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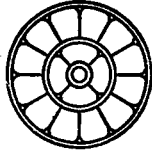
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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute,

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

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"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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WHAT SHALL I CALL IT?

BY CHAMPAKLAL

It is not a dream nor even a vision. The question is: by what name shall I call it? It is extremely difficult to put it in words. Yet I shall make an attempt. It gives me great delight. That is why I have made an effort to write. I would rather say that I cannot refrain from writing.

I happened to go to an altogether strange and unimaginable place. I do not even know how I managed to reach there. I am also unaware of all that took place. It is not something that one can write in brief.

My very existence was forgotten. 'Who am I? From where have I come?' I was unable to remember all this. Gradually I started looking around, and it seemed to me that I was in Sri Aurobindo's Room. But the Room appeared to be totally different. It had no doors or windows, not even an entrance. I pondered, 'How did I manage to come here?' but could not recollect anything. This hall was absolutely unfamiliar. One has to give some name, hence I have used the word 'hall'. Except for the glowing golden light, nothing was seen in the hall. Later a certain kind of melody was audible. Hearing it, I became calm and quiet and longed to go in the direction from which it came. I felt a tremendous pull from there. But from where was this cadence flowing in? From above, below, all round, everywhere—from where did it come? I could not make out. What a sweet, musical and ear-pleasing sound it was!

The tone of the mantra became louder and louder. Its incredible feature was that I thought I understood everything but at the end I felt that I did not comprehend anything. What a contradiction! Everything appeared to be so strange and yet so very natural! The notes then entered into my body. As soon as they penetrated into every cell of my body, these sounds were transformed into a variety of colours. And what luminous, radiant and fascinating colours! All these colours were rotating from top to bottom and from below upwards at a great speed. I was at a loss to know what was happening. After that numerous living figures made of these lucent colours were seen moving about quietly within. They were communicating with one another through many gestures and signs. Then these forms came out of the cells and merged into the light that flooded the hall. At that time I could see nothing inside me but the golden light. And outside was seen a majestic, enchanting, glorious and gigantic (विराट *virāt*) golden Purusha. How to write anything about him? On his forehead was a refulgent golden sun which, though blazing, was simultaneously effusing peace and coolness. Wherever this Virat Purusha cast his gaze, he dispersed rays of the golden light.

The scene then changed. The Virat Purusha was holding many suns. He contained countless suns in his single body. In fact one can say that he was composed of suns only! What an ecstatic sight! It is indescribable. The Virat Purusha's splen-

dorous glance was vibrating with love, grace, compassion and tenderness. All this is inexplicable. Then the huge hand of this God of gods (*devādideva* देवादिदेव) caressed my entire body. Instantly after his caress, I became bodiless. Yet I felt that someone was moving me all over that immense space. The loud chant of ॐ मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय (Om—lead me from mortality to immortality) was heard. It was being repeated in several ways. Then the light of various colours was seen enveloping the whole area of this enormous place. Ultimately, all over the vast expanse, the golden light alone was visible. Simultaneously was heard the melodious, powerful and resonant chiming of victory bells. I was absolutely spellbound.

I reflected: 'What was all this? From where to where had I come?' Filled with gratitude, my body prostrated itself in Sashtang Pranam (obeisance of the whole body). I just did not feel like getting up from this posture of pranam. I had to force myself up. But the mind was lost in the experience undergone and in its vivid remembrance. Almost the whole night passed in this state.

*

On the happy and auspicious day of 1st January 1987 at the august and sanctifying abode of pilgrimage—Sri Arvind Nivas, Vadodara.

(Translated by Sushilaben with the help of Kamalaben and Champaklal.)

A DREAM PERHAPS

WHEN mind's gusty gambollings subside tamed,
 A spark will pierce the stony walls of darkness.
 The casual flickerings of evasive enlightenment
 Steadies itself unruffled into a flame.
 Mind flippant pushed perforce into the side-wings,
 Soul the king augustly apparelled occupies the centre-stage.
 Oh! what glory to behold the luminous presence,
 What engrossing pleasure to hear him eloquent.
 Expositions, revelations, assurances overwhelm the senses.
 He steps down to me extending his helping hand—
 In joyous exhilaration I clutch it with complete dependence.
 Up we go beyond the highest blue of overmind,
 A new heaven opens up where truth and light reign supreme.

DEBANSHU

THE MOTHER'S COMMENTARIES ON SRI AUROBINDO'S *THOUGHTS AND GLIMPSSES*

COMPILED FROM HER TALKS TO THE ASHRAM CHILDREN,
1956-1957, IN A NEW TRANSLATION BY SHRADDHAVAN

(Continued from the issue of May 1987)

Chapter 8: DELIGHT OF BEING

If Brahman were only an impersonal abstraction eternally contradicting the apparent fact of our concrete existence, cessation would be the right end of the matter; but love and delight and self-awareness have also to be reckoned.

The universe is not merely a mathematical formula for working out the relation of certain mental abstractions called numbers and principles to arrive in the end at a zero or a void unit, neither is it merely a physical operation embodying a certain equation of forces. It is the delight of a Self-lover, the play of a Child, the endless self-multiplication of a Poet intoxicated with the rapture of His own power of endless creation.

We may speak of the Supreme as if He were a mathematician working out a cosmic sum in numbers or a thinker resolving by experiment a problem of relations of principles and the balance of forces: but also we should speak of Him as if He were a lover, a musician of universal and particular harmonies, a child, a poet. The side of thought is not enough; the side of delight too must be entirely grasped: Ideas, Forces, Existences, Principles are hollow moulds unless they are filled with the breath of God's delight.

These things are images, but all is an image. Abstractions give us the pure conception of God's truths; images give us their living reality.

If Ideas embracing Force begot the worlds, Delight of Being begot the Idea. Because the Infinite conceived an innumerable delight in itself, therefore worlds and universes came into existence.

Consciousness of being and Delight of being are the first parents. Also, they are the last transcendences. Unconsciousness is only an intermediate swoon of the conscious or its obscure sleep; pain and self-extinction are only delight of being running away from itself in order to find itself elsewhere or otherwise.

Delight of being is not limited in Time; it is without end or beginning. God comes out from one form of things only to enter into another.

What is God after all? An eternal child playing an eternal game in an eternal garden.

*

Sweet Mother, is it possible to go beyond time and space?¹

If you go beyond manifestation.

It is the act of objectivisation, of manifestation that has created time and space. In order to go beyond them, you must go back to the origin; that means going out of manifestation. Otherwise, from the very first act of objectivisation time and space have been created.

There is a feeling, or a perception, or an experience of eternity and infinity, in which one has the impression of going beyond time and space... but it is only an impression.

You must pass beyond all forms, even the subtlest forms of consciousness, for beyond the forms of thought, the forms of consciousness, in order to feel this impression of being outside space and time. This is what generally happens for people who go into *samādhi*, true *samādhi*; and when they come back to their normal consciousness they remember nothing—because in fact there was nothing there for them to remember.

That is what Sri Aurobindo says here: if Brahman were only an impersonal abstraction, the only reasonable end would be cessation. Because it is obvious that if you go beyond time and space all separate existence automatically ceases.

So you *can*, without much result!

2.1.1957

Chapter 9: MAN, THE PURUSHA, Part One

God cannot cease from leaning down towards Nature, nor man from aspiring towards the Godhead. It is the eternal relation of the finite to the infinite. When they seem to turn from each other, it is to recoil for a more intimate meeting.

In man nature of the world becomes again self-conscious so that it may take the greater leap towards its Enjoyer. This is the Enjoyer whom unknowingly it possesses, whom life and sensation possessing deny and denying seek. Nature of the world knows not God, only because it knows not itself; when it knows itself, it shall know unalloyed delight of being.

Possession in oneness and not loss in oneness is the secret. God and Man, World and Beyond-world become one when they know each other. Their division is the cause of ignorance as ignorance is the cause of suffering.

¹ See talk of 12.12.1956.

According to what Sri Aurobindo says here, the reality of the universe is what we call God or the Divine, but in essence it is Delight. The universe is created in Delight and for Delight. But this Delight can only exist in the perfect oneness of the creation with its Creator, and he describes that oneness as the Enjoyer—that is the Creator—the Enjoyer being possessed by his creation: a sort of mutual possession which is the very essence of oneness and the source of all delight.

And it is because of division.... Because the Enjoyer no longer possesses and the enjoyed also no longer possesses the Enjoyer, division has arisen and the essential delight has turned to ignorance—and that ignorance is the cause of all suffering. 'Ignorance' not in the sense in which it is ordinarily understood, for that is what Sri Aurobindo calls Nescience; that ignorance is a consequence of this one. Real ignorance is ignorance of oneness, of union, of identity. And that is the cause of all suffering.

Ever since division began and the creation lost its direct contact with the Creator, ignorance has reigned, and it has resulted in all this suffering.

All who have had the inner experience have experienced this: that the moment you re-establish oneness with the divine origin, all suffering ceases.

But there has been a very long-standing movement which has attributed the origin of the creation not to this essential divine Delight, but to desire. There has been a whole line of seekers and sages who have considered this delight in creating, manifesting, expressing not as delight but as desire. The whole line of Buddhism is like this. And instead of seeing the solution in a Oneness that restores to you the essential Delight of the manifestation and the becoming, they believe that the goal, and also the method, lies in a total rejection of all desire to exist and in a return to Nothingness.

This conception is a sort of essential misunderstanding. The methods they recommend for self-liberation can be very useful as methods of development; but this concept of a world that is essentially evil because it is the outcome of desire, and that one must escape from it at any price and as quickly as possible, has been the greatest and most serious distortion of the whole spiritual life in the history of humanity.

It may perhaps have been useful at a certain time, for everything has its use in the history of the world; but its usefulness is over, it is outdated, and it is time to go beyond this concept and return to a more essential and higher Truth—time to get back to the Delight of being, the Delight of oneness, and of manifesting the Divine.

This new orientation—I mean new in terms of earthly realisation—must replace all previous spiritual orientations, and open the way to the new realisation, which will be a supramental realisation. That is why I told you last week that only Delight, true divine Delight, can win the Victory.¹

Of course, there should be no confusion about what this Delight is. That is why, from the very beginning, Sri Aurobindo has cautioned us by telling us that only when

¹ The Mother's talk of 2.1.1957, explaining her New Year message for 1957.

we have passed beyond enjoyings can we enter into Bliss. Bliss is the state which comes from the manifestation of this Delight. But it is the very opposite of everything that is usually considered delight and pleasure; and you must have renounced all that completely before you can experience this state.

9.1.1957

(To be continued)

TIME FOR TEN THINGS*

1. TAKE time for **WORK**:
this is the price of success.
2. Take time for **THOUGHT**:
this is a source of strength.
3. Take time for **PLAY**:
this is the secret of youth.
4. Take time to **READ**:
this is the foundation of knowledge.
5. Take time for **CONTEMPLATION**:
for this washes earth's dust from your eyes.
6. Take time for your **FRIENDS**:
for this is a source of joy.
7. Take time to **LOVE**:
for this alone makes life sacred.
8. Take time to **DREAM**:
for this lifts the soul to the stars.
9. Take time for **LAUGHTER**:
how it lightens life's burdens!
10. Take time to **PLAN**:
then you will have time for all the other things.

* From "Auromessenger" ("Auromessenger" in English), a new spiritual journal dedicated to the Ideal of Human Brotherhood, as expressed by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and its manifestation all over the world. Address: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry-605002, Editor. Oscar Laesser.

REVERSAL OF CONSCIOUSNESS

FROM A TALK OF THE MOTHER TO THE ASHRAM CHILDREN
ON JUNE 6, 1956

To reach the Supermind, Sri Aurobindo says there are stages: first, the mind, then the purified mind, the illumined mind and all that.... Is it necessary for everyone to go through all these stages?

(*After a silence*) It is likely that a sequence of this kind always occurs. But the duration of the stages and their importance vary considerably according to individuals.... For some the passage may be rapid enough to be hardly perceptible, while for others it may take a very long time; and according to the nature of the resistance in each one, the stress on one or another of these stages varies enormously.

For some, it may be so rapid that it seems almost instantaneous, as though it didn't exist. For others it may take years.

There is one phenomenon which obviously seems indispensable if one wants the realisation to become stable.... Experiences come, touch the consciousness, sometimes bring great illuminations, then get blurred, retreat into the background and, outwardly, in your ordinary consciousness, you don't feel that there is a great change, a great difference. And this phenomenon may occur very often, may repeat itself for many years. Suddenly you get a sort of revelation, like an illumination, you are in the true consciousness and have the feeling of having got hold of the real thing. And then, slowly or suddenly, it seems to recede behind you, and you seek but do not find that there is any great change in you.... These things seem to come as heralds or as promises: "See, it will happen", or to tell you, "Well, have faith, it *will* be like that."

And this may recur very often. There is progress, obviously, but it is very slow and hardly apparent.

But then, suddenly—perhaps because one is sufficiently prepared, perhaps simply because the time has come, and it has been so decreed—suddenly, when such an experience occurs, its result in the part of the being where it takes place is a complete reversal of consciousness. It is a very clear, very concrete phenomenon. The best way of describing it is this: a complete reversal. And then the relation of the consciousness with the other parts of the being and with the outer world is as if completely changed. Absolutely like an overturning. And that reversal no longer comes back to the same old place, the consciousness no longer returns to its former position—Sri Aurobindo would say "status". Once this has happened in any part of the being, this part of the being is stabilised.

And until that happens, it comes and goes, comes and goes, one advances and then has the impression of marking time, and one advances again and then marks time again, and sometimes one feels as though one were going backwards, and it is

interminable—and indeed it is interminable. It may last for years and years and years. But when this reversal of consciousness takes place, whether in the mind or a part of the mind, whether in the vital or a part of the vital, or even in the physical consciousness itself and in the body-consciousness, once this is established, it is over; you no longer go back, you do not ever return to what you were before. And this is the true indication that you have taken a step forward definitively. And before this, there are only preparations.

Those who have experienced this reversal know what I am speaking about; but if one hasn't, one can't understand. One may have a kind of idea by analogy, people who have tried to describe yoga compare it with the reversal of a prism; when you put it at a certain angle, the light is white; when you turn it over, it is broken up. Well, this is exactly what happens, that is to say, you restore the white. In the ordinary consciousness there is decomposition and you restore the white. However, this is only an image. It is not really *that*, this is an analogy. But the phenomenon is extremely concrete. It is almost as though you were to put what is inside out, and what is outside in. And it isn't that either! But if you could turn a ball inside-out, or a balloon—you can't, can you?—if you could put the inside out and the outside in, it would be something like what I mean.

And one can't say that one "experiences" this reversal—there is no "feeling", it is almost a mechanical fact—it is extraordinarily mechanical. (*Mother takes an object from the table beside her and turns it upside down...*) There would be some very interesting things to say about the difference between the moment of realisation, of *siddhi*—like this reversal of consciousness for example—and all the work of development, the *tapasya*; to say how it comes about.... For the sadhana, *tapasya* is one thing and the *siddhi* another, quite a different thing. You may do *tapasya* for centuries, and you will always go as at a tangent—closer and closer to the realisation, nearer and nearer, but it is only when the *siddhi* is given to you... then, everything is changed, everything is reversed. And this is inexpressible, for as soon as it is put in words it escapes. But there is a difference—a real difference, essential, total—between aspiration, the mental tension, even the tension of the highest, most luminous mind and realisation: something which has been decided above from all time, and is absolutely independent of all personal effort, of all gradation. Don't you see, it is not bit by bit that one reaches it, it is not by a small, constant, regular effort, it is not that: it is something that comes suddenly; it is established without one's knowing how or why, but all is changed.

And it will be like that for everybody, for the whole universe: it goes on and on, it moves forward very slowly, and then one moment, all of a sudden, *it will be done*, finished—not finished: it's the beginning!

(*Silence*)

It is usually the first contact with the psychic being which brings this experience,

but it is only partial, only that *part* of the consciousness—or of the activity in any part of the being—that part of the consciousness which is united with the psychic has the experience. And so, at the moment of that experience, the position of that part of the consciousness, in relation to the other parts and to the world, is completely reversed, it is different. And that is never undone. And if you have the will or take care or are able to put into contact with this part all the problems of your life and all the activities of your being, all the elements of your consciousness, then they begin to be organised in such a way that your being becomes one unity—a single multiplicity, a multiple unity—complex, but organised and centralised around a fixed point, so well that the central will or central consciousness or central truth has the power to govern *all* the parts, for they are all in order, organised around this central Presence.

It seems to me impossible to escape from this necessity if one wants to be and is to be a conscious instrument of the divine Force. You may be moved, pushed into action and used as *unconscious* instruments by the divine Force, if you have a minimum of goodwill and sincerity. But to become a conscious instrument, capable of identification and conscious, willed movements, you must have this inner organisation; otherwise you will always be running into a chaos somewhere, a confusion somewhere or an obscurity, an unconsciousness somewhere. And naturally your action, even though guided exclusively by the Divine, will not have the perfection of expression it has when one has acquired a conscious organisation around this divine Centre.

It is an assiduous task, which may be done at any time and under any circumstances, for you carry within yourself all the elements of the problem. You don't need anything from outside, no outer aid to do this work. But it requires great perseverance, a sort of tenacity, for very often it happens that there are bad "creases" in the being, habits—which come from all sorts of causes, which may come from atavistic malformation or also from education or from the environment you have lived in or from many other causes. And these bad creases you try to smooth out, but they wrinkle up again. And then you must begin the work over again, often, many, many, many a time, without getting discouraged, before the final result is obtained. But nothing and nobody can prevent you from doing it, nor any circumstance. For you carry within yourself the problem and the solution.

(*Silence*)

And to tell the truth, the most common malady humanity suffers from is boredom. Most of the stupidities men commit come from an attempt to escape boredom. Well, I say for certain that no outer means are any good, and that boredom pursues you and will pursue you no matter what you try to escape from it; but that this way, that is, beginning this work of organising your being and all its movements and all its elements around the central Consciousness and Presence, this is the surest and most complete cure, and the most comforting, for all possible bore-

dom. It gives life a tremendous interest. And an extraordinary diversity. You no longer have the time to get bored.

Only, one must persevere.

And what adds to the interest of the thing is that this kind of work, this harmonisation and organisation of the being around the divine Centre can only be done in a physical body and on earth. That is truly the essential and original reason for physical life. For, as soon as you are no longer in a physical body, you can no longer do it *at all*.

And what is still more remarkable is that only human beings can do it, for only human beings have at their centre the divine Presence in the psychic being. For example, this work of self-development and organisation and becoming aware of all the elements is not within the reach of the beings of the vital and mental planes, nor even of the beings who are usually called "gods"; and when they want to do it, when they really want to organise themselves and become completely conscious, they have to take a body.

And yet, human beings come into a physical body without knowing why, most of them go through life without knowing why, they leave their body without knowing why, and they have to begin the same thing all over again, indefinitely, until one day, someone comes along and tells them, "Be careful! you know, there is a purpose to this. You are here for this work, don't miss your opportunity!"

And how many years are wasted.

(Questions and Answers 1956, pp. 171-176)

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

(Continued from the issue of May 1987)

(These talks are from the notebooks of Dr. Nirodbaran who used to record most of the conversations which Sri Aurobindo had with his attendants and a few others, after the accident to his right leg in November 1938. Besides the recorder, the attendants were: Dr. Manilal, Dr. Becharlal, Purani, Champaklal, Dr. Satyendra and Mulshankar. As the notes were not seen by Sri Aurobindo himself, the responsibility for the Master's words rests entirely with Nirodbaran. He does not vouch for absolute accuracy, but he has tried his best to reproduce them faithfully. He has made the same attempt for the speeches of the others.)

January 8, 1941

M: The knee is bending a little more, Sir.

SRI AUROBINDO: Do you think so?

M: Yes, Sir.

N: Is it the Inconscient that stands in the way of a rapid cure?

SRI AUROBINDO: Partially and many things in between.

N: If diseases arise from the Inconscient, then when that is worked out, all diseases should cease, Dr. Manilal's too.

SRI AUROBINDO: That depends on Manilal.

N: If by Sri Aurobindo's working on the higher planes we can open more easily to them, then by his working on the Inconscient our diseases ought to be over.

P: Yes, but we can open only in the reverse way! (*Laughter*)

(There was news that Hitler was trying to influence Bulgaria to allow him a passage or to get it into the Axis orbit.)

SRI AUROBINDO: That is the danger now. I don't think an invasion of England is likely. If Britain can't help with sufficient anti-tank guns, aeroplanes etc. it will be difficult for the Balkan powers to resist Germany.

N: Turkey may come in to help Bulgaria if the latter is attacked.

SRI AUROBINDO: Don't know. If Turkey waits till Bulgaria is attacked it will be too late. In that case Hitler may turn towards Palestine and help Italy there and then move to Africa. Next he will ask Spain to join him so that the English army in Africa may be caught between two forces.

P: Yes, that is why England is trying to hurry up the Libyan campaign so that it can move her forces to Greece.

Evening

(Dara has reported that Roosevelt in his speech mentioned three things one of which was freedom from care.)

SRI AUROBINDO: Freedom from care? Is it material and spiritual freedom? Take for instance Manilal's shoulder. Material freedom would mean freedom from pain, while spiritual freedom would mean it does not matter even if there is pain. Which do you want, Manilal?

M: Both, Sir! (*Laughter*)

(Afterwards it was found that Roosevelt had said "freedom from want." There was a difference of opinion about a case of chronic appendicitis. Dr. B. C. Roy advised an immediate operation, others said it should be postponed for a year. I asked Manilal's view.)

M: I don't know the case but if it is chronic, it is better to remove the appendix. But it may not be appendicitis at all. Many mistaken operations have been done even in cases of pneumonia, typhoid, pleurisy. At one time it was the fashion to blame the appendix for any trouble and get it removed. Doctors sometimes make much of a little thing.

SRI AUROBINDO: I remember in England Sarat Ghose had a small pimple on his lip. A doctor was called. He examined it and said with a long face: "Very serious, very serious!" The way he said it with a grave shaking of his head was most comical!

N: I had an urgent call today from X. I got a little frightened as she was having the haemorrhage trouble. But when I went in, I saw that she had called me for just a few patches of leucoderma she had suddenly discovered under her breasts. She was on the point of weeping and asked me to tell you to stop them. She said: "God has made me sufficiently ugly. Why this further addition?" (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO: If she were a professional beauty I could understand her fear! (*Laughter*)

N: You must have seen that K. S. Roy has become the leader of the Bengal Congress party.

SRI AUROBINDO (*smiling*): Yes. X and Y have seen that the game is up now. They are the most wonderful people for creating splits. I haven't seen anyone else like that.

January 9, 1941

(Somebody from Bombay has written that in the old files of Induprakash he has found a series of six articles on Bankim written by Sri Aurobindo. Purani asked Sri Aurobindo if it was true.)

SRI AUROBINDO: I may have, I don't remember. I wrote some articles on Madhusudan, I remember. In which year was it?

P: In 1894, the second year of your stay in Baroda.

SRI AUROBINDO: My knowledge of Bengali was very little at that time. I couldn't have finished reading all the writings of Bankim or perhaps I wrote the

articles during the first enthusiasm of my learning the language. Of course we started learning it in Cambridge (the Judge Beechcroft was one of us) under an Anglo-Indian Pandit. He used to teach us Vidyasagar. One day we hit upon a sentence of Bankim's and showed it to him. He began to shake his head and then said: "This can't be Bengali!" (*Laughter*)

P: Nolini is very happy that he will get materials for another book.

SRI AUROBINDO (*smiling*): Can't allow publication of that. It must have been very immature.

(It was decided that the man should be asked to send us the copies for Sri Aurobindo's inspection. The man in his reply wanted to charge about Rs. 90 for expenses.)

SRI AUROBINDO: I can't pay money for these articles. They are not worth anything.

PURANI: If Sri Aurobindo wants to see them money can be arranged from outside.

SRI AUROBINDO: Then I have no objection.

(Later on it came out that Sri Aurobindo had written some articles on the Congress.)

SRI AUROBINDO: Those will be interesting to see.

N: How could Madhusudan write so well in Bengali?

SRI AUROBINDO: He engaged several pandits and he had the inborn poetic faculty.

P: Besides, he was a linguist, he knew many European languages.

SRI AUROBINDO: Oh yes! you can see the influence of Homer, Virgil, Tasso in his writings.

M: I asked Nirod if he was having experiences. He said: "No, my work is now in the physical." I asked: "What about mind and vital?" "Oh, all that is finished!" "So it will be supermind next?" "Yes," Nirod replied. (*Laughter*) (*After some time*) Nirod, how is your poetry getting on?

SRI AUROBINDO: He has finished his mental and vital working. (*Laughter*)

January 12, 1941

(There was a long story narrated by Purani about the Ex-Maharani of Baroda, how her boxes were detained and opened by a Muslim Judge of Madras and handed over to the Police. The Police have detained the valuable documents etc., etc.)

M (*to Sri Aurobindo*): What type of past action makes innocent people suffer like this, Sir?

SRI AUROBINDO: Innocent people suffer everywhere! The law of karma, per-

haps. They may have been wicked in their previous lives. (*Laughter*)

N: Then how can they be innocent in this life?

SRI AUROBINDO: As a reaction, in the next life they may be again wicked and fortunate. (*Laughter*)

N: In her sleep X had an interesting experience of the action of the higher and the lower forces on her body in connection with her haemorrhage. The lower forces wanted to make the physical being accept the suggestion that the bleeding should start again and the higher forces repelled the suggestion.

M: How can it be explained, Sir? (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO: No explanation is required. It is a fact. Usually ordinary people get suggestions of illness from the subconscious in their sleep or dreams. They don't know it and get the disease. Moreover, the physical being is habituated to these things and easily accepts the suggestions; the vital being too. If the inner consciousness is awake, the suggestions can't act.

M: I don't accept suggestions, Sir.

SRI AUROBINDO: Who is "you"?

M: I, Manilal, Sir! (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO: Who is Manilal? The surface Manilal may not accept but there are many other Manilals whom the surface Manilal doesn't know.

M: Last night I got a bit depressed, Sir, because of this shoulder pain.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, you looked as if this world were *duhkhamaya*.¹ (*Later on*): Now that X has got this experience she ought to be able to bring down the right kind of forces and prevent the disease from coming.

N: But how can it be practically applied?

SRI AUROBINDO: Once one has the experience, one can do it more easily. It is the power of the idea and will. If the physical consciousness is awake, they can act.

Evening

M: I am having no meditation, Sir, and no experience. Formerly I used to feel so much peace, ananda etc.

SRI AUROBINDO: That means you have progressed. You may have reached the Inconscient!

M: Is the Inconscient something like *tamas*?

SRI AUROBINDO: Inertia.

M: How to get rid of it, Sir?

SRI AUROBINDO: By *utsāha* and *kāla*.² (*Laughter*)

M: If my state is due to the Inconscient how do other people get meditation and have experiences?

SRI AUROBINDO: You have made more progress: progressed so much as to be as inconscient as all that. (*Laughter*) The Inconscient doesn't work in the same way

¹ Full of misery.

² Enthusiasm and time.

with everybody. Are you getting stupid?

M: Formerly I used to feel that I was always carrying away something with me. This time nothing at all, Sir.

SRI AUROBINDO: *Aparigraha!*¹ (*Laughter*) Are you feeling stupid, forgetting things?

M: No, Sir!

SRI AUROBINDO: Then it is all right. You have been here only two months now. Nirod says he has been here for so many years and he is getting no result; only cases.

N: *Mā phaleṣu!*² Even in cases I am making no progress.

SRI AUROBINDO: You can't say now there are no cases.

N: No, but I am not profiting by the experience.

January 11, 1941

(*There was some talk about P, a sadhak who had gone away.*)

M: Did he have any occult knowledge?

SRI AUROBINDO: All his knowledge of previous births is humbug. What he had was some life-force which he could apply on the physical.

M: What does that mean, Sir?

SRI AUROBINDO: You have to read *The Life Divine* for that.

M: How could he have this fall?

SRI AUROBINDO: The physical mind.

(*To be continued*)

NIRODBARAN

¹ Non-acceptance.

² Not to result.

VIGNETTES OF THE MOTHER AND SRI AUROBINDO

(Continued from the issue of May 1987)

“Don’t Cut It”

ONE day a visitor asked an Ashram gardener for a nice rose which he wanted to offer to the Mother in the afternoon. It was about 2 o’clock on the first of a month. The Mother had just returned from the Prosperity Room after the distribution *via* the room where Bansidhar now gives chits for a visit to Sri Aurobindo’s room and *via* the open terrace and Pavitra’s room. She was followed by Nolini and Amrita. The gardener had kept some roses in pots on the terrace outside Bansidhar’s office (facing the western side of the Samadhi). He went up the stairs and stretched his hand to cut a nice rose for the visitor to take to the Mother.

The Mother was then passing through the corridor on the northern side and there was no way for her to see X. Suddenly she started walking very fast and reached the open terrace above Dyuman’s room and from there just in time called out to the gardener across the courtyard, “Don’t cut, don’t cut.” Nolini and Amrita were taken aback. And the gardener was bewildered and of course stopped at once.

Later the Mother explained, “The soul of the flower came to me to be saved.” She told them flowers should be cut only in the morning or evening. If they are cut or plucked during the hot hours they suffer.

The Banana Trees

One morning the Mother called somebody and told him to go to a particular garden of the Ashram. She told him something was wrong there, the souls of the trees had come to her crying for help.

The sadhak found that a new man had been employed and he had started to cut the banana trees which had not yet flowered and fruited. Their souls had rushed in anguish to the Mother. He was told to cut only those trees that had already borne fruit.

The Auroville Banyan Tree

One morning the Mother asked X to go at once to the Matri Mandir at Auroville. She said the Banyan Tree there was in great distress. On reaching the Matri Mandir X found that some careless labourer, after finishing his work the previous evening, had stuck his sickle in the tree-trunk. X at once removed it.

The Bird in Sri Aurobindo’s Room

X had the charge of cleaning Sri Aurobindo’s bedroom early in the morning while Sri Aurobindo took his bath. Once Sri Aurobindo sent a message to X to be careful and not shake the door on top of which a bird had perched and made a nest. As long as the bird lived in that nest the door was not touched.

Compiled by S.

THE STORY OF A SOUL

BY HUTA

(Continued from the issue of May 1987)

The Mother's Message

This is the
interesting story of
how a being discovers
the Divine Life



Volume Three: 1959

7

PAROOBHAI and Urmila asked me to accompany them to Shanklin on the Isle of Wight, because their two small daughters and a daughter of Maganbhai were studying in Upper Chine School. Their little son was in a school at Norwich, Norfolk. My nephews and nieces were in different schools at different places like Aberdeen (Scotland), Bex-Hill on Sea (Sussex) and so forth—far from London.

On Friday the 22nd May I stayed overnight with them at Mrs. Bee's house. The next day early in the morning we headed towards the Isle of Wight. We boarded a boat which would put us along with our car on the way to Shanklin.

Sashi, Manu and Sudha were with us. We all had breakfast on the boat. The Thames was broader here than at most places. The cool crisp breeze was enlivening.

After a couple of hours we reached Shanklin by car. The girls were in ecstasy to meet their parents.

The old village of Shanklin attracted me very much. Its thatch-roofed houses and hotels were dreams. We stayed in a hotel which had a lovely garden.

The following day was Sunday. The dawn was spilling a chiffon-light over the grass and sprinkling the lawn with dew. Birds were rising, pouring forth their songs from the new foliage of trees. The Spring had already broken out everywhere—buds opened amidst the emerald glory around them. Nature woke fully from her winter sleep. Everything was inviting, colourful, bright, hopeful.

I recall these verses from Sri Aurobindo:

“His laughter of beauty breaks out in green trees,
His moments of beauty triumph in a flower.”

After the rush and push of London traffic and the acrid smell of exhaust-fumes, the polluted air, here I found a purity of profound peace.

There was an alluring beach with a wide span of sand. We saw many café kiosks which offered refreshments. Coloured umbrellas shaded the area. There were tables where people sipped cold drinks—ate delicious ice-cream. Some basked in the warm sunshine on lazy-looking long chairs stacked with cushions and mattresses, some swam smoothly by letting the soft waves wash over them, their heads bobbing up and down in the water, some plodded along the beach. Their children played with spades and buckets, making sand-castles, some scuffed their feet, some splashed water around them and gave a whoop of delight and shrieked with happy laughter and then swam back to their parents. A few pretty girls in their becoming bikinis waded out of the water. There were sounds, voices, mirth interspersed with the crooning of the sea. In this air we ate ice-cream. It was, indeed, a perfect morning for rambling. Paroobhai took many snaps.

The azure sky reflected in the crinkled silk of green water. Sea-birds wheeled above—their wings glinting against the sky. The pageant of the surroundings was ravishing, exhilarating. It was nice to enjoy awhile the sheer serenity and repose. But the carefree sunny hours sped away and we had to leave the place in the afternoon.

The parting was pathetic. Urmila was sobbing her heart out when she bade good-bye to her little daughters, Urvashi and Malindi. I could not check my tears which were spilling down my face, when I saw Malindi cry and would not let her mother go. At that instant I thanked the Divine a million times not to have plunged me into an abyss of marriage, children and a continuous train of troubles.

On our way back to London, we all tried to cheer Urmila up by singing songs and cracking jokes. She seemed calmed down. But who knew or could fathom a mother's heart? We stopped at a wayside café to have snacks.

They dropped me at Mercury House. At night I reflected on the day's events and it was not long before I was in bed and asleep.

I had a gay time with my people.

After a few days Paroobhai and Urmila left London for Paris. I was asked to go with them, but I refused, because of my studies.

*

I loathed shorthand. The fifteen lessons had already been taught and soon there was to be a speed-test. This needed hard work. There was so much to do. I was almost at the end of my resources. I penned a letter to the Mother about my trip and my studies.

Her answer came on a card showing daffodils. It was dated 29th May 1959:

“To my dear little child,

I have received your pretty card and nice letter.

I can only say that stability and perseverance are indispensable for success—but in all cases the Divine Grace is there helping those who call with trust and faith.

With my love and blessings.”

Trust and faith in the Divine fluctuated. There were severe struggles and much tension which sometimes blotted out the memory of the Mother. Now dull depression settled on me.

*

It took more than twenty minutes to reach the college by walking. The road was hilly. Restaurants also were quite far. Above all I was not contented with my studies. I longed to quit certain subjects which I believed would not be useful in my life. But I had to face the music, however raucous it might sound. Moreover my Principal—Miss Darvall—advised me to finish the Secretarial course in nine months instead of six: “Miss Hindocha, it won't lead you anywhere if you leave your studies incomplete.” I said that I would try to follow her suggestion.

I felt sunk in misery and fatigue. Besides, I suffered alternate moods of optimism and pessimism. I resolutely made endeavours to check my unruly thoughts as regards my life, work and goal but they faded under a huge surge of doubt and dejection.

Anxiously I ticked off each day on my fingers for none of them could summon up in me much zeal. Positively I was not living in the rose-clouds of a dream. To

through all this, I could not feel the Mother's Presence in the materialistic environment. But at times I experienced the influx of a sweet warmth in my heart. Her letters sustained my soul.

A number of times I questioned my inner being: "What is the truth in the world?" The answer came invariably: "The Divine is the Truth. Turn to Him exclusively...."

*

May slipped by. June took its place.

The weather finally changed and with the disappearance of the spring-chill the sun came to brighten the grey streets. Days started growing warmer and longer. I discarded my heavy coat and cardigan. Light clothes were comfortable. Instead of wearing nylon stockings and shoes, I started wearing only opened-toed sandals. The bracing air was soothing.

When I came from the college, I often saw babies safely ensconced in their prams which their mothers had parked outside their houses so that they might get the benefit of the clear, fresh air on the sunny days. They burbled happily. Some chortled: "Mama, mama."

*

It was fun to go from one place to another in the underground tube train.

In the stations automatic machines were installed. The full instructions were given by notices, key-boards, arrow-signs, charts, maps and so forth. Everything was done in a jiffy. To climb on and climb off the escalator was a real diversion—steel plates came under my feet and broke into steps. I had to be cautious because of my sari.

The train stopped, its glass-doors opened, many people rushed out or into it. The doors snapped shut. Everything seemed risky.

Some Englishwomen went mushy over their lap-dogs—pekinese, pomeranian, toy-poodle, miniature pinscher, kerry-blue terrier and chow—which looked scrupulously groomed in their up-to-date attire. Even in the train they appeared calm, cool and collected like their mistresses.

Here are two jokes which show the typical unruffled mentality of the English people:

Butler: "I have to inform you, my lordship, that there is a burglar downstairs."
 Lord Huntington: "Eh, very well, Jeeves, bring my double gun and sports suit—the heather mixture."

Two Englishmen were sitting in adjoining easy chairs in the cloistered quiet of their club. One looked up from his *Times* and murmured: "I say, old man—terribly sorry to hear about your wife." "Eh? what is that?" asked the other,

looking up from his own copy of the *Times*. "I said," explained the first, "I was sorry to read that they buried your wife yesterday." "Yes, of course," said the other appearing to return to his reading. Then he added as an afterthought: "Had to, you know. Dead."

*

Once I was travelling in the tube train. I bought a ticket, went underground—the ticket was inserted in the slot and from the other side it came out punched. I was under the impression that I had put my wallet in my handbag. But in the feverish haste it had fallen down. I sat in the train. After two or three stations, I got out and realised that the wallet was not in my handbag. I was alarmed and did not know what to do. But at once I thought of going back to where I had started. I went there and saw a lady who collected the tickets. I asked her about my wallet. She told me that it was with her. Then the station-master took my signature and gave me the wallet. There were 40s in it along with the Mother's blessing packets. The ticket collector remarked: "You are a lucky girl." "All praise to the Divine," I murmured inwardly.

I was saved on several occasions. One of them was rather odd, shocking. One Saturday I went to see the news in the News Theatre. It was dark and I was ushered in by a door-keeper. I sat and watched the interesting events of the world. Meanwhile I became aware of a man who tried to hold my hand, but he was hesitant. He, I believed, did not dare to touch me. I guessed that he was not an Englishman, but a rich foreigner, for his fingers were glittering with diamond rings and his wrist-watch was expensive. I got up abruptly and walked straight to the usher to give me another seat. Fortunately nobody was sitting next to me now.

I knew I was protected all the time by the Mother.

Sri Aurobindo's words are quite apt here:

"To those who call from the heart for the protection, it cannot fail. Do not allow any outward circumstance to shake faith in you; for nothing gives greater strength than this faith to go through and arrive at the goal. Knowledge and Tapasya, whatever their force, have a less sustaining power—faith is the strongest staff for the journey.

The protection is there over you and the watchful love of the Mother. Rely upon it and let your being open more and more to it—then it will repel attacks and always uphold you."

Oh! these lines became true at that time, they are true now and will prove true in the future....

(To be continued)

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FOUR LETTERS

I

SRI AUROBINDO, COLERIDGE'S *KUBLA KHAN* AND THE POETIC PHENOMENON

A Letter to a Reader of *Mother India*¹

You have posed the problem:

"It has been suggested that Coleridge obtained many of his ideas for *Kubla Khan* from a letter written by Wordsworth (pp. 41-45 of *Mother India*, joint January-February issue, 1987). But Sri Aurobindo states that this poem 'is a genuine supra-physical experience caught and rendered in a rare hour of exaltation with an absolute accuracy of vision and authenticity of rhythm' (p. 349 of *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library*, Vol. 9). Could you please reconcile the two pronouncements?"

Your question cuts down to the root of the poetic phenomenon in general. True poetry is indeed a gift from one or another supraphysical plane with which a writer has somehow got into contact. Even when not transmitted in an unbroken stream like *Kubla Khan* during a dream-state directly in touch with the supraphysical, but, unlike it, composed step by step with a certain degree of labour in the waking state, it is never a piece of mental manufacture. However indirectly, it is still a product of the supraphysical. Swiftly or slowly, dream-caught or otherwise, either across a pathway already clear or through a passage dug open in the course of time, whether concerned with themes marvellous or themes natural, whether received in a forceful or in a subtle manner, something from beyond our usual poise of consciousness is channelled out. Did not Plato employ the word "enthousiasmos", connoting "the in-rush of a god", for the psychological condition in which all poetry takes shape? But this transfiguring breath from the more-than-human does not mean that inspired composition can have nothing to do with the contents of our mind.

What we have observed, what we have experienced, what we have read can serve as material for the inspiration to catch hold of and modulate and transmute into "something rich and strange". Over and above Coleridge's acquaintance with the story of the Mongol emperor Kubla and his garden-surrounded "house of pleasure" as told in Purchas's *Pilgrimages*—on top of all his other garnering of imagery and phrase from his wide reading—in addition to his own abundant memories of delighted watching of nature in bright or shaded mood—there was the vivid impact of Wordsworth's descriptive letter on his mind before a vision took place, in which multifarious recollections from waking life converged to serve as a mould in his dreaming consciousness for the activity of a mysterious dimension behind our common life, which we may term "occult". Such a dimension is always linked to our earth-

¹ K. D. Rao, writing from Madras on 4.3.1987.

plane. Broadly speaking, we may consider many of the facts and fantasies of the earth-plane to be diminished derivatives from the magical pattern of being and doing in this dimension, sometimes emerging in a cluster and at other times in fragments scattered in different places and periods. Or else, instead of carrying in a finer essence of unity various things that are partially combined in our world, the occult dimension may take up the diverse contents of our perceptions and conceptions and fuse them in a special creation, at once surprising in its details and harmonious as a whole. Then the poet may have as his "supraphysical experience" not some wonder that is already a part of the occult but a novelty suddenly formed by the occult, a fresh feat of wizardry on the basis of images from the earth. Either occurrence brings with it its own inevitable word-picture and sound-movement and may correspond to the perfection of art Sri Aurobindo has declared *Kubla Khan* to have manifested.

Just because a poem is truly inspired and thus transmits a supraphysical reality or vision in either a direct or an indirect mode it does not cut itself off from the realities or imaginations of the physical plane. Take the case of Sri Aurobindo's narrative, *Love and Death*, written in his early days in India. He has said about it: "The poem... was written in a white heat of inspiration during 14 days of continuous writing—in the mornings, of course, for I had to attend office the rest of the day and saw friends in the evening. I never wrote anything with such ease and rapidity before or after." The hint for the poem came from a summary tale in the *Mahabharata*—the death of a girl by snake-bite, the recovery of her in exchange for the gift of half the life of her husband: these are incidents from the imagination of human beings. The inspiration has filled them out and developed them, but even the development made use of Sri Aurobindo's own bent of mind. He has said that the Underworld (Patala) he described had an affinity with the Greek Hades because at that time he was not deeply conversant with Indian conceptions. There is also a creative use by him of past poetic influences. He has told us that at the age of 17 he read Stephen Phillips's *Marpessa* and *Christ in Hades* and "they made a powerful impression which lasted until it was worked out in *Love and Death*". With all this background to his inspired composition he would hardly see any contradiction between his pronouncement on *Kubla Khan* and Eira Dyne's analysis of the similarities of sight and speech in Coleridge's poem to the details in Wordsworth's description.

Apropos of Sri Aurobindo's comment on *Kubla Khan* I should like to affirm my own sense of the superb quality of a certain passage in *Love and Death*. Although occurring in a poem suggested by his reading and moulded by his bent of mind and infused with a particular literary colour from the past, the passage may not yield to such treatment as J. Livingstone Lowes in *The Road to Xanadu* and Miss Dyne in her article have given Coleridge's dream-vision. Of course, some verbal combinations found elsewhere may be traced: thus the "floating hair" in it towards the end echoes half of the line—

His flashing eyes, his floating hair—

at nearly the end of *Kubla Khan* itself. But I would not lay any store by such accidental non-schematic resemblances. I feel justified only in juxtaposing the two compositions for their sheer visionary excellence. Sri Aurobindo's narrative, which deals in a semi-mythic way with beings of other worlds no less than humans of the earth, rises here to a concentrated projection by the occult, drawing into itself figures of the terrestrial scene. I would call this passage as much a seizing of a reality beyond our world with an absolutely flawless expression as is Coleridge's little masterpiece.

Sri Aurobindo himself has distinguished it in a letter to me (10.2.1932) as "an unusual effort of constructive imagination" and, when I had prepared a copy of *Love and Death* for England in the hope of getting appreciation of it there, he wrote to me in an earlier letter (2-2-1932) in response to my enthusiasm about that passage in particular: "I know that the part about the descent into Hell can stand comparison with some of the best English poetry; but I don't expect any contemporaries to see it." I pick out its 56 lines as against *Kubla Khan's* 52 as constituting with them a poetic peak of "supraphysical experience" although the author did not pass out of his waking consciousness in the Coleridgean sense. It is worth quoting in full:

In a thin soft eve
 Ganges spread far her multitudinous waves,
 A glimmering restlessness with voices large,
 And from the forests of that half-seen bank
 A boat came heaving over it, white-winged,
 With a sole silent helmsman marble-pale.
 Then Ruru by his side stepped in; they went
 Down the mysterious river and beheld
 The great banks widen out of sight. The world
 Was water and the skies to water plunged.
 All night with a dim motion gliding down
 He felt the dark against his eyelids; felt,
 As in a dream more real than daylight,
 The helmsman with his dumb and marble face
 Near him and moving wideness all around,
 And that continual gliding dimly on,
 As one who on a shoreless water sails
 For ever to a port he shall not win.
 But when the darkness paled, he heard a moan
 Of mightier waves and had the wide great sense
 Of ocean and the depths below his feet.
 But the boat stopped; the pilot lifted on him
 His marble gaze coeval with the stars.
 Then in the white-winged boat the boy arose

And saw around him the vast sea all grey
 And heaving in the pallid dawning light.
 Loud Ruru cried across the murmur, "Hear me,
 O inarticulate grey Ocean, hear.
 If any cadence in thy infinite
 Rumour was caught from lover's moan, O Sea,
 Open thy abysses to my mortal tread.
 For I would travel to the despairing shades,
 The spheres of suffering where entangled dwell
 Souls unreleased and the untimely dead
 Who weep remembering. Thither, O guide me,
 No despicable wayfarer, but Ruru,
 But son of a great Rishi, from all men
 On earth selected for peculiar pangs,
 Special disaster. Lo, this petalled fire,
 How freshly it blooms and lasts with my great pain!"
 He held the flower out subtly glimmering.
 And like a living thing the huge sea trembled,
 Then rose, calling, and filled the sight with waves,
 Converging all its giant crests: towards him,
 Innumerable waters loomed and heaven
 Threatened. Horizon on horizon moved
 Dreadfully swift; then with a prone wide sound
 All Ocean hollowing drew him swiftly in,
 Curving with monstrous menace over him.
 He down the gulf where the loud waves collapsed
 Descending, saw with floating hair arise
 The daughters of the sea in pale green light,
 A million mystic breasts suddenly bare,
 And came beneath the flood and stunned beheld
 A mute stupendous march of waters race
 To reach some viewless pit beneath the world.

K. D. SETHNA

2

MENTAL POETRY AND EXPRESSIVE PERFECTION

A Letter to the Same Reader

Let me take the text of your reply for a little further explanation. You have written:

"Thank you very much for your letter explaining the position regarding the poem

Kubla Khan. I had to read it several times before I could understand the points clearly. Before the receipt of your letter, I was under the impression that intimations from the higher regions of the mind always get distorted by the 'mental coating' of the lower regions and that 'absolute accuracy' which Sri Aurobindo referred to in his letter was not possible."

You have used the term "mind" in the general sense of our "consciousness" with higher and lower regions. To make explanation easier I shall restrict the term to the plane on which we are humanly poised and understand by "the higher regions" ranges of consciousness beyond it. Poetry functions from various levels. One may have "a supraphysical experience" like Coleridge's but the expression of it may not be from the same plane as the experience. "Intimations from the higher regions" than our human poise do not automatically carry the language and rhythm of those regions. But "a mental coating"—that is, the language and rhythm of the human mental level—need not distort these intimations so far as poetry as such is concerned.

The precise intensity or immensity of the Beyond will not come through, but there is an utterance possible which is mentally intense or immense, and there can be with it an inevitability proper to the plane of the mind. If this is found, the poetry will be perfect. Perfection in poetry consists simply in letting the inner being on any plane find voice without interference from the outer self. This inner being is the instrument of what I distinguish in my previous letter as the "occult dimension". I employ the designation "occult" here in the sense not of mysticism or spirituality as usually understood but of the hidden depths that are the field of more-than-human power, what the ancients suggested by the general name, "the Muse", when they spoke of poetry.

In his book *The Future Poetry* Sri Aurobindo called that inner being the "soul" on whatever plane is natural to the poet. Elsewhere he means by "soul" the Purusha or self confronting Prakriti or nature, and in other places the Divine Spark secret in all matter, and in a different context he points broadly to the inmost in our subliminal part, "the psychic being." This being is the representative of the Divine in the sphere of evolution, it goes from birth to birth and develops from its subhuman instrumentation to the human and will have a superhuman one in the future until the divinity individualised in it is totally manifested with the help of the descending Supermind and expressed in transformed mental, vital and physical modes of existence on earth.

The soul, as denoted in *The Future Poetry*, has successfully employed what Sri Aurobindo calls its intuitive way of seeing and speaking in diverse kinds of mental poetry, work characterised by Sri Aurobindo as coming from "the poetic or creative intelligence". These kinds include the poetry of the Greco-Roman age, the poetry of the Mediaeval Dante and Petrarch, the poetry of Milton and of the French Classical period typified by Corneille and Racine, much of the poetry of Wordsworth and his contemporaries, including Coleridge himself. Mental poetry can take

up mystical and spiritual themes and give a faultless body to them, aesthetically as faultless as anything that hails from the heights of inspiration Sri Aurobindo has made famous as “overhead”. To exemplify how “mental coating” need not “distort” from the viewpoint of art a mystical and spiritual subject, let me quote to you with Sri Aurobindo’s markings and comments a composition deriving mostly from the poetic intelligence:

MAYA

|| A scorching shadow, masked as living light,
 Earth’s smile of painted passion withers now!
 But is there hollow on black ravenous hollow
 | With never a gold core of love divine?
 How pass then reveries of angelic wings
 || Or sudden stabs of paradise through clay
 Revealing the blind heart of all desire?
 || Surely some haloed beauty hides within
 || The mournful spaces of unlustred limbs
 To call with secret eyes a perfect Sun
 Whose glory yearns across the drouth of hell!
 | Behind the false glow dreams the epiphany—
 But like a face of night implacable
 Save to the soul’s virginity, the unknown
 || White fire whose arms enclasp infinitude.

Sri Aurobindo’s Comments

“Exceedingly fine. I have marked the best lines. It is a very powerful poetic expression of the idea. It is the poetic intelligence, of course, but the last lines ‘the unknown/White fire’ etc. reach overhead.”

K. D. SETHNA

3

MR. ALVAREZ AND SRI AUROBINDO

A Letter to the *Illustrated Weekly of India*

I fully agree with Mr. Claude Alvarez (“Unholy Synthesis”, Jan. 25) that it is folly to assess India’s mystical wisdom by the results of empirical science which are constantly changing. But, whether Fritjof Capra whom he has set out to “abuse” commits such folly or not, Mr. Alvarez goes completely off the rails in saying that

Sri Aurobindo attempted to synthesize his own metaphysics with the modern evolutionary theory.

First of all, Sri Aurobindo never spoke of a synthesis of Indian wisdom and contemporary science. He spoke of "The Synthesis of Yoga", which is the title of one of his longest and most admired books, both in India and abroad. By that phrase he meant the bringing together of the essentials of the various Yogas known in India and taking them up into his own "Integral Yoga" which aims at transforming the whole of life, both individual and collective, with the "descent" of the spiritual power which he called "Supermind".

Evolution signified for Sri Aurobindo the manifestation of the Supreme Spirit, stage after stage, and the development of the individual soul by various grades until the mental level is reached and preparation is made for the supramental level. To Sri Aurobindo the scientific theory of evolution is merely a study of certain external mechanisms by which life changes from form to more complex form. These mechanisms which are themselves undergoing change in the thought of scientists have no special force for Sri Aurobindo. He is not concerned with them at all but only with the inner agencies at play. He did not seek to modernize his spiritual vision with the evolutionary hypothesis. One may say that this hypothesis happens to catch in limited terms something of that vision's truth.

Contrary to the modern theory, evolution to Sri Aurobindo always presupposes involution and what is "involved" is the supreme existence-consciousness-bliss-supermind in an enormous opposite of itself which he designates the "Inconscient". The Divine has put forth a negation of himself from which he has to emerge under the retarding conditions natural to such a negation. Here is a tremendous wager, as it were, of the Divine with himself. Matter, life, mind and an illumined state beyond them are the grades through which the soul passes and the goal is not a Nirvana or a flight to some supra-terrestrial heaven but a fulfilment of all the evolutionary instruments on earth itself. The modern theory knows nothing of the Divine's "involution" and the shifting fate of its details has no bearing on Sri Aurobindo's basic vision. It is incomprehensible how Mr. Alvarez can talk of Sri Aurobindo's "grand synthesis" passing into "oblivion" or his "grand theory" lying in "shambles".

I am afraid our critic has not the ghost of an idea of what Sri Aurobindo's spirituality or philosophy is. I remember an old vilifying article of his in which he made out that for Sri Aurobindo, when the Supreme posited an opposite of his own divinity from which to evolve back to it, there was nothing left of the Supreme in a free eternal state above involution and evolution. If nothing were left, what sense would there be in Sri Aurobindo's writing of the "descent" of the Supermind into the Yogi's aspiring consciousness? Here was a mighty "howler" of Mr. Alvarez's, reducing to absurdity his claim to know what Sri Aurobindo has taught and practised.

By the way, even if Sri Aurobindo is taken to have fallen for "the temptation from science" and based his spiritual metaphysics on the scientific theory of evolution, how can he be said to have "laid the grounds for the rapid obsolescence of his

philosophy”? Has science given up the evolutionary hypothesis as such? Has that hypothesis become obsolete and has science passed to the “creationism” of Christian Fundamentalists? Somehow the news has not yet reached my ears.

K. D. SETHNA

4

THE INDUS SCRIPT AND ARYANISM

A Letter to *Frontline*

In “Cracking the Indus Script” (Feb. 7-20) Asko Parpola puts forth an intelligent and coherent view, which has the support of I. Mahadevan, but its constituent terms strike me as mistaken. A few outstanding objections may be listed.

To prove the Indus Valley Civilization, also known as the Harappa Culture, non-Aryan, much is made of the various animals depicted on the seals. We are told that there is no image of that typical Aryan animal, the horse, and that no horse-bones have been found in the early layers. But may I ask: Have any bones been unearthed of that equally famous Aryan animal, the cow, and is there any depiction of it in contrast to the pictures of the bull, which are abundant? Were there only bulls and no cows in the Indus cities? And what about the mythical animal, the unicorn, which is on a seal showing seven fishes and which the matter below the illustration calls “the most common pictorial motif on Indus seals”? Was the unicorn a common animal of the protohistoric Indus Valley? Surely the presence or absence of depictions cannot point unequivocally to the animals known. We cannot reject Aryanism on the strength of it.

Besides, Parpola and Mahadevan are not really justified in ruling out horse-bones from the earlier strata. The excavations carried out in 1965, 1967 and 1968 under J. P. Joshi at Harappan Surkotada, which dates back to at least 2000 B.C. discovered, to quote Joshi himself, “a lot of equine bones right from earlier to top levels”.

I do not mean to say that the Indus Valley Civilisation was Aryan in the same sense as the Rigveda. But it differs from the latter not because the Rigveda is posterior to it. This concept of posteriority stems from the popular idea of an “Aryan invasion of India” in the period following the end of the Indus Valley Civilization. Both Parpola and Mahadevan subscribe to the idea without any scruple. But have we the slightest evidence for it? Every researcher has been forced to answer “No”. A. L. Basham, for instance, who believed in the invasion-theory, admitted in 1970: “Direct testimony to the assumed fact is lacking, and no tradition of an early home beyond the frontier survives in India.” In 1975, another believer, T. Burrow, had the same thing to affirm: “the Aryan invasion of India is recorded in no written

document and it cannot yet be traced archaeologically." With both archaeological and documentary proof completely wanting, we can only build conjectures about Aryans coming from abroad to drive Dravidians from the north to the south. Actually nothing debars us from dating the Rigveda anterior to the Indus Valley Civilization. A pre-Harappan Civilization dating back to *c.* 3500 B.C. and spread over a large area with the Saraswati Valley, sacred to the Rigveda, its main seat has now been excavated and there is no reason left for us to exclude the Rigveda from that antiquity. And if we set the Rigveda in *c.* 3500 B.C. we can easily understand how the Harappa Culture can be Aryan and yet not in the Rigvedic sense.

With sufficient distance between the two the so-called non-Aryan signs stressed by Marshall and company—the worship of the Mother-Goddess, the prevalence of icons, the cult of the bull—can all be regarded as coming into prominence in the wake of the Rigveda without being non-Aryan. Seeds of the first and the last signs can easily be traced in the Rigveda and the Rishis' psychological process of creating the forms of the gods within their own beings is the inner spiritual basis of the outer iconism of popular religion. In the time of the Brahmanas and the Sutras the signs are fully present in Aryan Hinduism itself. The Sutras are generally put about 1000 years later than the Rigveda. With the Rigveda in *c.* 3500 B.C. the Harappa Culture can legitimately be considered a derivative and a development from it along with being a semi-deviation owing to influences Iranian and Mesopotamian.

With an eye to all these factors it is quite possible to suppose the Harappan language to have had a Proto-Prakrit base and a multi-linguistic superstructure in which Proto-Dravidian also had a part to play.

K. D. SETHNA

WHAT IS BEAUTY?

THIS is my session of introspection and self-reflection. I begin: "What is beauty?" I visualise the beautiful things I can think of and observe my feelings. The response comes: "Beauty is something that awakens, that silently stirs, a deep vibration within and expresses itself in spontaneous joy, the pure delight of existence."

To understand clearly, I take a beautiful golden rose from the vase on my table, hold it in my hand and ask myself: "What makes it beautiful?" The answer comes: "It unfolds and manifests the truth of its being, naturally, quietly and happily. For it, that is the only way of its existence—there is no other way." And something within me exclaims, "How wonderful it would be if man who is more conscious could also live the truth of his being—the divine spark in him!"

And again I look at the flower and perceive its perfect pleasing form, its soft and pure petals—some fully open, others in different stages of opening. I see seven rows around the centre which still remain to be opened. And yet the rose is beaming tranquilly! Its process of growing is not of effort and struggle as in man, but of natural spontaneity and harmony. I learn a lesson. Something whispers, "Allow yourself to be opened petal by petal in simple joy by the Guide within."

I keep the rose on the table. It continues to smile. Its joy is self-propelled and does not depend on my holding it or not. I ponder, how nice if I could have that poise—remain equally happy when the Lord uses me as well as when He keeps me aside or at rest, whether in company or in solitude, for my happiness is within as in this flower.

Something else strikes me: its sweet subtle fragrance which suffuses the surrounding atmosphere, and makes its presence felt distinctly. Its serene, refined existence charms me and elevates my being. If a flower can bring such a beautiful change in the atmosphere, why not man who is a higher species? And what is more, the rose spreads its perfume to whosoever passes by, be that a saint or a sinner, a prince or a pauper. What perfect equanimity in the flower! I catch the reason. It lives naturally for the Lord—it manifests His Will. It gives because it is the law of its being and not for obliging or attracting anyone. When a man in admiration presses it gently to his lips or his heart, it receives his love calmly. When a man in passion tears it apart and crushes it, it emits its scent to its last breath. What a touching sacrifice! But for the flower it is all in joy for the Lord. It came, it lived and it went out of existence, instinctively for the purpose of the Lord. "Ah!" my soul cries in anguish, "a little flower manifests the Divine while man, made in His image, fails to do so. He even does the opposite! Oh, to be like a flower!"

I look at the rose again with admiring eyes for teaching me something precious, when it reveals to me yet another secret. I notice that each petal is suffused with a golden tinge, and the shade grows deeper and deeper within. So it is the golden centre that spreads its hue to all the petals. And another truth dawns on me—Oh, if I could let my centre, my psychic being, penetrate and spread its radiance in all

my thoughts, feelings and movements!

With that vision I know that I too will be beautiful like this rose if I also live the truth of my existence in all the parts of my being, simply, peacefully and cheerfully. Each step then will be guided, each thought will be sublime, each emotion pure, each act in the right direction and the whole life a harmonious awakening of the Divine within, the process of becoming Divine!

SUSHILA MELVANI

SAVITRI'S INITIATION INTO YOGA

(Continued from the issue of May 1987)

17. The Path

“COMMAND, for I am here to do thy will”—that is the state of submission to which Savitri has already advanced. The Voice accepts the willing instrument and puts it on the path reaching its summit self. It chalks out the inward and upward route for Savitri's sadhana. Psychic realisations followed by the highest spiritual ones leading to Love's victory over Death will be the siddhis of this Yoga of the divine Shakti in the earth-consciousness.

Savitri must first discover her soul and recover her true hidden self. The external superficial being cannot know the meaning of God's creation and hence she must plunge in the depths of her heart, it is only in silence that she must seek the why and whereto of this world. She must change her outward nature into the divine nature so that the mighty Force may freely operate through her.

Then, passing through God's door, she must forget the outside world and enter into his trance. All impressions of the waking consciousness are too trivial and superficial in comparison with the movements of the inner world. She must even cast away Thought as it does not, and cannot, possess the true knowledge; it only copies and adapts the truth-ideas of the larger Light. Savitri was until then living and arguing out her actions with the help of this Thought which did not really give her any solution. It is in the tremendous hush that she must allow the great Truth to operate and function. She must wake it up and know things in its light. Her perception should not be a sense-perception, but truth-sight and truth-hearing. A new and finer faculty of observation will then show her the world as a totally different thing from what it is ignorantly conceived to be.

When her mind will be empty of all thought she will see that even in this world the Eternal is very much present bodily. The immanence will be a living experience. Even the minutest object will reveal to her his presence. She will enter into the cosmic consciousness. Then in a complete identity with God she will become an instrument for the divine use. She will do everything according to his Will, her speech becoming the speech and expression of his truth-ideas. What she will do will be his work.

On treading this path she will finally acquire and possess the force of the commanding Voice itself, the force that has the strength to conquer Death.

This is the initiation given to Savitri by the supreme Mother herself. It has the mantric power to establish in consciousness the truth of each of its commands and injunctions. Savitri will achieve all the siddhis of the Yoga of this Shakti. She is told to remember why she has come here:

"... Remember why thou cam'st:
 Find out thy soul, recover thy hid self,
 In silence seek God's meaning in thy depths,
 Then mortal nature change to the divine.
 Open God's door, enter into his trance.
 Cast Thought from thee, that nimble ape of Light:
 In his tremendous hush stilling thy brain
 His vast Truth wake within and know and see.
 Cast from thee sense that veils thy spirit's sight:
 In the enormous emptiness of thy mind
 Thou shalt see the Eternal's body in the world,
 Know him in every voice heard by thy soul:
 In the world's contacts meet his single touch;
 All things shall fold thee into his embrace.
 Conquer thy heart's throbs, let thy heart beat in God:
 Thy nature shall be the engine of his works,
 Thy voice shall house the mightiness of his Word:
 Then shall thou harbour my force and conquer Death."¹

This gives a detailed and complete formula, a sort of recipe, for Savitri to commence her spiritual sadhana. The course of action is elaborated; also the various siddhis she would get as she would progress on her path are indicated. But this formula, and therefore the siddhis, are specific to Savitri alone. It is her mighty Voice who is instructing her from above and it is the Power within her heart who is responding to it. Our own sadhana with the instruction from our own mighty Voice would be of a different nature and character. Our siddhis would also be of a different kind.

The Yoga of Savitri is meant to conquer Death. Death, the embodied Nothingness, is standing as the biggest obstacle in the way of Love. When Love came to her "repeating the marvel of the first descent", he was keeping the shadow—Death—hidden from her. In her he found "his perfect shrine."² That marvel has to be established now in embodied consciousness. This conquest over Death will therefore be the greatest siddhi of Savitri.

Victory over Death—that is the present outline and scope of Savitri's sadhana. After that victory—the siddhi of this sadhana—and with the Will of the Supreme, the Future will unfold itself in the course of Time.

18. Conquest over Death

The fated day will arrive. Satyavan will die in the lap of Savitri. The dark Adversary will stand in front of her, resisting the mighty Will. Savitri will harbour

¹ *Savitri*, p. 476.

² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

the divine Force. A fierce battle will be fought in the occult world. Commanding the God of the dark Law to step aside from the way of her Love she will be victorious. The great Shadow will disappear and dissolve into the Nothingness from which it came.

A victory was won for God in man,
 The deity revealed its hidden face.
 The great World-Mother now in her arose:
 A living choice reversed fate's cold dead turn,
 Affirmed the spirit's tread on Circumstance,
 Pressed back the senseless dire revolving Wheel
 And stopped the mute march of Necessity.
 A flaming warrior from the eternal peaks
 Empowered to force the door denied and closed
 Smote from Death's visage its dumb absolute
 And burst the bounds of consciousness and Time.¹

If this is decreed and in any case if it will happen, then what is the necessity of Savitri doing the Yoga at all? But the mighty Voice and the Power in her heart are as yet one only in essence, only in principle. While the Power is involved in the earth-consciousness, the mighty Voice is in the transcendent. The fact of its belonging to the high above and being in the know of things is not sufficient. The Power has to realise its divine aspect in the evolutionary process. Heavenly omniscience and omnipotence are not of sufficient avail if things are not done in the dense material consciousness itself. From up there the Voice cannot operate directly; it can guide, protect, exercise occult influence, lead, but it cannot bring about any change simply by virtue of its coming from such a lofty Source. A receiving Power in the earth-nature is necessary so that this change and transformation may be effected from within. A special descent in the earth-consciousness at its crucial stage of evolution is the divine Incarnation itself. Now Savitri is one such descent fusing the Voice and the Power. The mission of this Descent is to conquer Death. "To wrestle with the Shadow she had come."²

To be the engine of God's works and to be the sword of his victory—that is the task of the divine Mother's incarnation. By winning back the soul of Satyavan from the hands of Death she, as a present incarnation in the form of Savitri, has accomplished it in full measure. The command was to conquer Death. It means that in the evolutionary process the present commitment was only to the extent of winning this victory. Savitri achieved it. But now that Death cannot have his sway over her workings, the process of bodily immortality itself can begin. Indeed, the victory and the commencement of this process are the natural consequence of one following the other. How else would this have happened if it had not been so? "The body

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

of man also may some day come by its transfiguration.”¹

“A new Light shall break upon the earth, a new world shall be born, and the things that were promised shall be fulfilled.”² An intimation of the future possibility was received long ago because the Lord had willed it. Now the divine Shakti has executed the Will. A new Light has broken upon the earth like the dawn of a marvellous day; a new world is born in the splendid fusion of the grace from above and the action from below; the promise of the new Light and the new world has been fulfilled because Death has been conquered.

But who is this Death? Even by the gods it was debated whether, when the man who has passed away, ‘he is not’ or ‘he is’³. But Yama, the son of Vivaswan, “the child of the Sun, luminous Master of Truth from which the Law is born”, has the knowledge of it.⁴ Yama is the knower and keeper of the cosmic Law accepting which the soul has to rise by the process of life and death to the freedom of Immortality. It is from such a Teacher that Nachiketas got the instruction in the occult science and technique of Immortality. That is the secret lore Savitri has mastered.

But more needs to be done. Savitri has to conquer Death—the knower and keeper of the cosmic Law under which the soul presently suffers and yet grows into the freedom of immortality beyond life and death. Death can be bypassed by shooting out from this world; that is how the soul can be free. But when the other members of man’s being have to rise to this freedom then the cosmic Law becomes a terrible obstacle; it turns into a fierce Adversary against this possibility. Soul’s immortality could be obtained by transcending the cosmic Law, but such a procedure is not available for the physical nature. The material laws cannot hold such a freedom here. The process of decay and disintegration in Matter, the present *dharma* of things, cannot allow immortality to sustain itself and function with the freedom of the spirit. It is the presence of Inconscience, even in the very grain of Matter, that introduces and establishes death at the very root of the process. To make Matter free of the dark presence is the victory bidden to Savitri. Actually, on an earlier occasion Prana, the Life-Force, had come hoping to fill this world with joy by changing the material laws:

But while the magic breath was on its way,
Before her gifts could reach our prisoned hearts,
A dark ambiguous Presence questioned all.
The secret Will that robes itself with Night
And offers to spirit the ordeal of the flesh,
Imposed a mystic mask of death and pain.⁵

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 254.

² *The Mother, Prayers and Meditations*, September 25, 1914.

³ *The Upanishads*, p. 241.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 238.

⁵ *Savitri*, p. 130.

It is this 'mask of death' that has to be removed; the 'dark ambiguous Presence' has to be dissolved. Conquest over death for which Savitri has to strive means the disembodiment of the 'embodied Nothingness'. When this is done then the 'magic breath' will successfully cast the 'Immortal's fire' in 'Matter's womb'. That will be the beginning of the process of physical transformation.

It is out of the question that Satyavan could have conquered death; this has to be done for him. The evolving soul is too small and too weak to abrogate the cosmic Law. As an individual soul he could attain to freedom and immortality, but he has no power, no capacity, to make it universal. His soul cannot contain or 'harbour' the divine Shakti to conquer Death, as does Savitri's. Because Savitri is that Shakti herself in evolution, it is she who alone can break open the path for the aspiring soul of humanity to cross over to the Law of Immortality beyond the cosmic Law of Death. She has come to the field of ignorance and suffering and death so that the earth be changed into the life and light and delight of the Divine. Death, though born of the Inconscience, is a universal principle and the individual soul, though in origin a spark of the Divine Fire, is subject to it. Only the one who is transcendent to both the individual and the universal can alter their workings. In fact, Savitri as the transcendent Shakti operates on all the three levels simultaneously, as that is her divine nature. Such a conquest over the universal principle for the purpose of the individual is her great mission. Her sadhana is to harbour the divine Force for this purpose.

(To be continued)

R. Y. DESHPANDE

JUNG AND COMPLEMENTARY STUDIES

PSYCHOSYNTHESIS

As an Alternative to Analytical Therapies

ROBERTO Assagioli, an Italian psychiatrist and psychologist, who was born in Venice in 1888 and died in 1975, happily struck upon synthesis as the key to the problem of neurosis and other mental disorders. Indeed, synthesization or integration is the aim of all mental therapies. Freud aims at digging up the childhood memories through Free Association and Dream Interpretation, but the purpose of it all is a recomposition or reintegration of personality into a socially passable form. Jung's Analytical Psychology is in spirit analytical though it affirms a centre or self as its basic fact. In therapeutic practice, whereas Freud aims at childhood memories, Jung aims at the archetypes of the collective unconscious including the one of the self.

In fact, the general spirit of science is analytical, of looking to the parts, of reducing the phenomenon under investigation to the antecedents. It is only recently that a trend has come into being, which recognises wholes as significant facts by themselves and seeks to study their properties and looks upon analysis into parts as a subordinate activity.

Assagioli was indeed happy to think of synthesis as the direct and positive objective of cure and to regard analysis as a subordinate activity. Freud would raise the unconscious causes of conflict to consciousness and that automatically would bring about a reorientation or reintegration. But such recomposition was an effect not a direct objective. Assagioli made this recomposition the direct objective and then planned his therapeutic proceedings to be appropriate to each patient. There is an evident truth and force in this standpoint. Indeed, reintegration of a fractured personality is the aim of all psychotherapy. However, analysis was the power and the bias of science, and psychotherapies in variant forms adopted it with differences in the details of their orientations. They do, however, admit synthesis too in their general approach of analysis in variant forms and degrees.

But Assagioli has the merit of espousing synthesis as the main conscious purpose and yet employing analytical procedures in its service as needed.

In this attempt the lowest and the most original thing done by him is the attitude taken towards the unconscious, personal or collective. His central emphasis is on building up the will for health and happiness in the patient and in the course of this process whatever comes up or rather intrudes upon the consciousness from the unconscious is to be dealt with, but no direct attempt is to be made to unearth the unpleasant things from the unconscious, personal or collective. His own words in this connection are clear and definite. He says:

"The first and foremost is the release of drives and emotions which were locked in the unconscious and which can flood the conscious ego before it is ready and pre-

pared and competent to contain, control and utilise them.

"...Let us remember in this respect that Adler has rightly pointed out that a neurosis is often a defense mechanism or structure for keeping within safe bounds destructive, menacing, and otherwise overpowering drives."¹

"Such dangers can be successively offset by what we call 'fractional analysis,' i.e., not starting first with the analysis of the unconscious, but with the conscious assessment, with the consolidation of the conscious personality, and, moreover, with the establishing of the positive rapport between the therapist and the patient. This is the reason why, as already described in the preceding pages, we begin with the exploration of the conscious. Then the exploration of the unconscious is carried out by instalments, so to speak, i.e., part of a session is given to a particular exploratory technique, and then it is stopped and other techniques dealing with the conscious aspect are used. So, the quantity of analysis,² of exploration of the unconscious, is relatively limited during the treatment, and care is taken that the varied quota or amount or voltage of energies released from the unconscious into the conscious is immediately dealt with—cautiously; it is controlled, transmuted or utilized through expression."³

"We take the practical view: when the unconscious disturbs, it has to be dealt with; if it keeps quiet, we do not make a systematic offensive against it."⁴

*

This is indeed an original position taken up in Psychosynthesis and sought to be followed up a great deal in its practice. In this respect, the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and the Integral Psycho-therapy based on the same would have sympathy with the practice of Psychosynthesis. For Integral Yoga too the primary thing is the intensification of the aspiration or will for perfection, for the realisation of the Soul in man and the Divine in the world. And the problem develops when the unconscious intrudes into the conscious. Such intrusions are always numerous enough and they have to be handled. Further, the attitude towards the unconscious has not to be suppressive and repressive, but that of openness to the light of consciousness. This given, the unconscious contents are allowed to come up in their own way, in their own time and in their own proportions.

This is, indeed, a very strong point in Psychosynthesis. However, it must be stated that the recanalisation of energies into healthier modes of life and behaviour is what matters, not merely the awareness of it. The stress on awareness is a prejudice created by the intellectualist bias of our present cultural life.

The general plan of the process of self-reconstruction may now be considered.

¹ *Psychosynthesis* by Roberto Assagioli, A Penguin Book, p. 98.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

The first phase is that of achieving a knowledge of oneself, as one is. It is the "General Assessment and the exploration of the unconscious." That is a long process of self-observation aided by many helpful devices of questionnaires, diary-keeping, biography-writing. Above all, by a process of self-identification and disidentification. We use 'I' now for a bodily state, now for a mental condition, but a critical examination shows that the "I" is different from these. This process is really a traditional yogic technique. Psychosynthesis accords it rightly a high place among its techniques. The goal is self-realisation, which is a high and an ultimate ideal. But here catharsis, the living out of old suppressed and repressed emotions, has its place. Training of will, of imagination and of the use of symbols are all processes for the integration of personality. The last phase, that of spiritual psychosynthesis, is indeed the most difficult to delineate and characterise. The author says:

"The conscious and purposeful use of self-identification—or disidentification—is basic in psychosynthesis. It proceeds from a dynamic center on which the whole process of synthesizing the psychological multiplicity into an organic unit is based.

"... We are dominated by everything with which our self is identified. We can dominate and control everything from which we dis-identify ourselves."¹

And then:

"After the assessment of the conscious aspects of the personality and the exploration of the unconscious—and generally after the use of some techniques for the preparation of the patient, such as the training of the will and the exercises in self-identification and visualization—comes the right moment for a definite planning of the level of the psychosynthesis to be achieved."²

And at the end of the treatment the instruction to the patient is:

"You have seen the usefulness of psychosynthesis. Then go on and practice it throughout your whole life for the prevention of any recurrence of your troubles, and for a fuller, richer life and progressive self-realization."³

The spiritual psychosynthesis opens with a note of diffidence. It is not able to define the term spiritual and yet affirms the term superconscious and also affirms that "all the superior manifestations of human psyche, such as creative imagination, intuition, aspiration, genius are facts as real or as important as the conditioned reflexes."⁴ It also wants to be neutral towards philosophy and religion.

The question is, what is the truth that Psychosynthesis has found? It can certainly avoid terms which are likely to evoke wrong associations of the present and the past, but the truth it has found must be affirmed and that done unambiguously. The reading of the book gives a clear impression that the higher truths of life are its firm conviction and these it prefers to represent by the term superconscious. That appears to us clear and sound. Science is an expanding body of knowledge and it will surely accept it sooner or later.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 164. ² *Ibid.*, p. 165

³ *Ibid.* ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

Further, experience is the sure basis of knowledge. Our affirmation should be founded in actual experience. And yoga or experience expanded by yogic discipline enables us to affirm a self-existent consciousness in man and a similar self-existent universal consciousness at the heart of the world. These are facts of the super-conscious, the consciousness above the normal and the average. These would recall the terms soul and God of religion and philosophy, but not necessarily their old connotations. Each generation has to go by its own experience and build up its body of knowledge and seek its best acceptable support from tradition and history, not minding the agreements and disagreements it gets or does not get.

In this connection, it would be relevant to state the entire position of Psychosynthesis in a summary sort of way. We may take self-realisation as our goal seriously and state the first phase as that concerned with our ego-selfhood; its conflicts, its maladjustments inner and outer, its lack of central will for health and happiness. This covers largely the 'Personal Psychosynthesis' of the book and would restore to the patient his normal healthfulness.

But if he pursues 'Self-realisation' and is called to it, he will have to transcend his ego-selfhood which is yet outward-directed and now aim at the self-existent inner selfhood, which gives him a framing of true selfhood and freedom from external circumstances. That would be his first entry into the superconscious and also the first phase of the spiritual Psychosynthesis.

This realization would possibly lead on the seeker, if he pursues his spiritual journey, into the transcendental realms of the Superconscious, the wideness and the luminosity felt above oneself, all-commanding and all-encompassing. That should lead to the realization of the Supreme in existence. And this realization admits of increasing transcendence into higher and higher realms of greater wideness and increasing luminosity. That would be a growth into the wider and the higher ranges of the Superconscious of greater knowledge, deeper love and more effective volition.

Such would be the full scope of Psychosynthesis when viewed in conjunction with Integral Yoga.

The inspiration of Psychosynthesis of Dr. Assagioli is a happy one and it can look forward to a great scope of expansion and development. Its principles are sound and the techniques—collected widely from life Western and Eastern—are useful. The two chapters on Music and Meditation as therapeutic means are particularly apt. It is inclined to Jung in a special measure though Maslow has lent support to it in an explicit manner.

Dr. Assagioli seeks a wider accumulation of experience on the therapeutic practice of Psychosynthesis and we wish it all success.

INDRA SEN

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

THERE is a story told about an Englishman who said to a group of British and American friends, 'I'm mad about my flat.'

His British friends understood him to mean, I'm very excited about the rooms I live in, but his American friends thought he meant, I'm very angry about my punctured tyre! This is because the English used in the United States is somewhat different from the English used in Great Britain.

These two varieties of English have both changed a good deal in the last 300 years or so, and naturally they have not developed exactly the same way. However, the differences between these two national varieties are not very great. Most British and American speakers can understand each other easily though pronunciation can cause a few problems. The obvious superficial differences in spelling, grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary is something like this.

1. Spelling:

American	British	American	British
airplane	Aeroplane	practice (verb)	practise
theater	theatre	specialty	speciality
catalog	catalogue	mold	mould
dialog	dialogue	mustache	moustache
traveler	traveller	pajamas	pyjamas
honor	honour	plow	plough
analyze	analyse	skeptical	sceptical
aluminum	aluminium	thoro	thorough
tire	tyre (on a car)	thro	through
jail	gaol jail	wagon	waggon
jewelry	jewellery	wolen	wollen
advisor	adviser		

Grammar:

(A) American English has two past participle forms of 'get': 'gotten' and 'got,' whereas British English has only one: 'got'. The past tense form is 'got' in both varieties.

(B) Americans use a simple past tense in some cases where British people use a present perfect.

(C) There is also a difference in the repeated subject after 'one.'

American: One cannot succeed unless he tries hard.

British: One cannot succeed unless one tries hard.

Americans use the verb 'have'

(D) a little differently from British people in certain cases.

American: Do you have a problem?

British: Have you got a problem?

(E) The normal complement after 'different' is 'than' in American but 'from' or sometimes 'to' in British.

(F) The subjunctive is much more common in American than in British English.

'American: It's essential that he be informed.

British: It's essential that he should be informed.

(G) There are many small differences in the use of prepositions and adverbial participles.

Samples:

American	British
Check something out	Check something
do something over	do something again
fill in/out a form	fill in a form
protest something	protest against something
stay home	stay at home
visit with somebody	visit somebody

(H) In an informal speech, many Americans use 'like' in cases where most educated British people would prefer 'as' or 'as if'.

(I) In informal speech, Americans sometimes use adverb forms without 'ly.'

American: He looked at me real strange.

British: He looked at me really strange.

Pronunciation:

(A) Stressed vowels are often lengthened more in American English than in British. British people think Americans 'drawl' and Americans think British speech is 'clipped.'

(B) Vowels are often nasalized in American English. Vowels are not nasalized in most British pronunciations, so this makes the two accents sound very different.

(C) Many British people pronounce /ɑ:/ (a back vowel) in some words where Americans pronounce /æ/ (a front vowel)

Samples: can't, castle, fast, glass, class, staff, after, pass, example, dance, laugh, grant.

(D) In standard British English r is only pronounced before a vowel. In American English, r is pronounced in all positions in a word, and it changes the quality of a vowel that comes before it. So words like 'car, turn, offer,' sound very different in British and American speech.

(E) In American English, t and d both have a very light 'voiced' pronunciation /d/ between vowels—so 'writer' and 'rider' sound the same. In British English, d remains 'unvoiced' between vowels: 'writer' and 'rider' do not sound the same.

(F) Before u and ew, British people pronounce n—d—and t—like ny—dy and ty.

Americans pronounce them as they are written.

Samples:	American	British
	tune /tu:n/	/tju:n/
	new /nu:/	/nju:/

The American language is very flexible and expressive. And British English is changing continually and many of the changes in this century have been due to its absorption of American words and idioms.

The present Indian University students are plunged into a great deal of confusion. This is because some of their teachers are Ph.Ds from American and some from British Universities and they use a different accent and vocabulary. As such the students are unable to know what is standard and what is non-standard English.

The only possible way to get over this problem is to be able to distinguish situationally between the two varieties of English in order to have effectual international communicative intelligibility.

This is what every progressive learner of English should know in order to lighten his burden and brighten his career in this competitive world of advanced science, and technology.

A. C. VENKATESWARLU

(With acknowledgments to the *Hindu*, June 24, 1986)

REMEMBERING V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

From an article by Rajeswara Rao on Sastri and Gandhi in the
Hyderabad Fortnightly *New Swatantra Times*, January 31, 1987

...SASTRI mastered the English language and while he was a student corrected some passages in the famous English grammar by J. C. Nesfield. Webster's Dictionary was his constant companion. His devotion to the English language was almost canonical. He once corrected a mispronunciation by an English Principal. It always remained an unsolved mystery how he acquired such a mastery over the English language as to arouse the envy of Englishmen without travelling abroad or being trained under any English teacher. King George V wondered at this phenomenon. When there was a controversy about the correct pronunciation of the word 'Status' at Oxford, it was referred to him while he was attending the Round Table Conference in London. Winston Churchill as British Premier nodded in affirmation when Sastri pointed out the flaw of his reference to 'Triphibian' instead of 'Tribian'. He also corrected a stanza in Gray's 'Elegy.'

His vocabulary was abundant, voice metallic, diction mellifluous, delivery impressive and personality fascinating. Each one of his speeches, marked by a classic purity of language, was an oratorical triumph of unmatched brilliance, a grand symphony of word and voice, of thought and gesture. In polished urbanity and unimpeachable decorum and in exquisite balance of phrases and rounded periods there were few to equal and none to surpass him. He did not snort like a war horse and restraint was his forte.

His style was lucid as well as deep, terse as well as epigrammatic. He roused the guild hall audience by his exalted sentiments, nobility of ideas and superb eloquence. Lord Balfour remarked that after hearing him he realised the heights to which the English language could rise. Ramsay Macdonald confessed: "After hearing Sastri, I hesitate to speak my own language." Lloyd George was all admiration for him. University Dons took his speeches as models of pronunciation. It is a wonder of history that the shirtless Srinivasan of his college days, in spite of his reserve and retiring disposition, blossomed into Right Hon'ble Sastri, Privy Councillor and Freeman of the Cities of London and Edinburgh.

Though the authors that influenced him included Shakespeare, Scott, Eliot, Huxley, Spencer, Tolstoy and Hugo, Sage Valmiki occupied the place of primacy. His lectures on the Ramayana resembled Bradley's celebrated lectures on the characters of Shakespeare in erudition, zest, ethical seriousness and profound understanding. He delivered the Kamala Lectures at Calcutta University on "the rights and duties of Indian Citizens" and created a lasting impression. In the evening of his life, he became Vice-Chancellor of Annamalai University where he lectured on Poetry, Grammar and Idiom.

As a liberal, he was fed on the political diet of Mill on liberty and Morley on

compromise. Exposing the imperial game in a speech during his tour of Canada, he thundered: "The Empire's strength has been built on our weakness, its riches have been accumulated by keeping us poor, its power in the world has been possible because our strength could be used, and subordinated to its strength." Everyone wondered whether he was a moderate in the guise of an extremist or an extremist in the guise of a moderate. He had a wonderful sense of humour. He joked that Gandhi's dress evolved in inverse proportion to his fame. His friendship cut across national and racial barriers.

When Jawaharlal Nehru criticised him thus: "Sastri roars like a lion, but when the time for action comes he bleats like a lamb. Crisis does not suit his genius", with his innate dignity and tolerance Sastri kept mum. But Gandhiji replied, "Some kinds of courage are cheaper in India than elsewhere. But Sastri's courage is not of the cheaper variety." He was smiling and affable with a scholarly poise using the right word at the right place. More than his spoken word, his personality charmed everyone as Michael Sadler aptly put it.

The positions he declined on the ground that acceptance would cut him off from the political life were legion. Ill-health, advancing years and incidental infirmities could not tempt him to covet sinecures. He declined to be the chief of the Interim Ministry during 1937 before K. V. Reddy Naidu was sent for. He rejected Presidentship of Council of States, a seat on the Viceregal Cabinet and membership of the Secretary of State's India Council. He upheld values which were of the utmost significance to the country. He endeavoured to restore sanity and decency in public life and preached simplicity, self-discipline, endurance and duty. He combined in himself common sense, clarity and balance.

He had neither a letter-head nor a typist. His letters to me were always in his own hand on plain paper. He died poor. But we are richer that he lived amidst us once. When he passed away, his faithful disciple T. R. Venkatarama Sastri exclaimed at the funeral pyre, "Living corpses mourn the dead." Gandhiji in his obituary tribute said that Sastri was one of India's best sons who lived and died for the motherland and whose patriotism was never less than that of the tallest. His life was the story of an epoch, a mission and he was a man with striking gifts and a lovable nature who led a life of sustained intellectual grandeur, a purposeful and full life as an integrated man.

D-DAY IN EUROPE: JUNE 6, 1944

THE FORGE OF VICTORY

JUNE 6, 1944 was a dour, windswept day on the English Channel—and the decisive moment of World War II was hard at hand. The combined Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. and Britain had issued a directive to Supreme Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower: “You will enter the Continent of Europe and... undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her armed forces.” Eisenhower looked at the lowering sky and made his fateful decision to go ahead. Now to the captive people of Western Europe came his voice of hope: “The hour of your liberation is approaching!” This, 43 years ago this week, was D-Day. The results of that day’s work are known wherever man draws breath. Almost forgotten is how precariously the power and the glory hung in the balance.

To undertake history’s greatest amphibious invasion, the Allied powers had assembled 150,000 men, 1,500 tanks, 5,000 ships and 9,000 planes. The German enemy was reeling: his cities had been bombed, he had lost North Africa and been thrown back to the seven hills of Rome. Wounded he was—but still deadly dangerous, with 60 divisions, including his crack Panzers, to defend Western Europe. Adolf Hitler correctly divined Normandy as the probable Allied *Schwerpunkt*, concentrated his armored reserves behind seven infantry divisions in the target area and, closer to Germany, maintained strength in the Pas de Calais area. Hitler’s most mobile general, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, well knew that Allied air superiority (5,000 fighters on the channel front to a mere 119 for the battered Luftwaffe) would rule out any battle of maneuver. Rommel strengthened the coast defenses and prepared to fight it out on that line. Said he: “The war will be won or lost on the beaches. The first 24 hours will be decisive.”

The Allies therefore faced a momentous strategic equation. Once the beach-head into Europe was established, they could land 100 divisions and pound on to Germany with almost 2-1 superiority. But on D-Day itself the Allies would have to land nine divisions to fight ten German divisions in bristling, fixed positions—and the Allied spearheads would be even more heavily outnumbered. “We shall have to send the soldiers into this party seeing red,” said the Allied ground forces commander, Bernard Law Montgomery. “Nothing must stop them. Nothing.”

Nothing did stop them—in places. In the battle’s first hours, between 0015 and 0900, the Allies won three quick successes. On the left flank the British 6th Airborne Division achieved complete tactical surprise, wiped out German positions east of the Orne River. On the right flank the U.S. 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, although badly scattered in the airdrop, outfought three German divisions, suffering 2,500 casualties. Shielded by this U.S. airborne success the U.S. 4th Infantry Division swept ashore soon after the first light on Utah Beach, swamped the defenses at a cost of only 197 casualties. It was D-Day’s first major breakthrough.

Inch by Inch

But it was on the four beaches between the Orne and the Vire that the man-to-man battle was fought in most savage fury. On Sword, Juno and Gold beaches, British and Canadian troops hurled in an astonishing force of "specialized armor"—mine-clearing tanks, pillbox-blasting tanks, ditch-filling tanks, flame-throwing tanks—but the German 716th Infantry Division, in fortified seaside hotels and summer villas, fought back viciously, inflicting 4,000 casualties.

Onto the U.S. forces' Omaha Beach, a concave sweep of sand 300 yards deep beneath fortified bluffs, the U.S. 1st and 29th Divisions sent in a spearhead of 1,450 men. They ran head on into most of the German 352nd Division—undamaged by the inaccurate air bombardment—and were soon shelled, mortared, mined, machine-gunned. But even as the German commander at Omaha announced victory and began diverting his reserves against the British, U.S. Colonel George A. Taylor ordered an advance: "Now let's get the hell out of here!" Inch by inch, behind accurate naval gunfire, backed up by waves of reinforcement, the U.S. infantrymen pushed back the German defenders...

Mile by Mile

All day and night the Allies poured reinforcements onto the hard-won strips of Europe—36,250 in the Utah sector, 34,250 at Omaha, 83,115 on the British-Canadian beaches and airborne area. The German infantry began to crumble. Still desperately fighting, the British punched out gains of six miles, the Canadians eight. The U.S. 1st and 29th Divisions battled into fortified villages behind Omaha, dug in. In the Utah sector the seaborne forces linked up with the airborne, pressed inland. The battle neared its moment of truth—the expected counterattack of Rommel's blazing Panzers. But that moment never came.

What happened was a breakdown in the German command. Rommel, believing the weather too foul for an invasion, was away in Germany on D-Day. The 21st Panzer Division, instead of counterattacking, was fed into a piecemeal defense of Caen. The 12th SS Panzer and the Panzer Lehr Divisions were held in the rear from 0400 to 1600 by command from Hitler himself. Smothered by Allied air attack, they did not get into action until D-plus-one, D-plus-two and D-plus-three.

The Breakthrough

By that time, the battle was won. Along a 30-mile front, the forces of freedom had secured their beachhead on Hitler's *Festung Europa*. The price was dear: 10,724 casualties, including 2,132 dead.

There was deadly fighting yet to come and stirring history yet to be made. Montgomery drew the German armored strength onto the Second British Army

and First Canadian Army at Caen, while the First U.S. Army broke out at St.-Lô. Hitler and Rommel held back the German 15th Army near Calais, waiting for a second invasion that never came. George Patton, with his ivory-handled pistols, led the Third U.S. Army from Avranches to Le Mans to Orléans to Verdun to Metz in the most spectacular armored advance of the war. There was the unforgettable moment when Paris was liberated. But those moments essentially had been made possible by the U.S., British and Canadian troops who, on that single day 43 years ago, stormed the beaches named Sword, Juno, Gold, Utah and Omaha.

(Adapted from *Time News Magazine* April 8, 1959)

TRUTH

ACROSS the tremendous calm bridging Space with Time
I saw a distant gleam as of the dawn of God:
A shimmering curtain of red-gold radiance
Held secret yet ardent divinity.
An image I beheld rapt in deep folds of Light,
A high transcendence of living Bliss
Entranced, indrawn into some vast creative muse,
A giant sole Truth-Denizen meditating in the Void,
Holding captive a Vision of unfulfilled futurity.
In the huge dumb shadow of appalling Night
Undeterred, his self-luminous glow still held back
The ancient stinging ache of uncreated things
Forged into the inconscience of our death-still past.
A dolour, a pitiless pain, a silent cry I saw
Etching into his face with swift stabs of Love,
The voiceless rigour of an ascetic power
And the strange celestial Peace of those whom God owns,
An immobility whose depths no suffering can gulf,
An identity unmitigated by Death's torturing cord,
A stupendous poise of the conscious Eternal.

A power drew me close to that eternal face,
A hand led me past the ghouls of Night
Till I looked upon the visage of the Supreme,
And touched his marble-gold monument to Calm.
Upon the cheek of Sleep I laid a mortal touch,
To unborn radiance whispered the call of man,
Felt on my skin the prickle of God's delight,
The bright tremor which closes upon the soul
In the sudden sun-burst wash of his smile
And the sweet incandescence of his rapturous voice.

I heard the silent laughter that courses through the universe,
Bathed in its wide sparkling streams of godward joy
That pour into matter through stars, through suns.
Amongst resplendent Goddesses whose chariots move
Flinging their thought-tresses into solar winds,
And deep-bosomed Nereids haunting the Unknown,
A fathomless Power neared yet through all.

Containing Space, vanquishing Time he blazed,
A Presence of perilous lustre,
A shooting fireball, deathless to the core,
Swar stood, a seething intolerance piercing vacancy.
The deep ananda shimmering in the universe
Whirled around his feet, around his brow became
A flaming discus of transcendent power.
A puissant harmony of racing brilliances his eyes,—
A glad Warrior-Force whose body he became
Fronted dissolving obscurity.

ARVIND HABBU

THE LOVE OF PRINCESS USHA

“WHY are your eyes so sad, O lovely princess?
Bright your pensive beauty like a haloed moon
Enveloped the beholders with its quiet mystery.
Like proud fir-trees standing on Himalayan slopes,
Kings pledged their kingdom and throne, their youth and life
As on bent knees they pleaded with burning words
That brought to their passions aid their very souls.
With a smile that was a fatal mirage
Which never touched for once your heart,
Like some inexorable peal of death your ‘No’
Felled with a gale’s force their hopes.
O friend, how could you spurn life’s best?
These nobles of matchless charm and valour
Departed with eyes downcast, hearts desolate.
One who seemed a golden bud of the Gods
Came nigh to impaling himself on his own blade.
My marble princess, is not your triumph complete?
Has compassion no place in your beautiful hours?
Is human love then a thing so mean?
Among those suitors were many
Whose shimmering bodies and glowing visages
Declared them such as have in the heavens their home.
O sweetness adamantine, they too were refused.
Was it wise to scorn crown after crown eager
To adorn the golden tangle of your curls?
O proud beauty, sovereign of my days,
Why do you sigh?
Sorrow unexpressed may break a delicate heart,
But anguish shared loses its poison-dart.
So reveal the name your lips silently chant,
Upon whom muses your mind, of whom are empty your arms?”

Thus urged, she opened her lips,
Under a pensive load laboured her words.
A moment she paused. Like a breeze
Amongst two tender rose-petals,
Gentle, almost inaudible was her voice—
A soft murmur of drowsy spring-leaves
Or the fading sound of far-off seas.

"Chide me not thus, O Priya, friend of childhood's innocence,
 Joyous playmate of youth's awakening's echoes,
 My long day's sweet support, chide me not thus.
 Not wayward is thy princess, thy Usha.
 But what to me are these emeralds and diamonds.
 What to me the nobility of tiara'd heads?
 The Gods may put their very sun-seal on a man
 Or themselves, immortals, may covet my hand,
 But a fierce passion-blast of magnificent summer noon
 Will sear a half-opened bud,
 The violent coming of a wind-god on wings of tempest,
 The homage of lightening by a king-cloud
 May deprive an unsure leaf of its tender grip,
 Setting it adrift in Time's void away from its stem.
 Speak not to me of man's beauty or riches.
 My soul has offered itself to a nobler dream."

Her face took on wonder's hues as she paused.
 The dyke had cracked and the first rill of hesitating words
 Was overtaken by the passionate stream of pent-up emotion
 As her inmost secret impregnated her speech.
 Lashes wet with pearls of a sublime anguish,
 She who had suffered in silence revealed her longing.

"Some sound enchants me in the fields and flowers,
 A name whose echo I vainly try to catch,
 A whisper that comes to me again and again:
 'Bride, O my bride, I have waited for you through ages!
 In rare calm detached moments I glimpse a Face,
 Fount of the splendour of suns and moons,
 Sum-total of all power, essence of all bliss,
 An edge of sunrise, core of the unknown.
 My heart has been given to him who is all life.
 Howsoever great—god or man—I cannot spouse.
 I have to travel to immortality, I can only be the Lord's bride."

Slowly with folded hands sank Priya,
 Wondering at such greatness, at the feet of Princess Usha.
 Dawn was radiant on her face,
 And her eyes were lit with an unearthly fire.

SHYAM KUMARI

THE SONG OF THE LORD

THE GITA WITHOUT COMMENT

(Continued from the issue of 24 April 1987)

Chapter XVIII

1. Arjuna said:
“O Mighty-armed, I wish to know the essential difference between renunciation and surrender¹, O Hrisheeksha, O Slayer of Keshi.”
2. The Lord said:
“The laying aside of desired action is understood by the sages as renunciation. The giving up of the result of all action is called surrender by those who see.
3. Some thinkers say that action is a flaw and should be given up, while others say that acts of sacrifice, offering and askesis should not be abandoned.
4. Hear My opinion on surrender, O Best of the Bharatas. Surrender has been said to be threefold, O Tiger of Men.
5. Acts of sacrifice, giving and askesis should not be abandoned, but done. Indeed, sacrifice, giving and austerity purify the wise.
6. These acts are indeed to be done, but while abandoning attachment to their results, O Partha. This is My most certain and ultimate thought.
- 7 The renunciation of controlled action is not correct. The abandonment of that through delusion is called Tamasic.
8. One who abandons action for fear of bodily pain or fatigue makes a Rajasic surrender and obtains no result therefrom.
9. What must be done is done as a controlled action while abandoning the attachment to results. Indeed, that is thought to be a Sattvic surrender.
10. One who surrenders rejects neither disagreeable action nor clings to agreeable action. He is imbued with Sattva, clear-minded, with doubts excised.
11. Indeed, for a being with a body it is impossible to give up actions entirely. But one who gives up the results of action, he is called ‘a man of surrender’.
12. Wanted, unwanted and mixed: these are the triple fruits of action after death for those who do not surrender, but never for those who renounce.
13. Learn from Me, O Mighty-armed, the five factors in the perfection of action—the purpose of doing all things—as declared in the Sankhya.
14. The location, the doer, the different instruments, the varied functions and Fate, the fifth.
15. Whatever action a man performs—through body, speech or mind, right or wrong—these are its five factors.

¹ ‘Tyaga’ is translated here as ‘surrender’ to clarify the distinction made in the Gita between it and ‘sannyasa’ or renunciation.

16. This being so, one who, with an unformed mind, sees himself alone as the doer, sees through a twisted thought.
17. One whose nature is not egoistic, whose understanding is not stained, who, having slain these people, slays not, he is not bound.
18. Knowledge, the known and the knower: this is the triple impulse to action. The instrument, the act, the doer: this is the triple basis of action.
19. Knowledge, action and the doer are each of three kinds by the division of the Gunas. Hear of them also as declared in the enumeration of the Gunas.
20. That by which in all existences we see the One Existence imperishable, the indivisible within the divided, know that Knowledge as Sattvic.
21. But the knowledge by which distinct existences in manifold existences are viewed as different from one another, know as Rajasic.
22. And that knowledge which is attached to a single effect as if it were the whole, without logic, without basis in truth and small, that is said to be Tamasic.
23. That action done without attachment, without longing or repulsion, which is controlled by those who desire no result is said to be Sattvic.
24. But that which is done with a yearning for a desire, with ego or again with much effort, that is said to be Rajasic.
25. That action begun without regard for consequence, loss, harm, ability, from foolishness, is said to be Tamasic.
26. A doer who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, full of persistence and enthusiasm, unaffected in success or failure, is called Sattvic.
27. The doer who is passionate, who wants results, who is greedy, harmful, impure, moved by grief and joy, is called Rajasic.
28. Uncentred, common, deceitful, malicious, lazy, depressed, procrastinating, this is said to be the Tamasic worker.
29. Hear of the triple division by the Gunas of intelligence and persistence which I fully and distinctly describe.
30. One who knows action and withdrawal, what should be done and not done, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation, that intelligence, O Partha, is Sattvic.
31. The intelligence by which dharma and non-dharma, what should and should not be done, is wrongly understood, that is Rajasic, O Partha.
32. The one which thinks non-dharma to be dharma, which twists and in darkness envelops everything, that intelligence is Tamasic, O Partha.
33. The resolve through which by Yoga the mind, the energy and the senses are unswervingly regulated, that firmness, O Partha, is Sattvic.
34. But the resolve which firmly holds to dharma, to desire, to things, from attachment, O Partha, yearning for results, that is Rajasic.
35. The resolve by which a foolish man will not give up sleep, fear, grief, despair, drunkenness, that, O Partha, is Tamasic.
36. Hear now from Me of the triple happiness, O Best of the Bharatas, obtaining which one rejoices and comes to the end of pain.

37. That which at first is like poison, but in the end like immortal nectar, born of the clarity of the soul and mind, is called Sattvic.
38. What is at first like nectar and in the end like poison, that happiness, from the contact of sense and object, is regarded as Rajasic.
39. The happiness which at first and in result confuses, arising from sleep, laziness, negligence, that is called Tamasic.
40. There is no being on Earth or among the Gods in Heaven who is free of the three Gunas born of Prakriti.
41. The actions of the Brahmanas, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Sudras, O Parantapa, are distributed according to their nature by the three Gunas.
42. Calm, control, askesis, purity, forgiveness, straightforwardness, knowledge and realisation, belief in Truth: these are the acts of a Brahman, born of his nature.
43. Strength, splendour, resolution, ability, not withdrawing in battle, leadership: this is the action of a Kshatriya born of his nature.
44. Agriculture, cattle and trade are the works of a Vaishya born of his nature, work of service in the Sudra, also born of his nature.
45. Devoted only to his own work a man obtains fulfillment. Engaged in his work, hear how he obtains perfection.
46. From whom all existence evolves, by whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him through his work, Man reaches perfection.
47. Better one's own way without value than another's way well-accomplished. Doing work directed by his nature, he incurs no evil.
48. One should not give up the work for which one is born, though flawed. For all efforts are flawed as fires are enveloped by smoke.
49. One whose intelligence is nowhere attached, who has conquered himself, whose desires are gone, by renunciation he knows the supreme fulfilment of the freedom from action.
50. Learn from Me briefly, O Kaunteya, how, when perfection is reached, he attains the Brahman, the highest state of Knowledge.
51. With a pure intelligence, one in resolve, controlling himself, abandoning sound and other sense objects and giving up longing and repulsion,
52. dwelling in solitude, eating moderately, controlled in mind, speech and body, always absorbed in the Yoga of concentration, being free from longing,
53. becoming free of ego, power, arrogance, desire, anger, possessiveness, without 'mine-ness', peaceful, he is fit to become the Brahman.
54. Becoming Brahman, serene in the Self, he does not grieve, nor does he desire. He is the same to all beings. He reaches the Supreme Devotion, to Me.
55. Through devotion to Me he understands what and who in Truth I am. Knowing Me in Truth, he comes to Me forthwith.
56. Always doing all actions while living in Me, he reaches through My Love the eternal and Imperishable home.
57. In consciousness give up all actions to Me. With Me as Supreme, resorting to

the Yoga of the Buddhi, always keep your mind on Me.

58. Conscious of Me, you shall overcome by My Love all obstacles. But if from ego you will not hear Me, you will be destroyed.
59. What, bound in ego, you are thinking, 'I will not fight', is false. Your nature will compel you to this effort.
60. Bound by the Karma born of your nature, you will helplessly do even that which you do not want, O Kaunteya.
61. The Lord of All Existence is placed in the hearts of all, O Arjuna, causing all existence to turn by his magic as if mounted on a machine.
62. Go to Him for refuge, O Bharata, with all your being. By the Grace you shall obtain the Supreme Peace and the Eternal Home.
63. A Knowledge more mysterious than mystery has been given to you by Me. Reflect upon it fully, then do as you please.
64. Hear again My Supreme Word, most mysterious of all. I love you deeply, so I will speak for your good.
65. With your mind on Me become devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, praise Me. Truly, you shall come to Me. I promise this, for you are dear to Me.
66. Fully renouncing all dharmas, take refuge in Me alone. I will free you from all evil. Do not grieve.
67. This is not to be spoken to people without discipline, to those without devotion, who neither serve nor listen, nor to those who denounce Me.
68. One who speaks of this Supreme Mystery with established devotion among My devotees shall surely come to Me.
69. There are none among men on earth who will be dearer to Me than those who do what pleases Me.
70. And one who shall study this sacred dialogue of ours, by him I am desired, such is My view.
71. The man who is full of faith and free of malice may also hear. And free, he will also reach the radiant worlds of the righteous.
72. Have you heard this with a concentrated consciousness, O Partha? Has the delusion of your ignorance been destroyed, O Dhananjaya?"
73. Arjuna said:
"Delusion is destroyed and memory regained by me through Your Love, O Achyuta. I am firm. Doubts are gone. I will act by Your Word."
74. Sanjaya said:
"Thus I heard this wonderful conversation between Vasudeva and great-souled Partha, my hair standing on end.
75. Through the grace of Vyasa I have heard the Supreme Mystery, the Supreme Yoga, from the Master of Yoga, from Krishna expressing Himself directly.
76. O King, recalling this wonderful dialogue between Keshava and pure Arjuna—I rejoice again and again.
77. Remembering and remembering that most wonderful form of Hari, great is my

awe, O King , and I rejoice again and again.

78. Where there is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, where there is Partha, the Archer, there is glory, victory, happiness and resolve, such is my belief.

OM TAT SAT

In the Sri Mahabharata which consists of a hundred thousand verses composed by Vyasa, in the section called Bheeshma Parva, in the Upanishad of the Bhagavadgita, in the Brahman-Knowledge, in the Yoga-shastra, in the dialogue of Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eighteenth chapter called 'The Yoga of Liberation Through Renunciation'.

(Concluded)

Translated by DHRUVA

PRE-VIEW

A FEW EXTRACTS FROM THE FORTHCOMING THIRD PART OF NAGIN DOSHI'S GUIDANCE FROM SRI AUROBINDO: *LETTERS TO A YOUNG DISCIPLE*

The Higher Consciousness and Force

Self: *It is said that in the beginning whatever comes down or develops is confined to the inner being. The outer is dealt with only after a long time.*

SRI AUROBINDO: This does not mean that there should be no progress at all in the outer. One may not get the higher consciousness into the outer as yet, but that is no reason why one should not expunge from it whatever is of the nature of a wrong attitude.

Self: *Can one understand the Force before it descends?*

SRI AUROBINDO: One may feel the Force above, for instance, and know what it is and even be governed by it before it has descended into the mind, heart, vital or body.

Self: *Above the head I see a plane of infinite and eternal Peace. The Mother is the Queen of this world. From there I feel an unceasing flow coming down towards me. It first touches my higher being and passes through it without any resistance. But on its way downwards the flow narrows to a small current which passes through the Brahmic hole. How do you find this description?*

SRI AUROBINDO: This is quite correct. In many however it descends in a mass through the whole head and not in a current through the Brahmic hole.

Self: *What is the Brahman Consciousness and where is it spread out?*

SRI AUROBINDO: In the wideness of the self and of the universal divine Consciousness—these two together are the Brahman Consciousness.

Self: *If there are no descents from the higher planes, how are these difficulties to go? I thought it was the descents that would work on them and bring about the necessary change?*

SRI AUROBINDO: Descents there can be, but not the permanent descent.

I suppose it [the dynamic descent] is waiting for you to bring it down.

Self: *Are not the dynamic means necessary for turning *tamas* into *shama* (repose, peace)?*

SRI AUROBINDO: The dynamic means are not necessary for that—they are needed for bringing *tapas* into *shama* and they are useful for repelling the obstruction of inertia to other lines of progress.

Self: *Can all the parts of the outer being accept a complete peace without any helping action of the higher Force?*

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, if you mean without any *descent* of the dynamic force. Action of the higher Force is implied in all spiritual change, but it may be an action without dynamic descent.

Self: *Often a new thing descends from above, increases in power for a time, then begins to disperse and finally fades away completely.*

SRI AUROBINDO: It is because only a part of the being receives it and only as an experience, not as a settled or a dynamic realisation in the nature—even in that part of the nature.

Selected by NILIMA

FOR YOUR EARS ONLY

(Continued from the issue of May 1987)

5. ALL FOR MY SAKE

I HAIL from a lower middle class family. But my father was the son of a landlord. To the envy of everyone in the village, my grandfather had a coach pulled by two horses of a high breed. He was nicknamed *bangalakaran* (Bungalow-dweller) for the house he built (in which I now live) was a palatial one, the only one of its kind in the village.

Poor old man! He dissipated his energy and wealth. When he died he had a harem of wives to weep over their loss.

In spite of the repeated appeals made by my father to my grandfather's rich friends and well-to-do relatives, my father had to stop taking his school-final examinations. "There was no one to pay the examination fees," my father once reminisced. "No one gave me six rupees and four annas."

"Six rupees and four annas!" I exclaimed with surprise.

My father replied with a bang: "Yes! But in those days a bag of fine quality rice cost only a rupee and two annas."

"What? Was education so costly in those days?"

"Of course! That was because only a few were sent to school. Others went to the ricefields to work. Every fellow had a piece of land and cattle to look after."

The responsibility of clearing the debts incurred by my grandfather and the duty of looking after a large family consisting of a widowed mother, his three unmarried sisters and a quarrelsome brother were dumped upon him.

Luckily the English education my father had received in a missionary school came to his help. He applied for a job in the nearby cotton mill, whose products are even today exported to England and other foreign countries. He was appointed clerk-cum-*dubash* to the *doraigal* (Englishmen) who managed the mill. His starting salary was Rs. 7 per month.

"Those were not hard times. I had a post-office savings account. I was able to save slightly more than a rupee every month," my father said to me.

When I was a year-old babe, mewling and puking in my mother's arms, my father received a letter from England. It was from his boss who had reluctantly left India. The letter offered him a job in one of England's cotton mills with a very high salary.

My mother rehearsed to me what happened when my father received the air-mail: "He took you in his arms and said, 'Why should I go abroad leaving my little darling here? He is born after ten years of tapasya. I must be by his side to make him a man of rank. By taking a job in England I may grow rich. But my son will not know what fatherly love is.' "

That was and is my father. Even today I find no change in his affection for

me. He made me understand that a father is a father is a father.

A friend of my father once caught me when I slipped my hand into a crab's hole. "Hei! What are you doing there? Trying to catch a crab, eh?" He asked gnashing his teeth.

I nodded my head with a plain yes, showing all my teeth and still fishing for the crab in the hole.

"What will happen to you if you catch a cobra instead of a crab?"

"Cobra! It doesn't live here. I have seen it crawling there," I said pointing to a distant place full of ant-hills.

The matter was reported to my father. He slapped my cheek with one hand and with the other wiped off my tears. The next day I found myself in a *pial* school in the village. A few months later he sent me to the best school knowing fully well that he had to pay through his nose.

During his spare hours he taught me English and mathematics. I loved the former and was allergic to the latter. He rapped me on my head whenever I went wrong. Once he spanked me and that night I had high temperature. I saw him sitting by my side and weeping like a child when my mother looking daggers at him administered medicine.

I was a mediocre student. But I always stood first in English language tests and examinations. That was because of my father. He had the privilege of getting exposed to the English language during many hours of the day. At school my English teacher, an Anglo-Indian, found nothing to correct in my English notebook, while he had to rewrite the whole thing in every other fellow's notebook. At home my father corrected every wrong syllable I wrote in my notebook. He furnished reasons for my questions like: why does the word 'umbrella' take the article 'an' while 'useless' takes 'a' when both the words begin with the same vowel,—why in certain instances does a singular noun take a plural verb and *vice versa*? He dissected every word into syllables and made it easier for me to remember the spellings of long and difficult words. Every day he wrote five words on a piece of paper and gave me his *Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary*. All that I had to do was to find the different meanings of those words and use them in sentences of my own. He spent most of his evenings with me.

I was always the first to knock at the gates of the Town Missionary School. And it was usually before 6.30 a.m. I went so early not out of love for learning but out of necessity and compulsion. My father had to be in his office before the 7.00 a.m. siren of the cotton mill was heard. In those days when there were no town-buses, when autos and tempos were never even heard of and even cycle rickshaws were not yet introduced, my father found no means of conveying me to school except on his "England Raleigh" bicycle. Hence I was always two hours earlier to school, six kilometres away from my village. In the evenings too I spent two more hours at school awaiting the arrival of my father. He came by six o'clock or so to pick me up.

I can boast that I was the only one to spend a solid 12 hours at school. I can also

boast that the watchman of the school opened and closed its gates for me.

At times when my father was away on a business errand, I walked the distance escorted by my grandmother (father's side) who in the evening poured lukewarm water on my knees to quell the pain caused by walking.

One day we moved to the town to occupy a rented house which was within a stone's throw of my school. Our expenses soared high and in order to make both ends meet my father took up the job of a part-time clerk with a waste-cotton merchant. He couldn't afford to spend his evenings with me. But he spared an hour or so at night.

Sundays were devoted to sight-seeing. He took me on his bicycle to various suburbs of interest and inculcated in me a love for nature. Quite often he took me to the various slums just to show me the 'real India'. During such excursions or picnics, he advised me: "My son! You should come up in life. That's my only ambition. I will be the happiest man when you get a decent government job."

After the completion of my undergraduate course, I had to move to Annamalai University for post-graduate studies. For the first time in my life I was separated from my loving and affectionate parents. On the day of admission I saw tears trickling down the brown cheeks of my father. I knew for certain that they were not tears of joy.

Almost once in a week he came to the university hostel with snacks and non-vegetarian dishes of my choice. Every letter from me requesting money brought in a money-order. And I spent lavishly on books. My room-mates always envied me. The major portion of my father's salary went to pay the college fees and the food-bill.

A few months after post-graduation, I had to be away from my parents once again. I got a government job in Karaikal. My father escorted me, fixed up a room, found a tolerably good place for food (I am a full non-vegetarian) and left me there at the mercy of my own self.

At the bus-stand when I saw him off, he beamed with a smile and proudly puffed out his chest. But my eyes were brimming with tears. Those were the tears of gratitude.

(To be continued)

P. RAJA

STORIES FROM TAMIL LITERATURE

(Continued from the issue of 24 April 1987)

37. THE ACID TEST

ONCE there lived a rich man named Sarkarai Manradiar in the Kongu country. He was a scholar and a large-hearted man. One day the poet Veerapathiran from the town of Tiruchenkodu came to see him. The poet belonged to a community which was considered lower in social position, but Manradiar was not given to any kind of snobbery. He welcomed the poet with great warmth and affection. They delighted in each other's company and had a long conversation.

When the time for lunch neared, Manradiar excused himself and went into the inner apartments. His intention was to help his wife in preparing a sumptuous meal for the guest. While he was there giving directions a servant who went out of the kitchen told the poet nonchalantly that he would have to wait for some time before getting his lunch.

Poet Veerapathiran was a very sensitive person and these words of the servant cut him to the quick. He was not waiting there for lunch. Moreover, he supposed that because he belonged to a lower community, Manradiar did not like to sit with him to lunch and had gone inside to take his meal with his family. He felt humiliated and did not want to wait there any longer. He walked quickly out of the house and was on his way.

Meanwhile Manradiar got a rich lunch ready and came back to invite the poet. Not seeing the poet he was puzzled and hurried out of the house in search of him. He saw the poet walking fast at a distance, ran and caught up with him. He asked the poet why he had left so abruptly without taking leave while lunch was being prepared for him. Veerapathiran said that what he had understood from the words of the servant had made him suspect that discrimination was practised against him in the matter of serving meals. Manradiar was very sad at this misconstruction by the poet and came out with a full explanation.

He assured the poet that there was not a thought of discrimination in his mind. However, the poet was not to be easily convinced. So Manradiar took the poet home with him and to prove his purity of heart mortified himself by putting his finger in boiling oil. Veerapathiran was convinced and they both sat down to lunch. And again, in order to prove his humility, Manradiar did another thing which no man of a high social position would do. When the poet finished his lunch and rose, Manradiar took water in his own hand and washed the hand and mouth of the poet.

38. HOW KAMBAN WAS TRICKED

Many legends are told about Kamban in the later-day Tamil poems and this is one of them.

There was a poor wood-cutter in the city who greatly admired Kamban. He

very much desired his name to be mentioned by Kamban in a poem. In those days ordinary people believed that the poets had mystic powers and that if they were sung of by the poets it would bring them good fortune. Kamban being a famous poet, many people came pestering him with requests to sing of them and made themselves a constant nuisance at his door. So to avoid them he fixed a forbidding price on his poem, which was a thousand gold pieces. However, this high price did not seem to deter the wood-cutter and he was determined to get mentioned in one of Kamban's poems.

So he began to work extra hard so that he could earn the thousand gold pieces little by little. Every evening he brought an extra head-load of firewood and piled it in his backyard. His wife noticed the pile and asked him what he was doing that for. The wood-cutter told her of his intention. She felt sorry for him and said that he would never get his thousand gold pieces that way, for the fire-wood fetched a meagre price and it would take him his whole lifetime to amass the gold required. Instead, she suggested another way to get mentioned by Kamban easily. He eagerly asked her what it was and she whispered her plan to him. The wood-cutter was amused and then afraid, but at last agreed to the plan. According to her suggestion he got her a couple of beautiful sarees. His wife was young and beautiful and in the new sarees she looked bewitching.

Kamban's path to the King's court lay by their house and the very next day the wood-cutter's wife stood in front of her house and made herself very attractive to the poet. Kamban noticed her and she smiled at him ravishingly. In a few days Kamban became enthralled by the charms of the woman and made bold to make advances to her. One evening she beckoned to Kamban to stop and told him that her husband was away from home that day and that Kamban would be welcome at her home after dark. Kamban was overjoyed at this invitation and accordingly came back and knocked at her door after the whole town was hushed in sleep.

The wood-cutter's wife opened the door and took him inside. She led him to her bedroom and adopting voluptuous manners kept kindling his passion without allowing him to touch her. Suddenly there was a loud knock at the door and the next moment the wood-cutter came breaking in. With a great show of anger he picked up a club and sprang at Kamban.

The poet was completely unnerved and fell at the feet of the wood-cutter asking him to forgive him. The wood-cutter refused to be pacified but after much pleading he at last agreed to leave Kamban free if he could sing of him in a poem. Kamban readily obliged and composed a poem then and there, mentioning in it the wood-cutter's name.

When the poem was finished, the wood-cutter and his wife knelt at the feet of Kamban and confessed everything. Kamban was greatly relieved and went away blessing the couple. However, he never could free himself from the feeling of shame for having fallen a victim to the tricks of a beautiful woman.

M. L. THANGAPPA

Students' Section

THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

SIXTY-FIRST SEMINAR:

22 February 1987

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "THE HOUR OF GOD" AND HOW TO PREPARE FOR IT?

Speech by Dhir Sarangi

THERE are two kinds of hours, the hours of God and the hours of man. The first are those periods when the Divine Presence is intensely active in our midst, and the second are those when the Presence retires from us. In the first, as Sri Aurobindo says, even a little effort yields great results and changes destiny; in the second, on the contrary, a lot of labour is needed to procure a little fruit. This is so because in the latter period men live and act in their ego. And when the strong sense of 'I' is there, how can God overtly act in us?

In the history of human development we find periods when an old order of thought, living and action is broken down so that a new pattern could take its place. This breaking and building of forms of human life is essential to the progressive evolution of man because the new forces that begin to act in the new period of history find a strong resistance to their work from the old forms.

But then we might ask: Why are these new forces that shape new forms of human life released? It is because, in the process of evolution, the spirit wants to express itself through forms with an increasing freedom and fullness. So when old forms become too rigid to satisfy the progressive demands of the spirit, they have to be broken down. In their place new forms have to be shaped which express more fully the spirit than the old ones. These new forms in their turn have again to be broken down because of their incapacity to meet the ever-growing demand of the inner spirit. This process must go on till the spirit finds a form perfectly flexible to meet its infinite demands. In that case the form becomes immortal, for it does not need to undergo destruction or death.

Now these periods of change or critical periods are what Sri Aurobindo calls "the hours of God". They are critical because they are periods when humanity takes a decisive step forward in the ladder of evolution. The others are periods of assimilation and preparation or, as we may call them, "the hours of man". When man becomes very much self-centred and forgets the presence of God within him, it is not that the Divine withdraws from him completely. The Divine does his work in him

but secretly, not overtly as in the hours of God. This is not seen on the surface for it is covered by the sense of egoism. The work of preparation and assimilation of all that was realised in the previous hour of God goes on subconsciously. From this we can also deduce that the hours of God are shorter than the hours of man. This is evident because humanity is too brittle to bear the concentrated action of the Divine for a long time. This is what the Mother says about the hours of God:

“There are, in the history of the earth, moments of transition when things that have been for thousands of years must give place to those that are about to manifest. A special concentration of the world consciousness, one might almost say, an intensification of its effort, occurs at such times, varying according to the kind of progress to be made, the quality of the transformation to be realised. We are precisely at such a turning-point in the world’s history. Just as Nature has already created upon earth a mental being, man, so too there is now a concentrated activity in this mentality to bring forth a supramental consciousness and individuality.”¹

But do we realise that we are now at such a turning-point as the Mother says? What are the signs that tell us that we are at such a critical period? It is universally admitted that the life of humanity in recent times is suffering from a grave malady of mounting tensions in almost all the fields of its activity. Those who feel concerned about humanity as a whole and not merely about their personal selves realise acutely that there is at present an imminent danger of nuclear war which may annihilate the whole human race from the face of the earth. And yet we go on stocking more and more nuclear armaments! Isn’t this the extreme height of the mounting tensions?

Similarly, the problem of pollution has reached a peak. Scientists speak of the climatic changes in the earth’s atmosphere due to pollution that will effect the heating up of this planet. The consumption of fuel in transport, the building of more and more industries, the denuding of forests increase the percentage of carbon dioxide in the earth’s atmosphere. Carbon dioxide, we know, acts as a cover for trapping the heat that comes from the sun. A certain amount of carbon dioxide traps just the necessary quantity of heat that is responsible for the maintenance of life here. Now, if the content of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere exceeds that certain amount, more heat will be captured—more than required—and as a result the temperature of the earth will rise. If it rose by 3 degrees C, it would be sufficient to melt a large amount of ice on the Poles and this will lead to a tremendous inundation. Still further heating will wipe out life from the earth completely. We could cite other instances also from the field of science to show that the tension due to the circumstances which might lead to the destruction of all living creatures is continually mounting. The fate of man seems to hang by a thin thread like the sword of Democles, and at any moment the thread might snap.

“One thing seems obvious,” says the Mother, “humanity has reached a certain state of general tension—tension in effort, in action, even in daily life—with an

¹ “To the Students, Young and Old”, *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed.), Vol. 12. p. 72.

excessive hyperactivity, so widespread a trepidation that mankind as a whole seems to have come to a point where it must break through the resistance and emerge into a new consciousness or else fall back into an abyss of darkness and inertia.

“This tension is so complete and so widespread that something obviously has to break. It cannot continue this way.”¹

There is thus clear evidence that we are now at an “hour of God”. But it is important to note that this particular hour is unique among all the others that have come in the past because at the present moment the new order of things that is going to come will be shaped by a consciousness radically different from the human, mental consciousness. None of the previous hours of God have attempted such a radical change as to lift humanity beyond its human nature, in other words, to lift man to supermanhood.

And for this the manifestation of the supramental Force was necessary, and it took place in Feb. 1956. But it is still not overtly manifested in the physical atmosphere of the earth. It is there in the subtle physical layer waiting and knocking at our gates, to shake off from us our old-world torpor.

As the Mother says in a mantric expression:

“This wonderful world of delight
waiting at our gates for our call,
To come down upon earth....”²

Such then is the supreme significance of this hour in which we are now living. Do we realise it? Are we aware of it? At least, do we think of it sometimes?

If we do, then we should have asked ourselves: How to prepare ourselves in the right way to receive the New Force? How to collaborate in this tremendous divine task?

I will answer that question in the Mother’s own words, for that seems to me the most direct way to convey what I too feel. She says:

“At the basis of this collaboration there is necessarily the will to change, no longer to be what one is, for things to be no longer what they are...

“What is indispensable in every case is the *ardent* will for progress, the willing and joyful renunciation of all that hampers the advance, to throw far away from oneself all that prevents you from going forward, and to set out into the unknown with the ardent faith that that is the truth of tomorrow, *inevitable*, which must necessarily come, which nothing, nobody, no bad will, even that of Nature can prevent from becoming a reality—perhaps of a not too distant future—a reality which is being worked out now and which those who know how to change, how not to be weighed down by old habits, will *surely* have the good fortune not only to see but to realise.

“People sleep, they forget, they take life easy—they forget, forget all the time... But if we could remember... that we are at an exceptional hour, a *unique* time, that we have this immense good fortune, this invaluable privilege of being present at the

¹ *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed.), Vol. 9, pp. 296-97.

² The New Year Message for 1961, *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed.), Vol. 15, p. 96.

birth of a new world, we could easily get rid of everything that impedes and hinders our progress.

“So the most important thing, it seems, is to remember this fact; even when one doesn’t have the tangible experience, to have the certainty of it and have the faith in it; to remember always, to recall it constantly, to go to sleep with this idea, to wake up with this perception; to do all that one does with this great truth as the background, as a constant support, this great truth that we are witnessing the birth of a new world.

“We can participate in it, we can become this new world. And truly, when one has such a marvellous opportunity, one should be ready to give up everything for its sake.”¹

¹ *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed.), Vol. 9, pp. 158-59.