not renounce Her role as Creator and Pervader of the cosmos. Her worshippers point out that while other conceptions of God, such as Vishnu or Shiva, are represented as giving their devotees only liberation from the world (mukti), Devi gives both liberation and enjoyment of the world (bhukti). She can be worshipped in either of these aspects, says the Devi Bhagavata Purana: "She is said by the learned to be of two kinds, unqualified and qualified. Those bound by attachment should worship Her qualified form, those without attachment Her unqualified form." For She is both the Supreme unconditioned Brahman and the Mother of the universe. She is the great integral mystery.

She is the Purna, the Whole. The theology of the Divine Mother is thus a form

of non-dualism, or Advaita, but it does not attain its non-dual character by *excluding* the natural world, as some other forms of Advaita do. Rather, it is a Purnadvaita, a non-dualism of the Whole, in which the Transcendent is realized as containing the world, exceeding the world, and being the essence of the world. The Mother is recognized as having a wide range of being. As the absolute, She is simply Herself, without any reference to the world; She contains the world within Herself; again, She *is* the whole universe, but not exhausted by it; and She exists within every part of the universe. Without parts Herself, She exists in Her fullness everywhere. Despite Her production of the multiple world, Her absolute Unity remains unimpaired. (This is, I believe, the deepest metaphysical meaning of the epithet, “Virgin-Mother.”) The Devi Bhagavata speaks of “the Mother of all the worlds, who creates this universe...protects [it] by Her own energy of the three gunas, and withdraws it at the close of every action, and remains disporting Herself in Her oneness.”

The Significance of the Feminine Imagery

Let us go back to Woolman’s beautiful and hopeful words and consider again whether the Divine Mother can be a universal Principle in the light of which all nations can be brothers. What is the significance of the feminine imagery in this regard? Is not the brotherhood of man supposed to be based upon the *fatherhood* of God?

Here I have to enter upon dangerous ground, for I am not at all sure that it is a valid or profitable business to try to differentiate some qualities as “masculine” and others as “feminine”. However, certain qualities can in themselves be usefully distinguished, I think, and with a certain amount of indulgence and tentativeness we may attribute them to certain cultural images associated with motherhood and fatherhood.

The primary distinction which I wish to make here is that between *union* and *separation*. This is not quite the same as the old familiar “One and Many” division of Being, but represents two different ways of conceiving that division and two different ways of responding to it, perceptually, morally, and mystically.

When we see the world basically in terms of *union*, we see the One as primary, the Many as contained within it, their differences from one another being secondary and less important than their sameness or unity. A sense of “one thing” is the basic aesthetic response to reality, a sense of all being one “we” is the moral response, and the sense of universal Unity being eternal and the source of bliss is the mystical response.

When we see the world fundamentally in terms of *separation*, we see Manyness as being irreducible, especially as between God and creatures. The Many have their existence outside the One, and usually in the sense of opposition to the One—as (at least capable of) defying the will of the One, or as being claimants to a reality which belongs only to the One. (It is interesting to note that those theories which stress the reality of the One and the relative unreality of the world are theories of *separation*, not theories of *union*.) On perceptual and conceptual levels, one sees “this” and “that”,

in the moral world "we" and "they", in the mystical experience "He" and "myself".

This is a coarsely cut and exaggerated distinction, and I will have more to say presently on how even these two unite, but first one more abstract notion and then we will come to "Father" and "Mother".

In the world-view of *separation*, the basic response, on the perceptual, conceptual, affective, moral, and (up to a point) mystical levels is *mutual negation*. This of course, is fairly obvious; it is the only way beings can be separated. Figures are seen against grounds, sounds heard against silence, etc., "this" concept is not "that," nor "that" "this". "I" am "I" precisely by not being "you". Consequently, some things are "mine" and others "yours". "I" must exclude "you" from "my" territory of possessions, whether material goods, personality characteristics, talents, affections of others, or whatever, in order to have a clear idea of myself and where "I" stand in the world. "I" expect similar exclusion from every other's territory, and "we" come together only in terms of adjusting our exclusive possessions for our mutual convenience. The "we" is what Sri Aurobindo would call a "constructed unity," not a natural or original unity.

That was "mutual negation," the only way beings can be separated, we said. But it is not the only way beings can be distinguished. The alternative is not loss of selfhood in some great homogeneous soup of universal being, as is so often mistakenly feared. The alternative to mutual negation is *mutual affirmation*. This is most easily seen on the human affective and moral level, where it corresponds to unselfish love, or *agape*. However, it is not impossible to see the universe in general in these terms, and I think that Teilhard de Chardin's theory of cosmic love could probably bear such an interpretation. Do not living bodies exist by the mutual affirmation and cooperation of all their constituent parts? Even molecules and atoms may be seen as unities in which the elements reinforce one another's particular being, acting in such a way as to strengthen it and "encourage" it to be more perfectly itself. This is why I spoke of *union* rather than of a simple oneness. *Union* by *mutual affirmation* contains differentiation within it; indeed, it lives by differentiation, the differentiation is essential to it. The more beings unite by mutual affirmation, the more they differentiate themselves and become more nearly unique. Yet the sense of "we" is basic; "I" find my being only *in* the "we" which is the living union of "you" and "I". Consequently what happens to "you" is as important as what happens to "I," and the arrangements we make for our common life are not a compromise of our respective demands but an adjustment of the Whole as a whole for the well-being of each component.

Now we come to the gender imagery. I propose to call *union* by means of *mutual affirmation* the *feminine* mode of being, and *separation* by means of *mutual negation* the *masculine* mode of being. How can this be made to appear—I will not say valid, but—at least appropriate?

Fatherhood, as expressed in generation, is an act of separation. The father is at no time physically united with the child. His psychological orientation toward the child also tends to be one of confrontation rather than coincidence. When fatherhood

is applied to God, it is characterized by the parallel concepts of creation out of nothing—*i.e.*, the Father's own substance is not committed to the offspring—and of relations of the will, such as covenant, obedience, loyalty, and faith. There is frequently some image of challenge, such as a testing of the required faith or obedience, with consequent reward or punishment.

The social relationships among human beings in a Father-God culture tend also to emphasize relationships of will which are responses to perceptions of separation. Relationships of law and of economic and political organization of the possessions and powers of the separate "I's" and "you's" predominate. Dominion and control are key considerations. Productive work is important. Loyalty within the group and separation from other groups is emphasized. Hostility is countenanced and in its attenuated form of competition is encouraged.

The relationship to the natural world shows similar characteristics. The gulf between man and other creatures is stressed, and the right of the human being to use other creatures for his advantage is claimed. In the intellectual life, logical distinction is basic, and choice between mutually exclusive alternatives is a common way of posing problems. Creatively, one endeavours to be different from one's predecessors in order to establish the value of one's work.

What are the corresponding qualities of motherhood? In generation the mother has an ambiguous relation to the child, who is both different from her and united with her. Possessed of his own reality, he is nevertheless composed of her substance and experiences her as his environment. This tonality continues to characterize (in gradually diminishing degree) the postpartum relationship of mother and child. She tends to coincide with the child by a kind of empathy and to relate to him more on the affective than on the volitional level.

Feminine religious figures—even if not admitted in their respective theologies to be divine—are regarded as possessing these same characteristics of being a secure unconditional refuge and a source of nourishment and encouragement to growth as one's own person. The Divine Mother is seen, as we described above, as a Universal Origin, whose offspring are never separated from Her, for they are born of Her very substance, and are never presented with the possibility—much less the threat—of being rejected by Her, for She makes no demands on them.

The derived social relationship is based on a perception of common life and a tendency to see one another as contributing to, or being a part of, each one's own life. Social actions arise more from spontaneity than from obligation, and such formal organization of community life as exists involves participation and contribution to decision-making by all. Harmony and happy expansion of the common life are primary values. Play is an integral part of life. There is openness toward anyone not of the established group and a readiness to admit him. The presumption is that all belong to the same community. Every effort is made to avoid hostility, and co-operation is stressed. The human being sees himself in intimate relationship with the rest of the natural world, in which he respects each creature according to its kind.

Intellectually, the feminine culture favours synthesis, endeavours to find “both/and” structures rather than “either/or” patterns, and creatively builds onto and out from pre-existing productions.

If we are willing to accept this admittedly abstract characterization of “masculine” and “feminine” cultures,¹ I think it begins to be fairly clear how the image of the Divine Mother as the unifying, synthesizing, integrating Principle in Reality is indeed a universal in terms of whose comprehensive embrace the brotherhood of nations could be readily conceivable and emotionally more acceptable than it has been in our experience.

Unity among nations has so far been attempted, as Sri Aurobindo has pointed out, in terms of “constructed” unity, superimposed on essentially *separate* elements. Some balance of their respective dominions is sought, or else one center of domination reduces all the others under its control. (Control may be military, political, economic, or cultural.) This method will not succeed, both Sri Aurobindo and Teilhard have argued, because it is not harmonious with Nature’s own way of composing unities.

Nature’s way is fundamentally the Mother’s way; unifying by real sharing of life, by integration of elements under the formality of a single principle which creates a new whole whose kind, variety, and range of functions far exceed those of the constituents. The unity comes from the inside, from the cooperative interaction of the elements to the union. It is a product of the harmonious shared energy relations of the components. Differentiation of the elements takes place within and in terms of the overarching (or underlying) unity. The self-reality of the composing elements is in no danger of being lost, as it is when one power dominates others, or when essentially separate and potentially hostile units balance and compromise their respective forces. Genuine *agape* sharing of energy is actually the safest way to secure true selfhood in any community. “He who would save his life shall lose it, and he who loses his life (for the sake of the Integrating Principle) shall find it” is more than a moral maxim; it is a scientific law. It is, in our analysis and tentative convention of attribution, the *feminine* mode of being.

The Coming Synthesis

There are many signs today that the feminine mode of being and feminine psychic energy,² long suppressed, subordinated, or forgotten in most of our cultures, is beginning to rise and expand. In mythological terms, we may be witnessing a descent of the Mother toward Her earthly children once more.

The outstanding symptoms of this, I would say, are the overwhelming desire for peace in the world, a general willingness to live and let live, to accept all peoples

¹ This is not at all the same thing as saying that *men* have these qualities and *women* have those. Actually existing individuals of either gender are always combinations of the qualities itemized in any scheme of analysis.

² I will use the term “psychic energy” to designate the dynamic substance of all our conscious faculties, including moral and affective responses as well as cognitive activities.

and all ways of life, to co-exist and co-operate. Glorification of competition is somewhat decreasing, being replaced in some societies by ideals of community action and community service. The team approach is replacing individual invention, achievement, and leadership in many fields. There is a growing emphasis on community, as an experience and as an identity.¹ With it goes a return to nature, to natural ways of living and simplification rather than elaboration, a new aesthetic of the concrete. Appreciation of the natural leads to concern for conservation of the environment, rejection of the attitude which legitimates exploitation, characteristic of masculine consciousness. Mere knowledge on an abstract level is distrusted by many people, academic doctrines and arbitrary laws in religion are rejected as irrelevant; experience of the depths of life is demanded—and grasped at by the violence of drugs if it is not forthcoming in a natural way—all expressing a starvation for *wisdom*, for a revelation of the meaning of life that can be grasped with all one's faculties, not only with one's logical consciousness. An integral *wisdom*, as we have detailed above, is the province of the Divine Mother. She is the Principle, the personification, and the patroness of this holistic psychic life wherein aesthetic, affective, moral, intellectual, and mystical ideals find their harmony and fruitful union.

But, now, if Hegel is right about the procession of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, we should look for and encourage, not a swing of the pendulum from the heavily masculine culture, in which the several nations of the earth have had their formation, to the opposite extreme of the original concrete simplicity of a matriarchal society, but rather a synthesis. It may be defensible to say that life, biologically and psychically, is basically female, and that masculinity, as the antithetical moment in the unfolding of the three-step evolution, is a special formation of this basic energy for specific and well-defined purposes.

There were some important gains for human consciousness made during the era of masculine ascendancy, and we must take care, in our eagerness to correct the problems into which some of these powerful forces have led us, that we do not cast these gains thoughtlessly away. Discovery and invention, pushing back the frontiers of knowledge and manufacture, require a certain initiative, a purified version of aggression. Grasp of the complications of the universe and power to manipulate them profitably presuppose tremendous development of abstract thought. Besides, there is a beauty in pure abstract ideas that is found nowhere else and no doubt images to us better than any other ordinary experience the transcendence of the Supreme Being. The crystallization of ego-centered individual consciousness, while the most troublesome of masculine achievements and the one we must take the most care to correct, must also be counted a plus, for it appears to be a necessary moment in the develop-

¹ Michael Lewis, writing in *Psychology Today* ("No Unisex in the Nursery: Culture and Gender Roles," May, 1972), remarks: "It is no accident that new social movements combine a partial rejection of masculine ideals like intense competitiveness or clearly defined sex-roles with an intensification of touching and feeling interactions, and that these new movements all have a communal rather than an individualistic flavor. Knowing this, people interested in feeling and in group interaction must move toward an embrace of the feminine ideal—the feminization rather than the masculinization of our society".

ment of the differentiated unity toward which both microcosm and macrocosm seem to be oriented.

So now we must attempt a synthesis, and the Divine Mother can be our patroness here, for She is the Purna, the Whole, in which no element is neglected nor disparaged. But we must remember that the Whole itself is an evolving reality, whose unity grows from epoch to epoch, together with the refinement of the differentiated elements which it comprehends. As the movement of consciousness in general may be seen as a development from intuitive concrete experience through abstraction and artificial speculative devices, to application and testing again in the concrete, to a unified grasp of the vision and the experience in a whole, so the evolution of the psychic energy of the tribes of the earth may follow a parallel path. From the unreflective "we" consciousness of an imagined prehistoric tribe, we may hypothesize that individual "I" consciousness arose as the most elementary form of reflexive psychic energy. It inevitably expanded into the various characteristics and activities we described earlier as the masculine mode of being: separation by means of mutual negation. *Unit reflexivity of psychic energy required this.* What is in process of formation now is *community reflexivity of psychic energy.* Communal reflexive consciousness must take up, purified but unimpaired, the single units of individual reflexive consciousness and so organize, intermingle, and harmonize their energies as to realize a totally new level of being, as novel with respect to individual consciousness as the molecule is novel with respect to the atom. It is not at all a question, therefore, of rejecting the "masculine" mode of being, in favour of the "feminine" mode of being, as if they were two equal and opposite entities. Rather, the specific advantages of the "masculine" mode must be taken up into the more general and fundamental "feminine" and find their proper places there in a new synthesis.

Why should we say, then, that femininity characterizes this synthesis, that the Divine Mother is its patroness? Because the very process of so preserving, absorbing, synthesizing, and nurturing a new being is the feminine motif. The separating, negating aspect of being—which, we must not forget, is a necessary and valuable aspect—is by definition incapable of absorbing the unifying, affirming aspect of being, whereas the latter is by its nature inevitably disposed to incorporate the former. This is why, when it comes to the question of the brotherhood of nations, or the convergence of the world, the Divine Mother is the most powerful image of Deity to whom we can direct our aspirations and from whom we may expect succor.

It is the Divine Mother who sets the ideal before us in Her own reality. We must direct the flow of our psychic energy as a radiation outward from the now securely established nucleus of our individual selfhood; outward, toward all other beings, with the intention that it prosper them in their own ways of being to the harmony of all. All beings are to be, as it were, in the womb of each, where they are warmed and nourished and loved in order that they may be themselves in their own unique ways. This orientation does not involve the rejection of any level or kind of being. Its whole intention is to preserve all, to promote all, to reverence all, and to integrate all. If we

can experience this kind of harmonizing, self-giving dynamism as the essence of our own souls—that is, realize our union with the Divine Mother—we shall be able to project it also upon the world at large. If we can find in the “sincerity” of our “hearts,” as Woolman suggests, that this “deep,” “inward,” “pure” divine Principle is ready to “take root and grow,” then we can confidently move toward the age in which all nations may “become brethren,” and we shall fulfill our destiny of building the universe to fullness of its maturity as the image of God.

BEATRICE BRUTEAU

SHANKARA TO THE DIVINE MOTHER

“Oh, Mother, whatever I articulate, may that be the utterance of prayer to you; may all my handiwork be the gestures for your worship; may my footsteps be in circumambulation to you; may my eating and drinking be oblations to you; may my lying down be prostration at your feet; may all my enjoyments be in the spirit of offering myself to you; thus whatever I do, may that become your worship.”

(Soundarayalahari)

Wherever my mind, there be your form; wherever my head, there be your feet.”

(Tripurasundarivedapada Stotra)

THE RAMAYANA — MYTH AND REALITY

(Continued from the issue of January 1976)

PROFESSOR Sankalia¹ makes the interesting revelation that cremation of the dead is a relatively new tradition in South India, having become popular in this region around the 3rd century B.C. Before this, as discovered by a study of numerous Megalithic and Neolithic (2500 B.C.—500 B.C.) monuments, the people of South India buried their dead in specially made pits in a N-S direction. Now, according to some scholars of the Ramayana, Kishkindha the capital of the Vanaras, under the leadership of Bali, was located in the Andhra-Karnataka region which is in South India. Valmiki, when dealing with the subject of Bali's death, devotes some 30 odd verses to the cremation of Bali—thereby, according to Sankalia, displaying his complete ignorance of the South. This in itself is not a case of logical error but certainly displays a characteristic carelessness on the part of the Professor, for he is assuming once again and wrongly that Valmiki was trying to be historically accurate. The possibility that Valmiki was aware of the burial customs of the people of South India, yet deliberately introduced the cremation for poetic effect, is not given any room in the dissertation. If a poet devotes 30 verses or so to a particular subject it may be because he feels there is some deep beauty to be expressed there or he may have some other similar motive, or he may be trying to express his knowledge of contemporary customs. But there is absolutely no reason to assume that the latter is the motive for his work.

Then there is the Professor's attempt to elicit valuable historical facts by a study of the vegetation of India. There are numerous descriptions of the plants and trees in the different areas that Valmiki describes. The Sala (*Shorea Robusta*) is a hardwood and is included in the description of the forests around Lanka and in the Dandakaranya. We are informed that the only place where such trees occur is the Chota Nagpur plateau—the precise spot which some scholars have chosen as the site of Lanka, Kishkindha and other places. The professor made this study in 1968 but here I suspect his information to be at least secondhand. A visit to the forests near Dehra Dun will confirm the existence of Sala forests trees that have been there for at least half a century, and were certainly observable in 1968. If Sankalia has made some allowance for the fact that the descriptions in Valmiki's poem are at least a couple of thousand years old, he has failed to mention it in his thesis. In any case he is guilty of some bias in his selection of evidence, for we have the diametrically opposite viewpoint in Professor Pusalkar's monograph.² This scholar quotes references to sandalwood and coconut trees in Valmiki's descriptions of the same forests and tells us that these are found in

¹ *Ramayana—Myth or Reality* by H. D. Sankalia (People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1973), p. 17.

² *Location of Lanka* by A. D. Pusalkar (*Journal of the Oriental Institute*, Baroda, Vol. XV, Nos. 3-4, March-June 1966), p. 340.

South India and not in Central India.

By now we are deep into the controversy over the location of Lanka, a subject on which much has been written. Those who place Lanka in Central India maintain that it was on a hill surrounded by a lake or a swamp and within easy access of Kishkindha and the Dandakaranya forest. There are many reasons put forward to support this assertion—some quote the distances and time scales in Valmiki's work and use these to deduce Lanka's whereabouts; others point out that it is quite absurd to believe that the Vanara army could have constructed a stone and wood causeway across 50 miles of open sea;¹ yet others claim that Sri Lanka has not yielded any archaeological evidence supporting the existence of Lanka—the list is quite long. Of course none of the arguments are conclusive.

One of the reasons which Sankalia urges in support of his opinions on Lanka is the location of the Vindhya mountains. The Vindhya mountains are mentioned as the site of Dandakaranya and are supposed to lie to the south of Kishkindha. But they are also described as being north of Panchavati which is near the Godavari which is to the north of Kishkindha, thereby giving us an apparent contradiction. Sankalia² claims that there cannot be two Vindhya ranges and cannot conceive of the Vindhya mountains in South India, so deduces that Kishkindha, Panchavati, Lanka all lie in the Vindhya mountains. Pusalkar,³ however, claims that there are two Vindhya mountains, the mountains to the south being mistakenly identified by Valmiki as the Vindhya, while really they were the Sahya, as the Ramopakhyana of the Mahabharata rightly calls them. Concluding thus, Pusalkar goes on to establish Sri Lanka as the ~~only~~ correct site of Lanka. I quote this particular argument because it is a typical representative of the controversy that has been raging for quite sometime now. It is clear that our scholars have become too deeply immersed in their scholarship to be able to maintain a detached and free perspective. How can they possibly solve this riddle that has arisen out of the Ramayana if they are going around with such monstrous bees buzzing in their tightly fixed bonnets?

Nevertheless it is worth noting that Sankalia offers something more than just the location of Lanka. He⁴ reports that in the Jabalpur region there is a tribe of primitive people called the Gonds amongst whom Ravana is regarded in high esteem. The word Lanka means a high place, an island or the house of a king. In his summary⁵ he tells us that Ravana was probably a Gond chief and that the entire episode probably took place in the compact geographical area around Jabalpur. Valmiki in his poem was responsible for exaggerating this to include all of India, possibly to give a greater significance to the action in the epic. This is certainly plausible, for it appeals to common sense, and then all this could have been said in a much simpler and more direct way by the Professor.

¹ Sankalia, p. 50.

² P. 337.

³ Even this distance is not clear since there are conflicting values for the length of one *Yojana*.

⁴ P. 49.

⁵ Pp. 62-63.

I would briefly like to touch on the subject of the Avatarhood of Rama as well as on the possible age of the story. The question of Avatarhood has been well expounded by Sri Aurobindo. In fact in relation to this he has also discussed the historicity of the Ramayana. I give here two passages, the first from *Evening Talks*, Second Series, by A. B. Purani¹ in which Sri Aurobindo speaks about both Rama and Krishna, and the second from *Letters on Yoga*.² The first half of the passage from *Evening Talks* is quoted also in Sankalia's book.³

Disciple: Did Rama live, or is he merely the creation of Valmiki?

Sri Aurobindo: There is no ground to believe that Rama is a historical figure.

Disciple: But the account of the conquest and other things?

Sri Aurobindo: Do you believe a king marches to Lanka with an army of monkeys? Valmiki may have taken it from tradition, or from imagination and created figures which so well suited the Indian temperament that the whole race took them into its consciousness and assimilated them.

Some even believe that there were Ramayanas before Valmiki's and that even in the Veda you find Rama symbolising the divine and Sita standing for the earth. It also may be that Valmiki brought it over from some Daivic plane to this earth.

Rama might have lived but one cannot say anything definite.

Disciple: What about Krishna?

Sri Aurobindo: Well, Krishna stands on a different footing from that of Rama. He seems to be a historical character. All the myths that have gathered around his name seem to be later additions. But he is mentioned in the Upanishad and seems to have lived. He is mentioned there as "Krishna, son of Devaki"—there is also mention of Dhritarashtra. There Krishna is recognised as one of those who had the divine knowledge. He was, no doubt, somebody who made a very deep impression upon his age. But it does not matter whether Krishna, as he is popularly known, lived or not; Krishna exists in a much more real way than the physical.

Letters on Yoga has the pronouncement:

"As for the Avatarhood, I accept it for Rama because he fills a place in the scheme—and seems to me to fill it rightly—and because when I read the Ramayana I feel an afflatus which I recognise and which makes of its story—mere fairy tale though it seems—a parable of a great critical transitional event that happened in the terrestrial evolution and gives to the main character's personality and action a significance of the large typical cosmic kind which these actions could not have had if they had been done by another man in another scheme of events. The Avatar is not bound to do extraordinary actions, but he is bound to give his acts or his work or what he is—any of these or all—a significance and an effective power that are part of something essential to be done in the history of the earth and its races.

"All the same, if anybody does not see as I do and wants to eject Rama from his

¹ Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 1961, p. 209.

² Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 1971, Vol I, pp. 414-5.

³ P. 32.

place, I have no objection—I have no particular partiality for Rama—provided somebody is put in who can worthily fill up the gap his absence leaves. There was somebody there, Valmiki's Rama or another Rama or somebody not Rama."

As for the age of the occurrences narrated in the Ramayana, the Professor has offered the possible date of 1700 B.C. as the time around which the events occurred. He bases his statement on a short survey of Ayodhya where he found potsherds of what archaeological jargon has termed Painted Grey Ware. These have been dated to around 800-400 B.C. and were evident after only a perfunctory examination. He feels that a survey of the deepest layers of Ayodhya would yield sherds of the Ochre-Coloured Ware which has been dated to around 1700 B.C. It might be worth mentioning the astrological viewpoint regarding the age when Rama lived. Astrology has recorded the manifestations of the Avatars and there is a comprehensive account of this in *The Gnostic Circle*,¹ a book by Patrizia Norelli-Bachelet that has been recently published. She establishes that Rama was the seventh in the scheme of Avatars that have descended on earth to assist mankind in its terrestrial evolution. The date of this manifestation, according to the astrological scheme, is roughly between 8000 and 11000 B.C., considerably earlier than the earliest known archaeological site. It is curious to note that the estimate for the age of the coming of Krishna, the next Avatar, coincides with other records of his manifestation which is supposed to have occurred in the period 4000-3000 B.C. I would recommend a study of her book for a fuller treatment of the subject. For my part, I am content to sit back and watch with interest the results of the coming archaeological survey. Nonetheless I prefer not to attach any historical significance at all to the Ramayana. For me the poem has a totally different meaning—a significance which is perhaps best expressed in the words of Sri Aurobindo which I quoted at length in the earlier part of this article.

(Concluded)

ANGAD

¹ Aeon Books, 1975.

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PSYCHE

A PLAY IN VERSE

(Continued from the issue of January 1976)

SCENE THREE

ASSEMBLY HALL. KING, COURT, PRIESTS.

Enter hurriedly DAPHNE AND PSYCHE

KING: All know why we have summoned you. Today
Our herald sent to Delphi has returned.
Three daughters are our sole posterity,
Three daughters, two of them the wives of kings,
Though both still dwell amongst us, and a third
Who yet remains unwed. No suitor came—
Although men call her beautiful and praise
Her warm heart and mature deep-thinking mind;
Too fair, perhaps, too generous and wise
Is she for men who seek sufficient charm
And wit and grace to decorate their days,
But turn in fear from one intent to make
Existence a perpetual sacrifice,
All life an offering in the fire of love—
No human suitor came, so we have sent
To Delphi, where divine Apollo speaks
His secrets through ecstatic mortal lips.
All things he knows and all things can reveal,
But our dark minds confound the revelation
And make a riddle of the word of God.
So it has always been. But we today,
With reason as our guide, and with the aid
Of our own Apollonian hierophants,
Skilful at omens and the flight of birds,
Well-versed in supernatural sciences,
And communicants of God's high Mysteries,
Shall rightly hear and rightly, so we hope,
Interpret the prophetic utterance.
Speak, Herald, the oracular reply,
The mandate of the gods, and good or ill,
We who are mortal shall obey their will.

HERALD: I saw the priestess take her sacred seat,

The three-legged mystic throne of prophecy.
 I saw the God possess her, heard her cry
 In inarticulate ecstasy, then fall
 Like one whom life abandons. What she spoke
 I know not, nor could any man know, save
 The priestly guardians of Apollo's shrine
 Who set his oracle down in human speech.

KING: Well, read what it says.

HERALD: At once, your majesty:
 "No mortal man will take this child to wife
 But one whose power the powers of Olympus fear.
 To him she must give fearlessly her life
 In God's design let no man interfere."
 So spoke the God at Delphi.

DAPHNE: What does it mean?
 No mortal man...power the immortals fear...
 What does it mean.

PRIEST: Apollo's will is clear.
 It is a son of infernal Hecate,
 Dark mistress of the regions under earth,
 Whose progeny, immortal like the gods
 And like the gods in strength, but dark and cruel,
 Have thirst for human blood. Now one of them
 Demands propitiation, and the gracious gods
 Have chosen the unwed daughter of our great king
 To be the victim. Let all men rejoice
 For she has been afforded special grace
 In which we all shall share. But if we fail
 To carry out their will, famine and plague
 Will fall upon this land. "In God's design
 Let no man interfere." We must obey.

DAPHNE: You're wrong. We will not.

EUNICE: Daphne, calm yourself.
 Let father speak.

KING: Psyche, beloved child,
 Come here. God's doom is spoken and his word
 Though cloaked in mystery is yet too clear.
 Ah Psyche, if I knew this day should bring
 Such revelations from Apollo's shrine,
 I never would have tried to break the seal
 That keeps the future safe from mortal eyes.
 Better for man to bear courageously

The certain present than to try to peer
 Into the doubtful mists of what shall be.
 We are allowed a little happiness,
 A little love, a little light and power,
 But always grief and darkness wait behind
 Life's brightly coloured curtain, and when we think
 That we no more shall feel the touch of pain
 The curtain is torn aside.

PSYCHE: Oh Father, Father.

How often when I came to you in tears
 About some childish tragedy, you said
 That a real princess would be ashamed to cry
 About such things. You told me life was made
 Of pain and pleasure, of delight and grief,
 And light and darkness, woven warp and woof;
 But that true happiness was not these things,
 But broke in like an unexpected dawn
 In rare ecstatic moments through the clouds
 Of ordinary life.

KING: You are right, my child.
 Our priest cannot be doubted. The gods command,
 We cannot but obey. Our kingdom's good,
 The good of all our subjects must come before
 Our love of you.

PSYCHE: Of course, Father, of course.

DAPHNE: But what are you saying? Have you both gone mad?
 And you, you stand like a flock of sheep, and when
 He pulls the wool down over your vacant eyes
 You don't so much as "baa."

EUNICE: What do you mean?

DAPHNE: I mean that if you let this so-called priest,
 This muttering murmuring fortune-teller take
 The daughter of a king to make a meal
 For some monster and call it sacrifice
 It would be murdering her.

PRIEST: Impious speech.

The gods have ears.

DAPHNE: Don't talk to me about

The gods. What do you know about the gods?

PRIEST: I am Apollo's priest.

DAPHNE: And do you think

Your great Apollo will be gratified

To watch us slay an innocent girl, a child
 Of our own blood? If we allow this thing
 A foul miasma will pollute us all.
 The furies of revenge will seize our souls
 And drag them headlong screaming down to hell.

PRIEST: We are the guardians of the Mysteries.
 Their souls are in our care.

DAPHNE: You pompous ass.
 You don't know a thing about the Mysteries.
 [*To the others*] Our Mysteries have promised us new life
 Beyond this earthly hour, a golden door
 Is opened to immortal happiness
 Near to the gods, released from the toil and strain
 Of our mundane existence, but that door
 Is closed to all whom murder makes unclean.
 We are not crude barbarians who stain
 With human blood their altars. We are Greeks.
 Our lives are ruled by reason and by law.
 Shall we revert to savagery? These priests
 Can mutter their maledictions if they please.
 No one will take my sister to her death.
 Say something, Father.

KING: Daphne, what can I say?

DAPHNE: You are the king.

KING: But kings too must obey
 The law of Heaven.

DAPHNE: Yes, but not these priests.

KING: They are Apollo's regents upon earth,
 Initiates into his mystic cult,
 Well-versed in supernatural sciences...

DAPHNE: Oh Father.

EUNICE: But he's right. We must obey
 The spokesmen of the gods. If we refuse
 We all will be in danger. Let one die.
 The rest will live on safely.

DAPHNE: Who asked you?

EUNICE: You forget that I'm the oldest.

DAPHNE: You forget
 That she's your sister.

PSYCHE: Daphne, Eunice, please.
 Apollo's priests have said that I must give
 My life fearlessly to this unknown

- Unhuman husband and I must obey.
 DAPHNE: But Psyche, when obedience means death
 Revolt and live.
- PSYCHE: If God ordains my death,
 To death I go most willingly, for life
 As sweet and beautiful as life can be
 Has never given me what my heart demands.
 But that which life so feebly represents,
 That being, Daphne, who is all and all,
 Oh Daphne, who was born before the stars
 And cast the sun out like a spark from fire,
 He is beyond the reach of life and death
 And him alone I worship. What is death?
 The end of life, the end of happiness,
 That sweet wine, wine that sours to vinegar
 Before the cup is finished. You forget
 Although you prate of gods and Mysteries
 That she whom we adore as queen of death,
 Demeter's child, divine Persephone,
 Whom Death abducted from the sun-lit fields,
 Is mystic queen of immortality
 And that by death we gain immortal life.
- DAPHNE: Oh Psyche, Psyche, this is not the time
 To talk religion—you who would only talk
 Of boys and flowers and lovely happy things.
 Now you would talk of Being and the gods
 And suns and stars and splendour. Let me hear
 My little sister Psyche. Can't you see?
 These people want to kill you.
- PRIEST: No man here
 Will harm her. We will take her to a place
 Far away, high in the lonely hills
 And leave her there, alone with God and Fate.
- DAPHNE: You might as well save time and butcher her here.
 But you'll have to kill me first.
- PSYCHE: No, Daphne, no.
 The oracle was meant for me alone
 And I alone will face my destiny.
 Even as I answered the sweet call of life
 I answer now Death's call. Go, priests, and make
 Your preparations. We will go today.
 It will not do to make him wait for me.

SCENE FOUR

Outside the palace.

Enter DAPHNE with DEMETRIUS and PHILLIP.

DAPHNE: How can I go with them? I'll wait and when
They've left her there alone then you and I
Will rescue her and take her away from here.

DEMETRIUS: Not I, Milady, no, not I, but this
Strong lad, the staff of my decrepit age
Will go with you. Boy, take this sword. I fought
The yellow-haired barbarian with this sword
In distant countries by the Pontic sea
And slew full many for the gods and Greece:
For Greek cities and Greek pastures and Greek streams
And her temples and her sacred Mysteries
And divinely-given laws; for these I fought.
Now you, boy, in defense of innocence
And gentle goodness and well-mannered grace
Have got to save the princess. Son, be brave.
Fear not the foe, inhuman though he be
And sprung from the infernal womb of hell,
For no one, man or demon can withstand
The divine power of a fixed and fearless heart
That fights for righteousness.

PHILLIP: Father, I'll try.

DAPHNE: It's not enough to try. Demetrius,
Do you think this boy knows how to use that sword?

DEMETRIUS. He'll do me proud, I know it. Won't you, boy?

PHILLIP: I'll do my darndest. Father.

DAPHNE: Well, all right.
But remember, we're not going up there to chop wood;
It's not a game, my sister's life's at stake.
We have to save her. Go, outfit yourself
In greaves and hawberk. And you, keep out of sight.
Eunice found out about the part you played
In Psyche's outings and promised you twelve stripes.

DEMETRIUS: Pain suffered to bring joy to one like her,
So innocent and pure and beautiful,
Would be well suffered.

PHILLIP: And to die for her
Would be well died for.

- DAPHNE: Boy, don't talk about death.
 We two must stand against the fatal machine,
 Turn back the whirlings of its heartless wheel
 That crushes our helpless lives. She must be saved
 Although the gods oppose and we must slay
 A monstrous son of darkness, she must be saved.
 Now go. We'll meet before the sun goes down
 Outside the southern gate. I know the place
 They mean to take her. We'll get there before
 The priests and the others. It's an eerie spot,
 Believe me, all around dark jagged rocks—
 Huge boulders—and fantastic twisted trees,
 A fit place for a demon sacrifice,
 And behind the boulders a sheer precipice:
 One false step and a long way down to hell.
 We'll wait and when they've left her there alone
 We'll set her free and take her someplace safe
 We have to do it. Well, go—and don't be late.
- PHILLIP: Gosh, what a woman. And I never knew
 How much she loved her sister.
- DEMETRIUS: Nor did I
 To tell you the honest truth, boy, nor did I.
- PHILLIP: Do you think she doesn't love her really?
- DEMETRIUS: Well,
 It may be love that makes her say those things,
 It may be love. It may be love. Then too
 It may be something like what grabs you here
 And makes your skin start creeping, like when you see
 A snake on the road squashed flat by a chariot wheel.
- PHILLIP: Was that the wheel she was talking about?
- DEMETRIUS: No, boy.
 That wheel was something different.
- PHILLIP: But you mean
 That she's just feeling sort of queasy about
 Her little sister being up there alone
 And some big monster supposed to come and make
 A meal out of her?
- DEMETRIUS: Well, something more like that.
 I know those girls for sixteen years or more
 And, except for Psyche, well, the other two
 Are not so loving, no, not them at all.
- PHILLIP: It still seems kind of noble.

DEMETRIUS:

That it does.

You can't say that it doesn't seem just fine.
 But now we've got to get back home and get
 My shield and greaves and all that stuff I wore
 When I was fighting by the Pontic Sea.
 You've got to save the princess. I don't care
 Why this one's going, you've got to save her, boy.
 No matter what. Come on now, boy, let's go.

(To be continued)

PETER HEEHS

A BIRTHDAY WISH

MAY your life be a rapturous flight
 Into that radiant land
 Where morning steps with a strange sweet smile
 Across the shimmering sand,
 And silence soars on shining wings
 Above a moonstirred stream
 That flows into the silver fire
 Of Love's deep flaming dream.

May the light that leaps to you
 From His bright burning Face
 Let you live like a star that sweeps
 Through dark enchanted space,
 Like the sky in the night as it sings in its splendour
 Vast and lonely and free,
 Or the wind in the dawn as it tenderly winds
 Through a murmuring mistdimmed tree...

JEAN

DIALOGUES

(Continued from the issue of January, 1976)

Synopsis:

The young soul, born in ancient Athens, discourses with the great goddess, Pallas Athene. But she is unable to comprehend the mystery behind the goddess's words and is forced to turn back to a life of ordinary human activity without recourse to further communion with the gods. She next takes birth in ancient India as the disciple of an aged rishi. Her spiritual interests revive and she is able to experience the One immanent in all things. She lives in this awareness till death once again compels her to move on.

Chapter III

BEYOND the barrier of repose, the ever-restless world beckoned, and the girl's soul hastened to return from what men termed "death." For her youthful spirit felt drawn to press on towards some secret, infinitely distant goal of which it was itself yet incapable of dreaming.

The childhood that followed marked the intensest night she had ever known, interspersed by brief pinpoints of star-bright flashes. Only those moments reminded her from time to time that the One still lived behind all the impressions flitting past her human awareness.

She had returned to life in a conventional Indian household, with its conventional shrine in the home, its conventional customs of birth and marriage and death and worship, and its defined limits for almost every activity known to man. The shock of such surroundings impressed her so forcibly that she was all but ready to expire by her eleventh year. It was then, when she reached the crisis of an undiagnosed disease, that her mother carried her to the local temple and she looked upon the stone-cut image of Krishna, the beloved Lord. The stone face was dark and pitted, the flame-lit sanctuary all but buried in the surrounding darkness of the outer edifice. Yet she saw before her and felt within herself the one thing intimately familiar and dear in all this strange and terrible world into which she had been born. From that day onward the child, Shanti, recovered dramatically, having made her mother promise that she would carry her daughter to the temple each day till she should be completely well. There she would sometimes be observed to speak to the deity. Her lips would move, though none could hear the words she spoke. At other times she would appear to fall into a trance as the other devotees at the temple watched in amazement. Meanwhile all traces of the illness—her fever, her partial paralysis, her alternating coma and delirium—that had stood poised to kill her vanished in the unaccountable fire of her devotion.

Soon little Shanti came to be known as something of a phenomenon in the community. Her family came to be revered for having produced a religious prodigy, and

they basked in their renown, looking forward to the day when their saintly daughter would make a fine marriage, thus bringing wealth and prestige—as well as the fame she had already achieved—to the house. Meanwhile, they treated her well, but not with any intimate warmth, for she was too different from them all—being, rather, a creature apart to be kept and fed like a prize animal—but not one to be identified with or understood in the human sense.

She, also, tended to look upon her parents and other family members with fear and sometimes respect rather than with any affection, for they represented to her, with all their rules and strictures, the fenced enclosure in which she was compelled to live. It was an enclosure that grew tighter and more impenetrable with each passing year, until even her visits to the temple became more and more in the nature of a formal clan outing. Now she had not even the most fleeting moment alone with her adored deity, until one day, as she passed before it, her heart sent out its silent call:

“Lord, see my plight! What is this earthly life of man, more circumscribed than that of a goat tethered to a stake?”

“Peace, child. For is that not the meaning of your name?” the answer came almost immediately. Then the deep, quiet voice went on, “Look, I shall enter into your heart and live there always. You shall have no need then to come to this cavern made by man to be my home. You shall have no need to look upon a scarred stone face which the world recognizes as Krishna. Look in your heart, I say, and you shall see me there, more beautiful and more true.”

“Forgive me, Lord. Why did I not open to you sooner? Why did I have to continue year after year with this farcical ceremony of coming to the temple accompanied by all these who do not know or feel you?”

“No farcical ceremony, child—but the preparation needed to make this moment possible. Say farewell to the grey statue now. You shall not see it again, for they are planning to send you away in marriage.”

“Merciful heavens! But then will you stay with me?”

“Always, my dear one, always.”

And so, indeed, it happened. She never returned to the temple again, for the lucrative match her family had been seeking materialized all of a sudden, and a splendid marriage took place at the earliest possible date. Ceremoniously, as always, Shanti was made to change one set of shackles for another and, at the end of the affair, was dutifully led away by her husband’s family like a captive princess enchained in solid gold.

Her first true happiness came with the children—twin sons and later a daughter. Only then did her life transform itself into a small manifestation of peace. For it was then that her existence was reckoned to be that precious biological treasure to be protected at all costs—the life of a mother with her young. Restricted as ever within the four walls of a courtyard, to Shanti that courtyard came to represent, nevertheless, the whole garden of being. A venerable neem tree grew in the centre, while the sides of the area were adorned with plants in pots. Around these magical confines she

moved like an exquisitely caged and enchanted bird. She had even asked her husband's family for a statue of Krishna, and they had duly provided her with one, now installed in a little niche in a corner of the court. Yet she had never really been able to attach herself to it. It was too ornate, she thought, a trifle too polished and manufactured, perhaps. And so, though she made her formal obeisances and flower offerings before the statue to avoid appearing ungrateful to her in-laws, the Lord with whom she conversed and to whom she turned whenever the need gripped her was the one that had taken his abode within her before she had been married. It was in the mid-morning, when all the work of the house had been done, when the servant women were resting in the verandah, and she sat with her back against the trunk of the great tree in the courtyard—the twins asleep beside her—that she met her Lord most effortlessly. Then she spoke to him as though in a dream of deep pleasure:

“So you have been kind to me after all, my dearest Lord. After all, you have given me heaven—so small, so still, so neatly within my woman's reach. And four walls to block out everything else that doesn't matter.

“Remember how afraid I was before? What an atrocity this life seemed and how much I wanted to die! Now see how content I am and how your wild beast has been tamed and turned into a docile pet.”

“Your tranquillity suits you well, my dear one.” Her Lord was always ready to answer when she came to him. “Really, you were too untamed, as I remember you, nervous and fretful as a deer startled by every sight and sound. This earth where we come to reside from time to time requires a firmer heart, a steadier spirit. So now you have taken root like the tree beneath which you sit. You have sunk your feet in the earth where previously they were constantly itching to go skipping off into the heavens. It is an improvement.”

“Yes, Lord. And do you know I have even learned ever so slightly to love this species to which I belong? It is a wonder, because before—long ago—I don't remember when, perhaps it was even before I was born to this life, I thought of men as terrifying creatures herded together in those unthinkable walled labyrinths they called cities. I imagined them to be war-like, death-bent, unconscionably cruel—oh, in a word, altogether monstrous...”

“But, my little innocent, it was no imagination. You were perfectly right—men are all of those things—but now you have found that they are also something else, and that even those labyrinths of horrors known as cities hold some pockets of paradise, have you not?”

“Oh yes, my Lord, exactly! And then, my two babies—see how they sleep? They will be men, yet they are not monsters—”

“Dearest, how touchingly simple you are ”

“I am an uneducated girl, Lord. You must forgive me.”

“You are the jewel of my heart and I shall educate you myself. Now tell me, what would you like to learn first?”

“First? Ah, now let me see...” Pensively she let her mind run. “What am I?

What have I become in these twenty years of life? A—a nothing. Isn't it so, my Lord? I have learnt nothing in all my life—I suppose it is like that with moneyed people. We don't even work in the fields or in the kitchen as the peasants do. We just live. That's terrible, isn't it?"

"No, it isn't, because you are forgetting something. And besides, no one ever 'just lives.' Everyone does *something*. It's a necessity. Think again, little one, and try to remember. It's just under your nose, you know."

"Under my nose, under my nose... Oh, but you are right. I am something after all! I'm a mother. It's all I have to do or be—a mother. But then surely it's not enough to just give life to these little bodies; as a mother I must give more. I must teach them how to live. I must teach them... But I don't know what, my Lord. What am I to teach them, I who know nothing of life but what there is in this small courtyard? That is the lesson I must learn first."

"You have chosen well, child. But it is better to understand at the outset that in truth you can teach your children nothing. You as a mother can impart to them certain qualities as subtle as the fragrance of flowers. No more can you do, nor may any god or man expect more of you. Yet if you did your single work well you would contribute your necessary share to forward the destiny of this wayward race of men."

"Are you not asking too great a task of me, Lord? You know what I am—how small and worthless—"

"Silence, child, and listen well. The Divine asks no one to give beyond his capacity and yours is no less than that of the rest. Listen with your inner heart and your soul and you shall understand. The knowledge is already within you. I have no more to do than to awaken it.

"You know already that man in many ways is scarcely more than a savage. It was this observation that made you wish to flee this life at the earliest age. Yet with each step along the road the self-same savage, man, improves, becomes something he was not before—imperceptibly, reluctantly, ever so gradually. Look at yourself, for example. You have been born different: gentle and kind, quiet, thoughtful and forgiving when others are not so. Impart these qualities, then, to your children—you have brought these traits with you from some divine treasury and you can attempt to pass them on, or at least leave some imprint of them behind you. Otherwise they will perish with you and a chance will have been lost, a moment missed in the godly economy of things. The beings that have come to birth through you shall also remain as all the others with their souls curled within them like hibernating squirrels—"

"But how is it to be done, Lord? How—?"

"Of course, it cannot be done like teaching someone to read a lesson out of a book. That is manifestly impossible. Your children in any case shall be formally educated by other masters—you know it well. It is the system in this society and it shall be followed to the letter by your family. Your work must already be done before the other teachers arrive, before your little ones are compelled to leave the haven of

your private courtyard.

“Proceed, therefore, by letting your gentleness and delicacy of being pass into them like a silent prayer as they lie beside you, or as you hold them in your arms. Let them see it whenever they look into your face. Let them find your steady, thoughtful soul in your eyes and in your voice. Let your tranquillity sift through the very pores of your skin into the surrounding air so that they may take it in with every breath. And if you do all this, you will have done all it is possible for you to do as a mother, and all that anyone could ask of you.”

After a few minutes of silent meditation, she replied with the utmost gravity:

“I will try, my Lord. I will try my very best to do as you have said, and may the results be as you would wish.”

“Think not of results, dear child, but scatter your seeds on the earth and pass on. It may not be for you to enjoy or even see the harvest of flowers or grain that may mature thereafter, and for that harvest you shall not be responsible. Do your task and pass on—that is all.”

“Of course, my Lord, I have understood.”

And with those words the soul within her prostrated itself before its image of the Lord to seal the totality of its submission.

Thereafter, the years unfolded, and she did her quiet, voiceless work. She continued to worship the inner image of her Lord every day, to tend her small idyllic world, and to dutifully receive her husband when he chose to visit her between long intervals of travel.

It was with the birth of the fourth child that the repetitive daily round of her life came to an end. She had not been well throughout the pregnancy and then when the moment of birth overtook her at the height of midsummer, she could no longer hold on to the thread that bound her to her little existence. She pulled silently away, leaving behind her three half-grown children, a baby, a courtyard full of memories, and the last words of her Lord reverberating through her being:

“Depart in peace, child. Your work is done. Now farewell, sweet bird—fly where your destiny beckons. Fly—fly...”

(To be continued)

BINA BRAGG

IMMENSITIES

I CAST myself upon Thy open sea.
There is nothing left but Thee.
Alone I am, and free.
The world and all its majesty
Has come and gone from me.

I give myself unto Thy infinite.
The slow sere anguish and the swift delight
That pace the earthly day and night
Gleam with a fitful light
To my disenchanted sight.

Unconsumed, I house Thy lucent fire;
Thy pure white flame that burns without desire.
Love's rising heat upon its living pyre
Shows nothing of its cherished warmth entire
That I admire.

Life's endless repetitions from me blown
By breaths of Thy immensities unknown,
Faith the marrow of my bone,
I stand with nothing of my own—
Moved by Thee alone.

LORETTA

I DREAMT

I DREAMT of the golden chain
uniting all of us
Holding hands in a circle of rain
drowning all of us
And in absolute bliss
 universal kiss
We loved for all of us

Let us all hold hands and say
Here's to the golden day
And as the rain comes falling
Love in the golden way.

AJIT RAO

CONSCIOUSNESS APPROACH TO BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

(Continued from the issue of January 1976)

III. Attention

THERE is no matter animate or inanimate that does not respond to attention. In an institution the employees, the ideals, systems of functioning, rules, machinery, material and physical space all require a certain minimum of attention and all of them will respond to increased attention by serving better. The result is most pronounced where the attention given is motivated simply by respect and concern for the thing and without demand or expectation. The truth is that the Divine is in all things and all things are Divine. By giving attention in the form of mental interest, loving concern, enthusiasm, physical care, we contact and respect the Divine in matter. Let us consider the role of attention in a number of areas.

A. Attention to employees. We have stated earlier that attention given to men creates interest in work. To elaborate—one can see an individual as a whole person and not just in his role as employee, try to know and understand his life circumstances, his goals, strengths, habits, weaknesses, likes and dislikes, problems, attitude towards work, his feelings towards the work. One can treat him according to this knowledge with due respect for his ideas and feelings, desires and needs, interest in his development, concern for his growth, happiness, health and well-being. One can translate this knowledge and feeling into concrete attempts to help him whenever that falls within the reasonable scope of one's means and does not threaten to cause undue problems in the relationship between management and staff. It is true that certain rules, positions and formalities should be respected and maintained in behaviour but that does not limit one's capacity to understand and sympathize and should not be used as an excuse for hardness and indifference towards those who serve one. The best means to give attention to men is to take interest in the work that they do and give just recognition, and in that context to provide each worker with the opportunity to constantly learn new skills and obtain new knowledge and exercise new responsibilities appropriate to his capacities. It is possible to provide even the lowliest of workers with the opportunity for advancement by setting clearly before him the steps to perfection in his present work and presenting new opportunities when that perfection is reached. No worker can remain indifferent to the sincere concern of the employer for his growth and well-being. He will definitely respond by showing that same concern in his execution of the work. What responsibility one inwardly feels and accepts for his life, he will automatically feel and express in his work. The inner concern must be genuine but in outer expression the attention should be limited

by the extent to which he identifies himself with the work. One will find that when his inner attitude is proper, this identification will follow of itself. Give him the attention he deserves.

One's success can be measured by the effect on an employee's non-work life—either creatively by preparing him for a better job or encouraging him to further education, or at least functionally in terms of his manners, conscience, behaviour, family life, etc. One should encourage the progress of employees even if it seems to be away from the company. Encourage all expansive movements.

There are a number of criteria to ensure that each man receives the attention he deserves:

- 1) He should be considered as a human being more than as an employee;
- 2) The job he does should result in psychological satisfaction making him desire to have more work;
- 3) He should find constantly newer skills added to his capacity;
- 4) His work pattern should include a built-in recreation that prevents accumulation of frustration or tension;
- 5) His work should help to harness all his energies and give them to the work so that tedium, except the physical part, will be minimal;
- 6) There should be a genuine appreciation and psychological recognition of talents when they are found or freshly emerge. Work must help to reveal and develop these talents.

There is a negative side to attention as well:

- 1) No man should be given even a little more than he deserves; he must not be in a position to take from the management more than is his due;
- 2) No more interest should be given than the person's psychological identification warrants;
- 3) No man should be employed in such a way that only a part of his capacities are utilised. This gives him extra energies which often express themselves in a manner detrimental to the work;
- 4) No man should be at any work requiring him to give an excessive effort which may create tensions and spread to other men;
- 5) The surest way of bringing trouble into any relationship is to give someone more than what he deserves.

There are cases in which attention should not be given. A manager of a large government service bureau in California complained about the behaviour of one of his staff who kept his office in a state of complete chaos, who was always speaking in a loud and crude language to the staff members, interrupting and contradicting them in staff conferences and disagreeing with the manager on every possible occasion. From a description of his behaviour it was obvious that all this was done merely to gain attention from the manager and other employees. In such cases attention should definitely not be given to these negative expressions which only reinforce occurrence. Rather they should be completely ignored. Efforts should be made to

identify the underlying sources of the problem and attention applied either silently within oneself or in conjunction with external measures to remove the trouble.

There are innumerable examples illustrating the benefit which results from acting out of compassion, understanding, patience, goodwill, leniency with the faults of others, giving people the freedom to make mistakes and the chance to exercise responsibility. All such qualities will prove a great asset in any work, only they must be applied with one qualification. To the extent that a man identifies himself with the work project, feels a part of it, sincerely works for its progress, both the work and his own personality will benefit from this attitude. Where a man is only interested in himself or is hostile, one may still be compassionate but not allow him to unduly jeopardise the work. It is wrong to exploit others. It is equally wrong to let others exploit you.

Successful industrialists often respond to this point by saying that they have seen it proved in their own business in the early stages when the staff was small and close personal contact with each worker was possible. The men worked enthusiastically and took pride in the production. But later when business expanded and the labour force doubled or tripled in size, it was no longer possible to get to know every man and attend to him. Then the outside unions come in and everything is further depersonalized. The answer to this is for management to continue to give the same close attention to those with whom they work, to their supervisory staff, aides, etc. and in turn to instill the same attitude in these people, encouraging them to take active interest in the lives of those whom they have responsibility for in the work. A manager of 20 men can know each one very well. When the staff expands to 200 he can still take lively interest in twenty and each of them can relate to 20 men under them. It is possible to develop a hierarchy of personal relationship and genuine attention.

Outward attention to another is of limited value if it becomes a matter of policy or habit rather than an expression of genuine inner concern. Yet even in this form it is far better than unconsciousness towards others. Best of all is to strive toward an awareness of the true inner person behind another's appearance, gestures, words, thoughts and feelings. This can only come about by a corresponding effort at self-knowledge and self-discovery. Behind the personality of every man the soul resides, a spark of the Divine. By contacting that point in oneself and relating to that same point in others, one will spontaneously bring forth the best qualities in others. They will offer maximum cooperation and reap maximum growth.

B: Attention to Other Living Beings. Recently there has been an increasing amount of literature about the sensitivity of plants to various types of human stimulation, thought, emotion and touch as well as their response to mechanical stimuli. It is a fact that plants are conscious, though not with the normal human mentality or emotions, and they are highly receptive to mental, emotional and nervous vibrations as well as various forms of physical energy. Like people, plants respond to all positive

vibrations—thoughts for their welfare, happy emotions, peace, calm and harmony, etc. They express this response by their rate of growth and the quality and quantity of flowers and fruits. It has also been documented that certain negative vibrations like fear, anger, loud noise or violent chaotic music cause retardation of their development. What is true for plants is even more true for animals.

C. Attention to Tools and Machines. When a tool breaks or a machine constantly is in need of repair or some item is lost—all these are warnings that one's attention to these things has not been adequate. Constant use is attention to material things. As with living things so with inanimate objects. Not only our outer handling of them but also the thoughts and feelings or unconsciousness we have concerning them affect their performance and life-span. It is true from our side that an active concern leads to better handling and maintenance. It is also true that that concern elicits an active response from the objects themselves. They serve better and even if lost find their way back. For all matter, not only plants, animals and men, possesses a consciousness. But while in living organisms the consciousness manifests itself as growth, movement, sensitivity, feeling, thought, etc., in inanimate matter it is involved and invisible to sense perception. Nevertheless all matter responds to the consciousness of beings near to it. Also like the living organisms, it is in its essence Divine. If one has progressed far enough in his own conscious development, the inner consciousness of inanimate objects and their response to conscious attention is a matter of everyday experience. Many famous spiritual personalities have been known to treat the objects around them as if they were living beings and there are numerous stories of how the objects have responded by performing far longer than is normally possible without wearing out.

Not only objects but areas of space, rooms and buildings respond to attention. Naturally in most cases the response is more subtle, less easily perceptible. Yet most people are aware that some places have a nicer "atmosphere" than others. In some, one feels more comfortable, better able to concentrate, more relaxed, happier, more alert. These qualities are directly attributable to the consciousness of the individuals who normally occupy the place and to the manner their behaviour. Cleanliness, orderliness, absence of loud sounds or of the expression of anger, positive thoughts and feelings, the presence of beautiful music or fresh flowers, all contribute to creating a positive atmosphere. Once created, this atmosphere actually responds by discouraging the occurrence of such events or the approach of such behaviour as would tend to disturb or diminish its quality. When established in a business enterprise it serves as a powerful influence increasing the efficiency and perfection of the work done as well as the satisfaction enjoyed by those who work in it.

D. Attention to Systems. Systems of administration, planning, operation, finance, etc., are not mere forms. They are formulations of the mind. They express a certain equilibrium which is capable of constant improvement. If one reviews the working

of systems, examines the basic principles of their functioning, gives continual attention to their maintenance and perfection, they have a tendency to reveal better possibilities for innovation or greater efficiency. When not given regular attention, most systems respond by breaking down partially or completely, or some outside element comes drawing attention to the deficiency. For instance, the system of communication in a business between management and staff or between different departments may be primarily a written formal system with a regular chain of communication or an informal system of notes or oral conversation with fewer restrictions or fixed pathways. In either event if the system is ignored or violated frequently or insufficient effort made to maintain receptivity and flow of ideas, a breakdown in communication may result, leading to misunderstanding of orders, requests, information, feelings, procedures and policy, etc. Any such incident of confusion or failure of adequate communication is an indication that the system itself needs attention and perhaps improvement. Other systems such as mail distribution and response, telephone calls, cleaning, filing, accounting, transportation, food, systems of verification, referral, authorization, education, training, production lines, etc., all follow the same principle.

In any business it is a valuable exercise to periodically list all the operational systems both formal and informal, review their basic function and the procedures established to carry out that aim, and evaluate the quality of the present operation in terms of speed, economy, efficiency, accuracy, harmony, etc. Then make efforts to update and improve the system wherever possible by even a small amount.

If the atmosphere is positive, management can initiate a study of the company including employee relations, use of machines, tools and materials, operation of systems, etc. A questionnaire may be a helpful source of information from the staff. Such a study should place emphasis on the possibilities for greater progress and perfection rather than on destructive criticism of others, self-defense or justification of the *status quo*

(To be continued)

GARRY JACOBS