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NOTE

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NEW RATES

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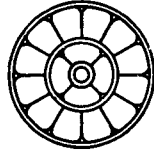
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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute,

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled



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No. 9

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

CONTENTS

<i>The Mother</i>	
SOME WORDS	563
<i>Sri Aurobindo</i>	
SOME WORDS	563
<i>The Mother and Sri Aurobindo</i>	
ON FREEWILL	563
<i>The Mother</i>	
TRUE COURAGE: A DEFINITION	.. 564
<i>Amal Kiran (K. D. Sethna)</i>	
LIFE—POETRY—YOGA	
SOME PERSONAL LETTERS	... 565
<i>Shraddhavan</i>	
RAINMAKING (Poem)	.. 573
<i>Nirodbaran</i>	
THE ASHRAM CHILDREN AND SRI AUROBINDO'S LIFE	
A DREAM-DIALOGUE	
(Translated by Jhumur from the Bengali)	... 574
<i>John Gillespie Magee</i>	
AN AIRMAN'S ECSTASY (Poem)	580
<i>Nirodbaran</i>	
SOME EPISODES FROM THE LIFE OF "AN EXTRAORDINARY GIRL"	
A REPORT BASED ON ORAL COMMUNICATION	... 581
<i>Dinkar Palande</i>	
NOT YET (Poem)	. 584
<i>Huta</i>	
LABOUR OF LOVE	.. 585

CONTENTS

<i>Akash Deshpande</i>	
FLAME-KINDLED (Poem)	589
<i>K Subramanian</i>	
AN UP-TO-DATE BIOGRAPHY OF ENGLISH WORDS	590
<i>N Jayashanmukham</i>	
THE GITA AND THE TWO WAYS OF DOING THE APPOINTED WORK	593
<i>P Marudanayagam</i>	
COMPARATIVE INDIAN LITERATURE	598
<i>Nilima Das</i>	
SRI AUROBINDO—THE SOUL OF INDIA	603
<i>Ranajit Sarkar</i>	
MEGHADŪTA. A STUDY OF THE INTERPLAY OF “DARK” AND “BRIGHT” IMAGES	607
<i>Sunayana</i>	
THE STORY OF AN OLD HOUSE	614
<i>Wilfried</i>	
NEW AGE NEWS HOMOEOPATHY TODAY	617

STUDENTS' SECTION

<i>Speech Read by Desikan Narasimhan</i>	
THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION SEVENTIETH SEMINAR 21 APRIL 1991 “WHAT ARE THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SRI AUROBINDO'S YOGA AND OTHER SPIRITUAL PATHS?”	620

SOME WORDS OF THE MOTHER

In what sense is our Yoga an adventure?

It can be called an adventure because it is the first time that a Yoga aims at transformation of physical life instead of escape from it.

Why is faith so supremely important in Yoga?

Because we are aiming at something quite new that has never been done before

What is its determining power due to?

Your faith puts you under the protection of the Supreme who is all-power.

26 April 1969

SOME WORDS OF SRI AUROBINDO

YOGA through work is the easiest and most effective way to enter into the stream of the sadhana.

8 3 1930

As for the work one does, there is no higher or lower work, all work is the same provided it is offered to the Mother and done for her and in her power

6 10 1934

THE MOTHER AND SRI AUROBINDO ON FREEWILL

You must choose, there is no force like that which chooses for you, or chance or luck or fate—this is not true. Your will is free, it is deliberately left free and you have to choose. It is you who decide whether to seek the Light or not, whether to be the servitor of the Truth or not—it is you.

21 April 1951

The Supreme demands your surrender to her, but does not impose it. you are free at every moment, till the irrevocable transformation comes, to deny and to refuse the Divine or to recall your self-giving if you are willing to face the spiritual consequences.

TRUE COURAGE

A DEFINITION BY THE MOTHER

TRUE courage, in its deepest sense, is to be able to face everything, everything in life, from the smallest to the greatest things, from material things to those of the spirit, without a shudder, without the heart beginning to beat faster, without the nerves trembling or the slightest emotion in any part of the being. Face everything with a constant consciousness of the divine Presence, with a total self-giving to the Divine, and the whole being unified in this will; then one can go forward in life, can face anything whatever. I say, without a shudder, without a vibration, this, you know, is the result of a long effort, unless one is born like that. But this indeed is still more rare.

To overcome one's fear means that there is one part of the being which is stronger than the other, and which has no fear and imposes its own intrepidity on the part which is afraid. But this doesn't necessarily imply that one is more courageous than the one who has no fear to master. Because the one who doesn't have any fear to master...this means that he is courageous everywhere, in all the parts of his being. Now, there is an intrepidity which comes from unconsciousness and ignorance. Children, for example, who do not know about dangers, you see, do things they would not do, if they had the knowledge of this danger. This means that their intrepidity is an ignorant one. But true courage is courage with the full knowledge of the thing, that is, it knows all the possibilities and is ready to face everything without exception.

LIFE—POETRY—YOGA

SOME PERSONAL LETTERS

Dearest Josef,

Minna and I are delighted to get your letter and are truly relieved to learn that your blood-trouble was such as to let you go home for the week-end. We pray to the Divine Mother to make you normal soon. I thank you for your renewal of subscription to *Mother India* plus your donation. It is indeed a generous gesture

It must have been a big surprise to you that when everything was ready for the yearly flight to our Pondicherry Ashram you had to be whisked off to a Vienna hospital. But for those whose heartbeats are a *japa* of the names of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother all happenings turn into gifts from God bringing the devotee closer to the eternal Light and Love in various ways.

Those words of mine on the phone—"Our love is with you"—sprang without a deliberate thought. They were a proof that there's always a deep warmth within us enfolding our far-away friend and as a fellow-follower of our Divine Guides he is a part of their own golden presence in our lives—a presence which is well described in the words of a poet as "closer to us than breathing and nearer than hands and feet".

I am so pleased that the June *Mother India* was brought to you by your wife to be your companion in the hospital and that it happened to carry my letter to you of November 1990 as the very first item in "Life—Poetry—Yoga". It must have reassured you that no matter what happens, the grace of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother is always with everyone of us and is invariably carrying us onward and inward and upward to their own Perfection which for all its ever-full sublimity and felicity never fails to brim over with sweetness and solicitude for us earthlings.

Most appropriately too this issue of *Mother India* brought back to your mind that Master Mantra from the Mother when you keenly needed to be told that Sri Aurobindo always stood as your "refuge", welcoming you to those Guru-feet of his that have touched the dust of our earth. They have blessed this dust and made themselves at the same time our guardians and the bearers of all those who cling to them towards the goal of the world's evolutionary pilgrimage. (19.6.1991)

NOTE ON JUNE 27

I learned by a phone-call from Austria that our cherished friend—a lovely man all round—had passed away soon after receiving my letter as well as a letter from another of his intimate friends in the Ashram: Dimitri. He was only 56 years old.

I may note that the mantra *Sri Aurobindo sharanam mama*—"Sri Aurobindo is

my refuge”—was given by the Mother to be repeated a hundred times as the sole last rite at the cremation or burial of Sri Aurobindo’s disciples. It is significant that Josef should have picked it out for himself in his final days.

Josef was found suffering from uncheckable internal bleeding.

*

I am extremely sorry that you are not well. Fever, nervousness, weakness—all these troubles cut to my heart and make me wonder what I should do to help. As soon as I read of them I concentrated on our Divine Mother and put them into her hands—those ready recipients, both graceful and gracious, of all our troubles. I am glad that you are not such a defeatist as to run to your bed each time there is an indisposition but are sitting in your chair and even moving about. When you tell me that you value my letter so much as to put it on your chest I feel deeply touched. Of course the worth of my letter—if any—is not due to my own small self: the communication has worth only inasmuch as this small self can be a little opening through which my adoration of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother wafts towards you something of their sublimating, strengthening and soothing presence.

I am quite curious to know how my enlarged photo must be looking with all the loving tricks you play on it. If you hadn’t said that the photo is framed (and therefore has a glass over it), I would have been startled to read that you had put some *kumkum* on my forehead! I like the idea of your putting a small picture of Sri Aurobindo on my chest to show how the manifest Lord is held in my heart. Yes, he is always there, but, as I have said in some letter, my feeling whenever I have knelt at the Samadhi has been that rather than Sri Aurobindo being in my heart, tiny Amal is in the mighty heart of Sri Aurobindo. The Master is too big to be contained within his diminutive disciple. That is the ultimate reality, as the Mother hinted to me when I once told her of my feeling. But actually she was speaking in qualitative terms figured in terms of quantity. Quantitatively the Supreme is infinite not exclusively in extension: He is infinite in essence, as much a plenitude of presence in an atom as in a galaxy. Largeness or smallness of space is not a measure of his infinity, just as length or shortness of time cannot measure his eternity. That is why the Upanishad speaks of the Atman, the Self of selves, as bigger than bigness and smaller than smallness—a paradoxical way of putting its transcendence of all measurement. The same paradox is expressed more concretely in those four familiar lines of Blake:

To see a world in a grain of sand
 And a heaven in a wild flower,
 Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
 And Eternity in an hour.

Transposed to another universe of discourse, the fact of the essential Divinity being formulable anywhere is thrust home to us by Sri Aurobindo when he wants us to break through the illusion that the world of gross-seeming Matter on which all other-worldly philosophy has frowned is really incapable of manifesting perfection. According to Sri Aurobindo, the fulfilment of us earthlings is finally at the two ends of existence—the Supermind bearing in itself the truth of both eternity and time at one extreme and at the other the terrestrial scene where all truth appears to be lost so that Sri Krishna of the Gita could say to Arjuna: “Thou who hast come to this transient and unhappy world, turn thy love to Me” Sri Aurobindo, in his poem “The Life-Heavens” sees man’s consummation ultimately in a full embodiment of the Divine on the terrestrial scene. To one who has wandered into the alluring excitements of the “roseate cloud-fire” with their thrilling yet limited “sweetness of heaven-sense”, what in *Savitri* is called “the Paradise of the Life-Gods”, a sudden reminder rises from the earthly depths which he has abandoned. The reminder is at once of the Supramental Truth-Consciousness and of the seeming abyss in which man’s evolution has been set. It is “Earth’s outcry to the limitless Sublime” The last part of it runs:

“I, Earth, have a deeper power than Heaven;
 My lonely sorrow surpasses its rose-joys,
 A red and bitter seed of the raptures seven;—
 My dumbness fills with echoes of a far Voice.

“By me the last finite, yearning, strives
 To reach the last infinity’s unknown,
 The Eternal is broken into fleeting lives
 And Godhead pent in the mire and the stone.”

Plato long ago intuited that on a high plane beyond ours there subsisted ideal forms, which he called archimages, of all things that are part of the flux of time. These things can merely approximate, distantly reflect, those idealities. That is because Plato made a distinction between the real world and the shadow world. And this distinction has held for all dreamers and aspirants as well as for philosophers and moralists. The aim of life has been visioned as the contact between the real world and the shadowy through an “imprisoned splendour”, the “soul” which belongs to the former but has fallen into the latter and got trapped there. In Sri Aurobindo’s eyes, the soul has deliberately come below and to him what is dubbed the shadowy world is one where the soul has to work out a divine manifestation. Not just to reflect but to incarnate the idealities—not to run away to join them but to draw them down here is its job, its true mission. But the question confronts it. “How can a genuine incarnation of the idealities be

possible if life in matter is something different in its very stuff from them?" Unless the stuff is basically the same, the attempt will always fall short.

In however hidden a way, material life has to be divinity itself, for else the idealities will never be earth-existence altogether. As the lines I have quoted from "The Life-Heavens" show, Sri Aurobindo finds Godhead concealed in its entirety within the series of "fleeting lives" and within the very clay of which we are made. The idealities are all biding their hour in the obscurities of matter. We cannot at present reach them or open a clear pathway for them to emerge. But we can prepare for their emergence in some fabulous future. The means of this preparation is to hark to Sri Aurobindo's summons to change not only the inner being but also the outer. The day-to-day person in us has to live in the light of the soul. A consecrated consciousness should be ours with a sense of the Divine from within us coming forth, through all thinking and feeling and speaking and doing, to meet the Divine who is everywhere around and above and below—yes, even below, waiting to be recognised in dumb material things. Of course, this should not blur our perception of the diversity of instruments—we have to deal differently with persons and occasions with common sense and tact and specific understanding—but all through we must still have the awareness of a secret divinity and whatever instrument we face and whatever occasion we meet must appear to us a veil from behind which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are communicating with us. By keeping them always within subtle sight we shall turn everything into an opportunity of knowing their will in the world and of variously fulfilling it.

You are lucky to have "subtle sight" in a special mode. Not only do you have *darshan* of guiding powers in trance: you get visions of them also with open eyes. You say that from 1980 Sri Aurobindo and Mother Mira have deeply entered your life. Let your concentration on them keep increasing. Let them be the central presence. If the entry of a fellow-disciple like me in 1986 has helped to make them more and more close and vivid, I am indeed pleased and feel that my friendship has borne fruit. You have paid many compliments to me: they are most sincere and I truly appreciate them, especially your sense that I am a messenger of the Great Reality that my Gurus are. If you see any light in me, it is meant essentially to lead on to the Superb Source of it and be to your visionary eyes at best no more than

A golden temple-door to things beyond.

It should also serve to show by whatever genuineness there may be in it what the touch of my Gurus can do with even the most difficult stuff ever brought to their onward-leading feet and their upward-bearing hands. For I came to them with a very complicated and critical mind looking in various mutually conflicting directions and with a sensuous nature over-keenly responsive to a myriad lures

indicated by that old Christian formula: “the world, the flesh and the devil ” Through such a problematic *ensemble* a speck or spark of some strange dream sought to work its way into the outer life. It was encouraged to come forward by two calls. One was the diversely sensitive “poet’s eye” discerning a persistent beauty in earth’s transiencies, a beauty which drew near only to beckon me to some incomprehensible farness. The other call was a contact with a girl who was as simple as I was complex but had a beauty lit by an intimate touch on what had been to me an elusive distance.

When the wonder-struck poet kindled into a lover whose object of affection had already heard the flute of Krishna, something awoke in him relating itself not only to the human charm in front but also to a Beyond in that charm. Then the search for the Unknown linked the two beings as much as what their eyes delighted in. This search brought them together to the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo, and the Great Path they shared in common as companion-pilgrims put an end to their old passion. Sri Aurobindo wrote to me: “ ..it was through the psychic element in both that you were united to her, the connection that was formed on the way to the Divine and led to your both coming here, after which its utility ceased to exist ”

(20.6 1991)

*

You don’t seem to have been a careful reader of my long-continued series “Life—Poetry—Yoga”. Otherwise you would not have written. “If my letter is to disturb your contemplative mood, I may be excused.” Two words here are rather inapt. First, “disturb”. Even when people unexpectedly come to my door and say out of politeness: “We hope we are not disturbing you”, I sometimes say: “What you are saying is hardly a compliment to me. Do you think I am so easily disturbed?” Time and again in my articles I have written that I try to practise equanimity—along with the formula “Remember and Offer”. A letter—and that too from a cherished friend—is surely very far from being anything like an earthquake, however minor. Perhaps a full-fledged Yogi, which I am not yet, would not be disturbed even by an earthquake: he might meet it by a mirthquake on his part, though that would possibly be a super-manifestation of Ananda rather than of peace.

The second erring term is “contemplative”. It would hardly be correct to picture Amal Kiran in any pose even vaguely resembling the Greek image of an Indian Yogi’s occupation: “omphaloskepsis”—“contemplation of the navel”. One of the impressions my articles are bound to create is that their author rarely sits in regular meditation or concentration: mostly he is doing something—reading or writing or typing or speaking or else walking a bit lest his already poor legs should atrophy. Amal Kiran’s life is spent in what he has called “unplanned sadhana”. There is no regime of regular “in-going” by means of notable

sessions. This Aurobindonian is generally poised midway between “in-going” and “out-going”—his attempt is at a gathered-up consciousness with open eyes, living in the sacred presence of the Master and the Mother by a constant evocation of the memory of them and laying imaginatively in their hands or at their feet all his actions—and, if he is caught off his guard, all his reactions to unpleasant outer circumstance. So to refer to him as being in what is commonly understood as a “contemplative mood” bespeaks a somewhat inattentive reading of his monthly publication of “personal letters”

Most probably you’ll be surprised at my making such ado about a conventional apologetic phrase. But you must make allowance for the *cacoethes scribendi* which is the pedantic equivalent of the “itch of writing”—a practised writer’s eagerness to find an occasion to indulge in the art of words—hopefully to some original effect.

You have mentioned the importance of the month of June for you, since it contains the 26th, the date on which in 1969 our Mother is said by you to have directly intervened and saved you during your first operation. The exact date, but in 1938, is also memorable for me. In one of her talks, without mentioning my name, the Mother has spoken of what happened to me. According to her, by all ordinary standards I should have died, the heart should have stopped—if there had not been in the being an immediate cry for help, a cry which the Mother said was due to a habitual all-time turn of the consciousness to her. In one of the talks recorded by Nirodbaran, Sri Aurobindo said that I had been saved from death by a divine intervention.

Your question—“Why are you so silent about the Samadhī?”—has set me off on a shining trail. What did you want me to say? My appeals to the Mother on behalf of my friends go on as usual. But your use of the word “silent” is quite suggestive. One can’t help being silent in connection with the Samadhī—not only because the qualities of this holy place exceed one’s power of speech but also because the Samadhī essentially represents the power of silence. Mind my expression: with silence I have associated power. Such an association is most apt in relation to Sri Aurobindo. As he had withdrawn into the solitude of his room after the end of 1926 to concentrate on his spiritual work, and put the Mother in the forefront to deal with his disciples from day to day, we were physically in his presence on only four special occasions in the year and naturally there was silence during them. But, unlike a Yogi like Ramana Maharshi sitting quietly for hours and diffusing intense peace, Sri Aurobindo keeping silent filled us with what I may indicate by inverting a mantric line from his “Life-Heavens” thus.

Rest one with unimaginable Force

It was as if we were stilled into a deep surrender to a Divine Presence that irresistibly carried us forward on the path of Perfection. This Presence is well hit

off by the paradox in that stanza from Sri Aurobindo's "Jivanmukta", a poem on the Vedantic ideal of the living liberated man about which he noted: "Perhaps I have given a pull towards my own ideal which the strict Vedantin would consider illegitimate." The stanza runs:

A Power descends no Fate can perturb or vanquish,
 Calmer than mountains, wider than marching waters,
 A single might of luminous quiet
 Tirelessly bearing the world and ages.

What I mean by the extraordinary element in Sri Aurobindo may be most pointedly driven home by my feeling when I first looked at his body after he had left it on December 5, 1950. I marked that there was nothing like what people usually speak of when they stand before someone dead. They refer to the expression of peace on the face. I saw the very opposite. Certainly not any stamp of agitation but the unmoving source of a sovereign dynamism. A tremendous power seemed to emanate from the face and figure. Wave after wave of it filled the room and surrounded me. I perceived an overwhelming air of Conquest. A king was taking his siesta after a supreme victory. From the flaring nostrils to the way in which the legs were stretched out, slightly apart, there was a natural aspect of domination. Spontaneously, effortlessly an assertion of empire could be experienced. Here was a silence, transcendent of all creation—an ultimate absolute of the ineffable—from which had originally flowed forth a creative energy and which now was sending out a power of re-creating all life. Such was the mysterious death of Sri Aurobindo. And it is this fount of new life that is enshrined in the Samadhi at the centre of the Ashram courtyard.

A most holy hush of infinite Grace by whose radiant omnipotence of love everything could be blessed into an outgrowing of old forms that have become fetters—this is the Samadhi where both the Master and the Mother are laid—his casket the support of Hers, as it were, and both together symbolising a silence with the power to put an end to all past failures, to remove our futile frettings and unobtrusively, without the fanfare of even one word, bring about the beginnings of an earth discovering its own hidden divinity. There is nothing to be wondered at in one's being "so silent about the Samadhi" if one's wordless state reflects in however distant a measure the almighty secret hinted in that flower-decked incense-wreathed monument from where our Two Adored Ones waft to us mutely the message "We are always with you!"

After this paean do not run away with the idea that one has to be within physical reach of the Samadhi all the time if not spend all one's hours sitting in front of it. No doubt, the Ashram has a special spiritual virtue, it is the central power-house of the Aurobindonian Yoga because here the Master and the Mother lived and their "material envelopes", sanctified by the lives led in them,

are preserved. But the Master and the Mother were essentially realities of consciousness and it is with our consciousness that fundamentally we have to be in contact with them. Just as on darshan days people came to Pondicherry from all over the earth, so too some physical touch with the resting-place of the Avatars' bodies is needed, but to conjure up the silence of the Samadhi within our souls is the basic need. (8 6.1991)

*

Your mother must have passed on to you my comments on your poems as well as on what attitude to take towards the poet in you. Every poet should have the urge to write, as Meredith said, "our inmost in the sweetest way." By "sweetest" he did not mean mere elegance of expression or pleasing musicality: he had in mind the search for the beauty and harmony of the revealing word which gives at the same time the precise shape and impact, as it were, of the theme and an "aura" of suggestion beyond the apparent line and hue and thrill. There is, of course, no one single way of realising the Meredithian ideal. One may be exquisite as in Coleridge's

Her gentle limbs did she undress
And lay down in her loveliness,

or grand as in the same poet's

The alien shine of unconcerning stars

or one may progressively lead from the one mode to the other through what may be termed a subtlety of descriptive insight as in the closing passage of this very poet's "Frost at Midnight":

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the night thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet moon.

Admittedly, these instances belong to an old though never to be out-dated

tradition The modern temperament is more nervous, less patient in its poetic responses and naturally the technique tends to lose something of the steadiness and regularity and sequential movement, but this is no defect in itself, provided the “inmost” *à la* Meredith is at play and the aesthetic sense, set to however new a pattern, is not coarsened Actually an anticipation of *true* modern poetry in quintessence is in the strange successions and tempo-changes of “Kubla-Khan”’s kaleidoscopy and I am glad that this poem has gripped your imagination no less than the researching intellect in you. You certainly have a genuine poet breaking through your young, slightly rebellious days and I see the magic and the mystery floating even across the semi-serious charm of the face in the photo of “The Three Graces”, as I would call it, which I have received: your wonderful mother with a daughter standing on either side. (10 9 1986)

AMAL KIRAN (K. D. SETHNA)

RAINMAKING

LIKE boys on city housetops
 Who beck and call
 Their circling pigeons home
 And hope to lure
 A neighbour’s with their own,

I beck and call
 To circling cloud-flocks
 Blue and grey and pale—as if they’d come
 To my uplifted finger!

These tumbling racers
 Aren’t the birds
 To answer such a summons—

They dash a few drops from their feathers,
 Flash and mock and pass again ..
 Yet keep electric promise quivering
 As grey plumes fill the sky

SHRADDHAVAN

THE ASHRAM CHILDREN AND SRI AUROBINDO'S LIFE

A DREAM-DIALOGUE

(Continued from the issue of 15 August 1991)

ONE of the children piped: "What was the work God had reserved for you? Was it yoga and sadhana?"

"Those are the means, not the aim. The purpose was to revive the *Sanatana Dharma*, the Eternal Religion, the ancient Hinduism, and by it, as a means, to reawaken the entire human race. India has always nurtured this ideal, the very law of her being has been to bring about the spiritual welfare of mankind. God revealed to me the immortal truths of Hindu spirituality. He even changed the attitude and behaviour of the prison authorities towards me, so that I was allowed to walk in the open courtyard outside my cell, both morning and evening, for an hour or two. The prison doctor and the Jail Superintendent and his Bengali Assistant, who had been always quite sympathetic towards me, made it a point to come and see me every day and exchange a few pleasant civilities. In fact it was the Irish doctor who had made it possible for me to take those walks. These moments were very precious to me. As I walked I would recite the eternally puissant mantras of the Upanishads, those profound verses filled with deep luminous thought and vibrant rhythm. I could actually feel myself penetrated by their power! I always sought to experience the truth they expressed—that all here is the Lord, *sarvam khalvidam brahma*, that everything is the abode of Narayana."

"Can one seek to experience these truths?"

"Why not, so long as they are sincerely sought for? And one day my efforts bore fruit, I did realise those truths. Then I found that I was no longer surrounded by the walls of my cell, but by the arms of Vasudeva. When I walked under the tree in the yard, it was not a tree any more but Sri Krishna who spread his cool protective shade over my head. The guards and jailors had become Vasudeva, the very door, the bars on the window, all were none but Vasudeva. When I lay on the coarse blanket it was the embrace of Sri Krishna that I felt, the arms of my Lover and my Friend. In the thieves and murderers of the prison I discovered the same Vasudeva, the same Narayana. The love, kindness and humanity shown to me by those men had earlier not only overwhelmed me but also embarrassed me. I am particularly reminded of one of them, a simple peasant, a man of the unlettered masses, one whom we, in our blind pride, might describe as low-born. And yet he had seemed to me to be a saint and I had never understood how he could have been charged with robbery and sentenced to ten years of imprisonment. A man who was so truly good could not be capable of wilful robbery. And about these people God told me, 'Look at these men. It is

because I want you to work with them that I have sent you to prison. Try to understand the nature of this extraordinary race and see why I want you to awaken it and raise it up.' "

"What did you gain from this experience that you had?"

"How do you mean? Do you think of gain when you see God, even in dreams, standing before you? What would you think of?"

"Delight."

"Well, then, delight, absolute peace, love and compassion for all living creatures, all these came rushing on me. There also came the certitude of my freedom from imprisonment.

"When, soon after this experience, our trial began and we were taken from the quiet prison to the noisy heart of the city, I was disturbed and shaken at first. Then God appeared again before me and said—'Do you remember those early days in jail when you would so often complain to me about your lack of my Grace and Protection? And now, look who the Magistrate and the Prosecutor are. Are they not Vasudeva?' Yes, indeed they were all Vasudeva, there was none who was not Sri Krishna. Smiling with infinite gentleness, He continued, 'There is no cause, therefore, for any doubt or fear. I dwell in all of them, it is I who am the mover and the Guide, my protection will never leave you. This trial need not worry you, for I shall see to its outcome. Besides, it is not for the trial that I have had you brought here. This case is but an occasion and a means. What I intend for you is something completely different.'

"All the same, I would often help my lawyer with my own ideas and suggestions. Perhaps because of the pressure of circumstances, he found that he could no longer handle the case. In his place came another, a most unexpected substitute, a dear friend of mine whose name you all know. The latter gave up all his other work and responsibilities to take up my case. He worked for it all day and half the night, week after week and month after month, even at the cost of his own health. He was Chittaranjan Das. When he came, I felt certain that I need not give him any suggestions or advice. And the inner voice said, 'This is the man who will bring you your freedom. You do not need your papers any longer, for I will guide him, not you.' I grew completely quiet within, for the voice would repeat again and again, 'Remember the work I brought you to jail for and fear nothing, think of nothing else. No human power can alter what I have willed.'

"In the meantime, He brought me out of my solitude. I rejoined the young men who had been arrested along with me. In their company I felt humble, as well as happy. I had often been praised for my selflessness and patriotism, but now I found that these boys possessed a courage, a strength and a capacity for self-sacrifice far greater than I did. Indeed it appeared that I had much to learn from some of them. Then again I heard the Voice speak, 'These young men represent the types of the great new race that will inhabit this country. In no way

are they weaker or lesser than you. If today you fall asleep or move away from the path, yet shall the work continue, these are the ones who will carry it forward. But you have been specially selected to harbour my Force, to raise this fallen race with the power of your Speech.'

"In fact, it was true. They were all exceptional, those boys. How they loved fun and laughter, those so-called terrorists and killers! There was no trace of fear in them, they were ready with a smile to mount the scaffold, if that was what was required. They did not feel the least worry about the future, or even about the outcome of the case. They were on good terms with everybody, friend or foe, prisoner or guard and even the Englishmen. In the court, while the trial was on, some of them sang songs while others read books, even while their fates were being decided. They were not concerned about whether they were going to be hanged or deported for life to the Andamans or sentenced to hard labour. I would marvel at them and say to myself that since the Motherland had sons like them, freedom could surely not be long in coming. Watching them, I realised that God had indeed proved to me that He was creating a new race of men."

Everybody was listening to Sri Aurobindo in rapt silence. When he finished speaking, the children seemed to return to the outer consciousness from some deep meditation. Quietly they filed out of the room, their heads bowed.

The next day Sri Aurobindo began on his own:

"Last time, I spoke to you about the young men of the New Age. Now, when I look at you, I feel that you are children of a still Newer Age. Perhaps many of those same young people have been reborn in you in order to participate in the Mother's work."

"But we don't feel anything!"

(*Laughing*) "How can you? You have not yet had either the time or the knowledge to understand anything about the past or the future. But whoever has the vision can see in you the seeds of a new life, a life that is not content with moving along the same old ways and rounds. The desire to know the Divine, to consecrate yourselves to His service, to awaken to a new Consciousness—these are all there in you. As they intensify, they will become more evident and you will become aware of them."

"Yes. Sometimes we ask ourselves—'What is the Divine? Can He be known?' At such times everything else like studies or games seem so unnecessary! And then when we come to you, we feel a new enthusiasm, afterwards for days, a deep joy fills the being. But again the old heaviness returns, the laziness, the unwillingness to apply ourselves to our studies. All we love to do then is to have fun, and spend our time with our friends!"

"Oh well! It's not so bad. Human nature, after all, takes time to change. I too had my bad habits."

"You? Unbelievable!"

(*Laughing*) "Why are you so surprised? I wasn't born a ripe and ready fruit, you know. Ask your elders how often I've had to explain this to them. (*Laughing, again*) You all seem to have learned to think and speak just like them. But don't forget, I too was a boy once upon a time, with all the qualities and defects that a boy might have."

"But you were a brilliant student."

"A brilliant student doesn't have to be brilliant in every field, does he? No, no, don't look at me through rose-tinted glasses. I had many weaknesses, all of which I had to master with the yogic power."

"But where can we get that power?"

"Didn't you just say that when you came to me you felt a new joy, a new force?"

"But we can't always come to you!" (*Laughter*)

(*Smiling*) "You don't need to, really. Whenever you call us with all your heart, we hear you and send the help, the strength."

"Is it true that in jail you said to Mona-da's father, 'Think of me'?"

"I may have. I don't remember now."

"How did you spend your time there? Was it that you meditated most of the time, as some say?"

"If by meditation you mean sitting in one place with closed eyes, then, no. But it is true that I was doing my sadhana. In fact, that was the very reason why God sent me to jail, as I have already told you. And you may say that in that one year the intensity of my spiritual discipline was equivalent to three years of rigorous sadhana, a sadhana which in the normal circumstances of life would have taken me a hundred years to realise."

"What kind of sadhana was it?"

"How can I describe it? It included the disciplines of different yogas, such as Raja Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Tantra and so on."

"Did Vivekananda come to you in your cell, as we have heard?"

"Yes, indeed. It was really an extraordinary experience. I never knew him before that. Of course, I had read his books, but I had never met him and yet he came to me in prison for two whole weeks. I was hearing constantly his voice. The voice spoke only on a special and limited but very important field of spiritual experience and it ceased as soon as it had finished saying all that it had to say on that subject."

"Incredible!"

"It may sound incredible; but such things are not at all uncommon in the spiritual life. Haven't you heard about the experiences Mother had?"

"Yes, of course. We have heard that when she was young she used to see you, that you would often visit her?"

"And yet I, the outer Aurobindo, knew nothing about it. (*Laughter*) Many other beings also used to visit her. It was during my contact with Vivekananda

that I got the first inkling about the Supermind. But I had never personally met him."

"Did he know something about the Supermind?"

"I can't say anything about that; anyway, he never mentioned it to me. I deduced from what he spoke to me that there existed something beyond the truths he was helping me to realise."

"If he had known about it, he would have told you."

"No, not necessarily. In fact, a yogi rarely speaks about everything that he knows. Even if I were set to write for twelve years to express my knowledge, I might still keep something unsaid."

"But you must write everything! How else can we ever learn?"

"My answer to that is the same one that I have been giving to your elders all these years. First read and learn everything that is already written. You're all so young. Perhaps you don't even know the names of all the books!"

"How did you acquire so much knowledge?"

"Through sadhana and yoga. While I was in prison, doing my sadhana, the eye of vision suddenly opened. For instance, about painting. I began to understand painting, its qualities of colour and form and line. Also, I have already told you about the power acquired through Pranayama, haven't I, how it helped to bring down a flood of literary creativity."

"All these realisations must be boons you have received from actions in your previous birth!"

(*Laughing*) "That is typical of the orthodox Indian mind! Karma, everything is but a result of Karma! In that case, there is no use making any effort or doing sadhana. Naturally, there is a past existence, a present one, a future one too. But if I had only counted on them and not on my own striving, could I have acquired any of these powers? Why need I have done so much sadhana? The truth is that all Knowledge is lodged within man's being. Tapasya helps him to discover it, and later to liberate it."

"Didn't the company of the other young prisoners disturb your tapasya in the jail?"

"They were not there with me the whole year long. In any case, I used to sit in my corner, busy with my own meditation while they remained busy with theirs."

"Did they too meditate?"

"If they did, it was rather noisily done, often through loud singing!" (*Laughter*) "A few of them, though, did make some effort to concentrate on their sadhana."

"We have read that they would often rope you in, in their pranks and jokes."

"Well, of course, now and then I did join in their fun and laughter. After all, they were my friends and companions, all of them were spending time in

prison mainly because of me.”

“Nolini-da too was one of them.”

“Yes, but he was very young, and I wasn't very well acquainted with the youngest ones there ”

“Someone has written something about your hair.”

“What has he written?”

“Since you had extremely shiny black hair, he asked you how you managed to oil it while they never got to see any oil!” (*laughter*)

“And what was I supposed to have replied?”

“You put your arm round him and explained to him that the shine was not due to oil but to sadhana Even your complexion was getting lighter, he had noticed There is also a funny story that he recounts.

“Once, those naughty fellows stole all the biscuits from somebody's box and were having a midnight feast They tried to give you some but found that you were fast asleep, wrapped up in your blanket. Then suddenly, out crept a long arm and an open palm from underneath the blanket!” (*Laughter*)

“Oh yes! and there's another story,” chirped a little one “It's about your meditation in Charubabu's house, where you were staying as a guest You had locked yourself up in your room there one day and had entered into such a profound trance that though they almost broke down the door trying to enter the room, you heard nothing.”

“But why on earth were they so keen to enter my room?”

“It seems, you had asked for an iced drink earlier, and since the ice was melting rather fast they wanted to give you the drink before it got too warm ”

“Oh! I'm told that Charu has many stories about me. He is the Grandfather who carries a great big pouch of stories with him.”

(To be continued)

NIRODBARAN

(Translated by Jhumur from the Bengali)

AN AIRMAN'S ECSTASY

OH, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings.
Sunward I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds—and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence, hovering there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,
Where never lark nor even eagle flew,
And while, with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high, untrampled sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

JOHN GILLESPIE MAGEE

NOTE: The sender of this poem by an airman of the Second World War who was killed, when only 19 years old, in a flying accident in December 1941, in Lincolnshire while piloting a Spitfire, has asked me to make a comment.

The poem, full of youth's exuberance of spirit and language, shows without doubt a true poetic turn in both imagination and expression. Here is also a vivid narrative gift, a fine building up to a significant climax.

What most appeals to me in the substance is the religio-mystical sense which Magee develops as the poem progresses and which he brings to a focus at the end. Thus the last six lines are the profoundest and the concrete suggestion of God as a palpable presence is splendid.

Even in the early part there are subtle indirectly spiritual hints: "Sunward I've climbed.."—"High in the sunlit silence..."

In the later part, three lines—in however indirect a way—are spiritually atmospheric with a fine rapture of vision:

Up, up the long delirious burning blue..
Where never lark nor even eagle flew.,
The high, untrampled sanctity of space, .

The subjective approach to the vision is well hit off in the phrase: "silent lifting mind."

I may remark that the whole piece containing fourteen lines is actually a sonnet. Instead of the usual Shakespearian form of three quatrains and a closing couplet, it has two stanzas in the Shakespearian rhyme-scheme—abab, cdcd—building an octave followed by a sestet in a semi-Miltonic manner: efe, gfg.

K. D. SETHNA

SOME EPISODES FROM THE LIFE OF “AN EXTRAORDINARY GIRL”

A REPORT BASED ON ORAL COMMUNICATION

(Continued from the issue of 15 August 1991)

An Extraordinary Girl

THE other day, Nirod-da visited me and asked me how I was.

“I am all right,” I replied. “But I had to quarrel a lot with Him. Do you remember how I threatened Him when I was a child? I wrote to Sri Aurobindo that if he didn’t answer my letter, I would go away to the forest! He wrote back at once asking me how I could think of such a thing. Didn’t I know that there were lions and tigers in the forest and that they would devour me? What a pity I lost that letter. How sweet and tender it was. I find even now that simple prayer and quiet surrender are not effective, at least in my case. I suffer and suffer and He doesn’t seem to care.”

“Yes, there is some truth in it,” Nirod-da said. “Once Sri Aurobindo wrote to me that one must cry sometimes. But you are crying all the time!”

“I can’t help it,” I countered. “He has given me such bad health and such a weak stomach that I have been suffering from both for years and have had to complain to Him constantly. Once my Thakur (Krishna) told me with a smile, using the Bengali word *দেহসর্ব্ব*, that my body was my obsession, and that I was constantly preoccupied with my sickness and my endless list of complaints. So I quarrelled with Sri Aurobindo after having suffered miserably for three or four days from a stomach upset, and was cured immediately.”

“But if you bring on your illness by your own indiscretion, you should pay the price for it,” Nirod-da remarked.

“What indiscretion?”

“I was told that you ate a lot of mangoes, and not of a very good quality.”

“No, no, that isn’t true! I was eating only one small mango a day. But in the end I did take a big mango of inferior quality and that was what made me sick.”

“But I thought that you had obtained His permission to eat it. What is the story? I want to know it first-hand.”

“As it happened,” I answered, “I had abstained from eating mangoes for years lest they upset my stomach. You know how I suffered from stomach trouble in Pondicherry. And then my astrologer physician had predicted that in later life I would continue to suffer from a bad stomach. However, this time when I saw some lovely mangoes, I was greatly tempted to try them. So I bought some and, holding them before Him in an attitude of prayer, I said, ‘Please

protect me. I have withheld my desire for so many years. Now I would like to try and eat this fruit. If nothing happens to me, I promise I will not go to Calcutta on a visit.' He asked me if I was sure, as though doubting my word, and I assured Him that I was. Then I ate a small mango—although with fear and trembling. Nothing went wrong. Delighted that He had kept his promise, I took one every day—until that last day when I took the big one. It was then that the pain and diarrhoea began, and I was in for it.

"But whatever happens, the picture of my childhood Thakur always smiles at me. The other day, however, I found that it did not. Straight away I turned to Sri Aurobindo's picture and complained about Thakur, whereupon I distinctly heard Thakur saying with a wicked smile, 'Oh, so you are complaining to Him, are you?'

"This is, in fact, my sadhana and my life, talking with my Thakur and with Sri Aurobindo through my varying moods, like a child.

"Now after this tit-bit I suppose you would like me to continue my life's story," I went on. "It has, in fact, come to an interesting point, which is so unusual that many will have difficulty believing it, but it is nevertheless true.

"As I have already described, shortly after my marriage, I returned to my mother's house. But I did not cut off relations with my husband. He came to our place regularly and made it virtually his home. My mother looked after him and paid him all the attention due to a son-in-law. I was also happy, and the two of us spent much of our time together. He had finished his studies and, since he was a zamindar, had no need to work. In the evenings we would go out visiting places of interest, particularly to see animals and birds in which both of us were keenly interested. We would also take walks hand in hand around the Calcutta Lake, laughing and chatting like so many other couples. Because both of us were young and good-looking, we attracted the attention of the other strollers, regardless of their age. Once one of my middle-aged relatives saw us and recognized me. 'Are you so-and-so?' she asked, 'and who is this handsome young fellow?'

"I smiled mischievously. 'Oh, I know, I know!' she exclaimed. 'He is your husband. How good-looking he is! A fine couple indeed. God bless you both!' And we parted, while my husband and I exchanged knowing glances.

"The strange part was, you see, that we were comparatively free from physical desire. My husband had already told me he would like us to live like brother and sister, which delighted me, for physical intimacy had always struck me as gross.

"Quite a few years passed and finally my mother asked me how it was that we had had no children. She insisted on our seeing a doctor, but when he examined the two of us he found us perfectly normal.

"'What is your secret?' he asked. 'Don't you want any children?'

"'Not yet,' I answered.

"'Then why have you come to see me?' he retorted.

"When after six years we did have a child, our sweet married life took a bitter and fateful turn "

*

Soon after I became pregnant, I noticed something strange had occurred in my relationship with my husband, though to be honest I could find no outward manifestation of it. It was a purely feminine intuition that something which had been there before was now missing between us. On the surface, he was as attentive and loving as ever, and so I tried to dismiss my feeling. I told myself that my psychological unease must be due to my pregnancy.

Then one day I was having some trouble with my eyes, and my husband arranged to take me to an eye-surgeon who was a friend of his. On the way, he suddenly said, 'Don't tell him that you're my wife. Say that you are my sister.'

Bewildered, I asked him why. 'There are reasons,' he replied. 'I'll tell you about them later.' I was greatly perplexed. When, after coming home, I told my mother about it, she answered, 'Foolish girl, don't you see his 'reason'? He must have taken another girl and introduced her as his wife and therefore you have to be his sister. It's so simple and you so naive.' I really fell from heaven. However, I kept quiet. But the matter did not end there. Soon after, a close relative of mine asked me how it was that he saw my husband waiting daily in a certain locality, and whether I knew anything of it. I replied in the negative and put the matter away from my mind. I was too preoccupied with the vomiting and nausea of morning-sickness to be bothered about it. At the same time I felt so extraordinarily hungry that I doubled my food intake. Needless to say my weight increased rapidly and I had to consult the doctor. He refused to medicate me in any way for fear of injuring the foetus, and instructed me instead to control my diet. Otherwise, he warned, the baby would grow too big and cause difficulties during the birthing—which did indeed happen.

At the same time, the situation with my husband became clearer and clearer, and soon there could be no doubt that my woman's intuition had not played me false. He had fallen in love with someone else, thus bearing out my Uncle's misgivings about the character of zamindars. But unlike many other women in the same predicament, I felt no jealousy, nor any desire to sever relations with him. He continued to come to the house, and my mother received him as before. The only difference was that I could no longer bear to have any physical contact with him.

For his part, he too seemed to have retained some love for me. According to Sri Aurobindo, if I have understood him correctly, there is more than one kind of love, the psychology of love being one of the most complex. One may have genuine or true love for one person and yet the vital being may gambol about. Sri Aurobindo had remarked that I was free from attachment, and so it turned out

to be with regard to my husband I do not know whether I really loved him either. For, once, when he had a heart-attack in our house, I was having a sound sleep at night. My mother came and woke me up saying, "What's this? Get up, get up! What will people say? While they are attending on him, you are sleeping!"

(To be continued)

NIRODBARAN

NOT YET

THE shadows of tomorrow—
 Some short, some long,
 Some green and gold, some gray or dark—
 Are indistinct.
 Yesterday's remains are like stars,
 Fading dots in a dawn-lit sky.
 But living in today is not,
 Not yet to be always
 Within the Effulgent.
 This living has become a habit
 Of loafing within an ever-changing
 Togetherness.
 This living is a lazy floating
 In calm seas, few are the storms,
 Fewer the surges from deeper stirrs.
 Not yet the ever-turbulent laughter
 Of the Ganges in Shiva's wild tresses,
 Not yet the intense delight amidst deep silences,
 The infinite movement of eternal stillness;
 Oneness still eludes.

DINKAR PALANDE

LABOUR OF LOVE

by

HUTA

(Continued from the issue of 15 August 1991)

THE year 1957 began.

Unceasingly I went on painting various objects and flowers—given or sent by the Mother

During this time she taught me how to draw on tinted papers with crayons.

I sketched many pictures—mostly her visions. She gave a meaning to each of them. Later she revealed to me that the pictures I had drawn were living beings.

About her way with paintings the Mother told me on 21st January 1957:

“I enter into their consciousness and find out their meanings, the truth and beauty behind each painting.

Some paintings are indeed very nice to look at—they have pretty and gorgeous colours, but when there are no living vibrations and deep harmony then obviously the paintings are lifeless and without value. But where there is a combination of the two—outward charm and inner vision—then they are real and can be considered as true art.

In your paintings I have felt the living vibrations and that is very good.”

She added:

“A true artist never speaks of what he has done. ‘Oh! I have done a nice painting!’ Instead he thinks and says, ‘Oh! No I could not do it nicely, it is not what I wanted to do.’

“In fact, he is never satisfied with his work and he continues his effort until he paints masterpieces. An artist puts the full power of his aspiration in his work to reach perfection.”

Not only was the Mother teaching me painting but giving me lessons of life: how to be modest and persistent in my endeavour to reach perfection and develop into a true artist.

None can beat the Mother’s vision, conception and opinion. A pointer to her being and her ways may be found in *Savitri* Bk. 4, C. I, p. 406:

“And from her eyes she cast another look
 On all around her than man’s ignorant view
 All objects were to her shapes of living selves
 And she perceived a message from her kin
 In each awakening touch of outward things ”

*

The morning of 7th February the Mother reassured me:

“I have received your nice letter.

Yes, we are going towards painting that will be able to express the Supramental Truth of things

My love and blessings and the Presence of the Divine Grace are always with you.”

In the evening she explained to me:

“I want you to do something new. You must try to do the *Future Painting* in the New Light

There is a reason why I always ask you to paint mostly on a white background It is an attempt to express the Divine Light without shadow in the *Future Painting*. But everything will come in its own time.

In the *Future Painting*, you must not copy blindly the outer appearance without the inner vision. *Never* let people’s ideas influence your mind and impose their advice about the *Future Painting* Do not try to adopt the technique either of modern art or of old classical art. But *always* try to express the true inner vision of your soul and its deep impression behind everything to bring out the Eternal Truth and to express the glory of the Higher Worlds.

Truth is behind everything. For, the Divine dwells in flowers, trees, animals, birds, rivers as well as human beings—in fact, in every creation of Nature.

You must have the psychic touch to see and feel the vibrations, the sensations and the essence of the Truth in everything and that Truth is to be expressed in the *Future Painting*

To paint perfectly well is not an easy thing. It certainly takes time But by the growth of consciousness you can have inspiration, intense vision, delicacy of colours, harmony and subtlety of true beauty. Then you can surely express wonderful things in painting, otherwise painting will be a lifeless confusion.

The growth of consciousness is essential for doing marvellous paintings.”

I asked the Mother. "Without seeing the Divine Light how can I paint?" She laughed softly and said.

"Child, it will come "

Now it was apparent that I had to learn numerous things from various angles in painting in order to step into the unknown domain of the secret and higher worlds where I could release lavishly, freely my imaginations, reveries and inspirations to express exactly what the Mother wished me to.

The play of colour,—balanced distribution of light and shadow to bring out the perfect harmony of colour—the subtle infusion of light, the transcendent spontaneity, the magical changes of Nature—the Supreme Colourist's realism and visions—these were all I had to put on canvases with vibrant, various strokes of brushes

I was absolutely aware that it was not going to be easy, but life now beckoned me along strange paths which I must tread. There was no turning back since I had committed myself to the spiritual life and the higher artistic sphere.

The Mother has stated:

"If you want art to be true and highest art, it must be the expression of a Divine World brought down into this material world "

*

There was in me an overwhelming disappointment, a sense of disillusionment and bitterness. But my soul persisted to go on—no matter how many hideous phases and setbacks I had to face. I would not budge from this life and the work the Mother had entrusted to me.

I sent a letter to her about my determination. She responded:

"Indeed I am very glad of your resolution, the firmness with which you carried it out and the strength of your will.

I fully agree with your nice letter and appreciate the decision you have taken.

You can rely entirely on the Divine Grace as well as my love and my blessings that will lead you without fail to your goal."

*

On 15th February when the Mother saw my painting of the Chinese vase, she exclaimed

“It is excellent, you are getting on quite well with painting. By August, we shall have a good collection. Then there will be an exhibition of your paintings.”

I cried: “Oh, but I have just started painting Is it possible to exhibit my paintings which are hardly satisfactory?”

She consoled me:

“I have already planned how to arrange the paintings in the exhibition. It is a happy progress—whatever people may say or think. It is a miraculous progress.”

*

I received from the Mother a card with these words:

“Here is a Japanese picture painted on a very thin sheet of bamboo I am sending you also the pink dahlia for painting

My love and blessings and the Presence of the Divine Grace are constantly with you.”

Since she did not mention the background I painted the flower against a white background

When she saw the painting in the evening her eyes lit up with admiration She said.

“You are progressing steadily It is good. The Consciousness and Force are there. They need the proper instrument through which they can act.

If the instrument is not receptive and good, then they cannot possibly express themselves.

For example, a great musician has a piano but owing to the bad tuning he cannot play on it in spite of his wonderful talent

Similarly the Divine Force, the Divine Consciousness and the Divine Grace cannot work if the instruments are not proper.”

*

The Mother sent me an attractive card with a coloured print of herself on it: she was sitting in a high-backed chair, elegantly dressed in a sari and about to give blessings and her message on Lakshmi Puja day. She had written on the card:

“Bonjour to my dear little child—to my sweet Huta,

This is to say to my sweet child, on the occasion of my birthday, how glad I am of the progress she is making both spiritually and in her painting—and to assure her of my constant and affectionate help so that this progress will increase without stop.

My love and blessings and the Presence of the Divine Grace never leave you.”

(To be continued)

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FLAME-KINDLED

EACH cell of my body, O Sun,
Kindle with thy ecstasy's fire;
O Truth-flame burning deep within,
Thy gold be my glowing attire.

Dissolve this cloud of matted hair,
My eyes with starry look replace;
Wide like a dazzle be my brow
In thy sunstorm's sky-rushing blaze.

I have poured my breath in thy hearth
And made all a chant of my soul;
Even as I soar, O Splendour,
Make me thy journey's goal!

AKASH DESHPANDE

AN UP-TO-DATE BIOGRAPHY OF ENGLISH WORDS

THE second edition of the Oxford English Dictionary published a few months ago is a monumental achievement of the 20th century. By using computers, it was completed in six years. The 12-volume first edition took seventy years from conception to publication. The 20-volume second edition weighs 62.6 kilos (137.72 lbs). It has 59 million words and has 290,500 main entries, about 38,000 more than in the first edition. There are 350 million printed characters with 137,000 pronunciations, 249,300 etymologies, 577,000 cross-references and 2,412,400 illustrative quotations. There are 157,000 combinations, 169,000 phrases and combinations. The first 10,000 copies weigh 614.82 tons, used 5345 miles of paper and 6243 lbs of ink. The price of a set is £ 1500 and the shelf space for a set is 44 inches. The longest entry in the dictionary is for 'set'. It has 154 main senses and 60,000 words.

The first editor of the Oxford English Dictionary was James Murray who was a school master deeply interested in philology. The first fascicle of the dictionary, A-Ant, was published in 1884. The dictionary was finished only in 1928. Murray died when 'T' had been reached. The total number of pages in the first edition is 15,487; of these 7207 were edited by Murray. His task was completed by Dr. C.T. Onions, Dr. Henry Bradley and Dr. W.A. Craigie. A supplement to the 12-volume edition was published in 1933.

Realising the 'quantum-leap' in the development of the language, the Oxford University Press decided in the fifties to issue another supplement incorporating new words and new meanings. Dr. Robert Burchfield, a New Zealander, started work on the Supplement in 1957 and completed the work in 1986. The first volume of the 4-volume *Supplement* was published in 1972, the second in 1976, the third in 1982 and the final volume in 1986. The Supplement contains 66,372 entries of which 12,000 were new words that had entered the language since the first edition.

Even as the *Supplement* was in progress, it was felt that the original OED required a thorough revision. Work on this started in 1982 and with the help of computers, it was finished in 1988 and the twenty volumes were published in March 1989. The second edition is an amalgamation of the first edition of OED, its Supplement and the 5000 new words that have entered the language since the publication of the four-volume Supplement. Thus the second edition is the result of the integration of the texts published earlier and 'is the result of extraordinary cooperation of literature and electronics, of history and technology'. In future, it will be easy to update, correct and amend the dictionary as the words are on a computer database. Work on the third edition has already started and it is likely to be out early next century.

OED₂ is a fairly up-to-date biography of English words. Under each word, first the current pronunciation of the word is indicated, then the origin of the

word. The different meanings of the word over a period of time are given with illustrative quotations. For example, the word 'nice' is from Latin 'nescious' through French 'Nescious' in Latin means 'ignorant'. 'Science' originally meant 'knowledge'. 'Nescience' is absence of knowledge. 'Nescious' means 'ignorant' This was the meaning of 'nice' originally. It was used in the sense of 'foolish, stupid, senseless' in the thirteenth century. It developed from this meaning into the modern meanings given below in the order of their development. loose-mannered, elegant, strange, rare, lazy, tender, delicate, over-refined, shy, fastidious in matters of literary taste, minutely or carefully accurate, agreeable, kind, pleasant. 'Silly' is an English word which originally meant 'blessed', 'happy'. 'Comrade' was a person who shared a room with you 'Bravely' once meant 'a thing of beauty'. Changes in meaning are given in a chronological order with illustrative sentences.

English is a sponge language. It has absorbed and absorbs words from other languages and has enriched itself 'An Englishman cannot *thrive* or *be ill* or *die* without Scandinavian words'. The words underlined are of Scandinavian origin. Most words pertaining to law, administration, culture, and cooking are of French origin. Some of them are: judge, jury, plaintiff, crime, property, administration, sovereign, culture, beauty, culinary. Jespersen said that animals when they are alive have English names (ox, cow, calf, sheep, swine, deer) but have French names when they appear on the table (beef, veal, mutton, bacon, brawn, venison). Most musical terms like soprano, staccato, crescendo, opera, quartet, tempo, solo, sonata, contrapuntal, piano, are of Italian origin and scientific terms are of Greek and Latin origin. The dictionary also contains more than 1500 words of Indian origin. Some of them are sahib, pundit, ahimsa, mongoose, nabob, punch, curry, cheroot, bangle, bungalow, shampoo, jungle, dacoit, khaki, loot, pyjamas, thug, pucca, tamasha, Jodhpur, copra, cot, mango, chintz, calico, chamar, chutney, catamaran, bandy, bandicoot, gherao.

The following are some of the new words that are listed in the dictionary. Deregulation (the removal of regulations and restrictions, especially tariff restrictions), disinformation (the dissemination of false information, especially when supplied by a government or its agent to a foreign power or to the media, with the intention of influencing the policies or opinions of those who receive it), fuzzy logic (the logic of fuzzy sets and fuzzy concepts), ginormous (excessive in size, amount), granny flat (a self-contained living unit for an elderly relative forming part of or detached from the family home), football hooliganism, glasnost, perestroika, head-hunter (an employment agent or agency specializing in the recruitment of managers and other skilled personnel by identifying and approaching preferred candidates), Hooray Henry (a type of loud, rich rather ineffectual foolish young society man; now specially, a fashionable, extroverted, but conventional upper-class young man), toy-boy (a good-looking youth who is kept by an older woman as a lover).

English has borrowed unblushingly from other languages and now it is influencing other languages. It is influencing Latin also! The Vatican is preparing a Latin lexicon of English words that have entered Italian 'Animated cartoon' has been translated into Latin as 'imaguncula disneyana', 'secret agent' as 'speculator tectus'. The English language contains a large percentage of words of Latin origin. Now it is the turn of Latin to receive from English!

No other language has such a massive up-to-date dictionary as OED₂. It is pure pleasure to browse through OED₂ which covers the vocabulary of the English language from AD 1150 and gives a historical development and change of meaning of each word. Small dictionaries are like small cultivated gardens. OED₂ is like a thick forest with gigantic trees, tender plants, the debris of ancient forms and seeds of new ones. A garden charms you with its beauty. A forest continually surprises you with its hidden treasures.

K. SUBRAMANIAN

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THE GITA AND THE TWO WAYS OF DOING THE APPOINTED WORK

1. The Two Alternatives

WHEN Arjuna takes a look at all those whom he has to slay, he is suddenly overcome by pity and fear and impotence, for he sees that he has to kill the very persons without whom he would not care to live. He tries to hide his weakness behind words of wisdom and wishes to retreat from the battlefield, as if he has become indifferent to worldly concerns. But Krishna is not carried away by these words. He knows that Arjuna has surrendered to the power of the moment and so tells him that this does not befit him at all. As soon as Arjuna realises that he can no longer hide himself behind high-sounding words, he admits that his true nature is veiled by the taint of pity—pity for his own people—and that his whole consciousness is bewildered, *summūḍha cetāh*. He seeks refuge in Krishna with a prayer to save him from this crisis (2-7).

Krishna agrees to help him and tries to get him out of the predicament. A cursory glance at the teachings of Krishna shows that he places two alternatives before Arjuna. Arjuna is asked to give up his original stand and fight *either* as a true Aryan hero *or* as a true devotee of God. By temperament and training he is a *kṣatriya*; hence he should not abandon the work of battle assigned to him as a *kṣatriya*. By devotion and intimate oneness he is the beloved of God, God manifest in the body of Krishna, hence he cannot turn away from the work of God, the work of destroying the evil-doers, to which he is appointed as a devotee of God. Once Krishna succeeds in helping Arjuna to view the situation in the proper perspective, Arjuna is freed from the confusions created by his emotions. Thus freed, he takes Krishna's word and agrees to act accordingly, *karisyevacanam tava* (18-73).

The whole purpose of the Gita is to convince Arjuna of doing the appointed work. And the Gita comes to a close when Arjuna agrees to do the work. But from another point of view the end seems to be rather abrupt, because the Gita does not precisely tell us which of the two alternatives Arjuna has chosen when he agrees to act according to Krishna's word. Arjuna's words are too general to disclose his choice.

2. Krishna's Teachings

Before we try to find the clues that disclose Arjuna's choice, we have to go through the teachings of Krishna, however briefly: otherwise we would be ill-equipped for the task.

First of all, Krishna's teaching on abstaining from battle, *akarma*. Arjuna says that he is not interested in anything and prefers to renounce life and the

world and live on alms. But Krishna opposes his decision from various points of view. Philosophically, as long as one lives in Nature and is part of Nature, one cannot dispense with works, for works are born of Nature. Spiritually, renunciation is a soul-state and not a physical condition to be attained by abstention from works or by abandoning them. Morally, he will incur sin on account of violating the law of his life and of his being. Psychologically, his decision is the result of fear and weakness and delusion; he will have to reverse his decision sooner or later when he regains his natural self. Socially, his decision to abstain from battle will bring dishonour and disgrace and slander. Therefore Krishna calls upon Arjuna to give up his decision and to fight, *uttistha parantapa*.

Secondly, Krishna's teaching on fighting as a true Aryan hero, *ksatriya*. To battle for the right is the true object of life for the *ksatriya* and there is no greater good than this. His true happiness consists not in domestic peace and harmony but in finding a cause for which he can sacrifice his life or in winning the crown and glory by victory. To him a righteous battle coming of itself is like the open gate of heaven. Krishna agrees with Arjuna that the ethical standard of the *ksatriya* has its own limitations and may not be as effective as it should be, under certain circumstances. Rather he recognises with Arjuna that the law of action evolved for the *ksatriya* is surely inadequate in a situation where one has to slay his own people. But at the same time Krishna points out that there is no justification for abandoning one's own law of action. "Better is one's own law of action," says Krishna, "though in itself faulty" (18-47). For all undertakings determined by human standards are clouded by defects as fire by smoke. Stated in plain terms, Krishna tells Arjuna that the evil consequences of killing his own grandfather and teacher, friends and relatives are inevitable and should not be allowed to stand in the way of fulfilling his appointed work, however disgusting it may be. He must submit himself to the law of action proper to the *ksatriya* without question, without reservation. Hence Krishna's exhortation: "Slain you shall gain heaven, victorious you shall enjoy the earth; therefore arise, O son of Kunti, resolved upon battle" (2-37).¹

Thirdly, Krishna's teaching on fighting as a true devotee of God, *madbhaktah*. Krishna is God manifest in human form and descended into the world of men. He is born here for the destruction of the evil-doers and for the enthronement of the Dharma. This is the work of God, *matkarma*. Apparently the war is the inevitable outcome of a family dispute over territorial rights; but behind the surface it is the culmination of the Divine Will working steadily for the destruction of the old forms that establish the law of the Evil and the creation of the new that promote the law of the Good. In the infallible perception of God the destruction of the evil and of those who work for its success is a thing already decreed and no force on earth can alter the outcome of the war.

¹ This and other verses in the article are based on Sri Aurobindo's renderings

Arjuna's long association with God in human form and his genuine devotion to the divine Companion have made him the doer of God's work, *matkarmakṛt*. Therefore Krishna urges him to be a faultless instrument in the hands of God for fulfilling His purpose in the world, *nimuttamātram bhava* (11-33). And the way to become such a faultless instrument is to consciously give up all his present laws of action, *sarvadharmān*, and learn to act according to the law of God, *dharmyāmṛtam* "Giving up your works to Me, with your whole consciousness identified with the Self, free from desire and egoism," says Krishna, "fight delivered from the fever of your soul" (3-30).

Thus Krishna's teachings fall into three broad categories: (1) those that disapprove of Arjuna's decision not to fight, in unambiguous and absolute terms; (2) those that establish the work of destruction on the basis of the law of one's life and of one's being; (3) and those that throw light on the deep and divine forces that have brought this monstrous work to Arjuna

3. Arjuna's Choice

At the end of a long and elaborate discourse between Arjuna and Krishna we find Arjuna agreeing to act according to the word of his Master, *karisyevacanam tava*. As we have stated above, Krishna's word stands at least for three kinds of teachings (*vide* section 2). So the exact meaning of the expression *karisyevacanam tava* (I will act according to Thy word) has to be determined only with the help of certain clues to be found in the text of the Gita.

In the first place it is not very difficult to notice that Arjuna uses the expression *thy word* obviously in contrast to *his word* uttered in the beginning, *na yotsye* (I will not fight—2-9). This indicates that Arjuna has given a careful consideration to the teaching that to abstain from battle is unnatural, unwise and ridiculous; as also that he will surrender his original decision. Besides, we may also notice that the expression *thy word* is used in reference to what Krishna has said in one of the preceding verses. In verse 18-58 Krishna says, "If from egoism you will not listen to me, you shall perish." When Arjuna says that he will act according to Krishna's word, his intention is to affirm that he has given up his egoistic attitude and is willing to save himself by listening to Krishna's word. Viewed in the context of verse 2-9 as well as verse 18-58 Arjuna's words in verse 18-73 imply that he will not abstain from battle and is prepared to do the work assigned to him.

Incidentally, we have to understand why Krishna has spoken so harshly in verse 18-58. What is it that prompted him to speak of Arjuna not listening to him? Perhaps he is thinking of what Arjuna did in the beginning. In verse 2-7 Arjuna says that he takes refuge in Krishna and seeks his help in making the right choice. But in verse 2-9 Arjuna hastens to announce his decision to abstain from battle without allowing Krishna to speak even one word about his request!

This explains why Krishna is so harsh and uncertain about Arjuna's receptivity. Mark the following verse 18-59 which refers to verse 2-9.

To return to our main point, we have found that Arjuna has taken one aspect of Krishna's teaching viz. that he should not neglect the appointed work. If Arjuna is prepared to do the work assigned to him, in what way is he going to do the work? In the way of the *kṣatriya*? Or in the way of the *bhakta*? As long as he does not refuse to do the appointed work, it does not matter how he does it. But from another point of view, it does matter. There is a fundamental distinction between the two ways of doing the appointed work. If Arjuna fights as a *kṣatriya*, he may be doing the work of destruction in accordance with the law of his life as well as the law of his being, but at the same time he must reconcile himself to the inherent defect of his law of action (*vide* verse 18-48) i.e. he will have to suffer the evil consequences of slaying his own people, *svajanam*. If, on the contrary, he fights as a *bhakta*, he may be doing the work not according to the laws of human nature and life but according to the immortal law of God which wipes out all sin resulting from that terrible work (*vide* verse 18-66). Thus there exists a qualitative difference between the two ways of doing the appointed work. Since in the execution of this work an order of preference is implied, we have to see carefully if it is reflected in Krishna's teaching.

The best way to discover the clue to the order of preference attached to the two ways of doing the work of destruction is to choose the relevant verses and compare them. There is a special advantage if these verses are selected from the concluding chapter of the Gita, because in it the whole outline of the previous chapters is given with a view to deliver the message effectively

Look at the two verses which correspond to the two ways of performing the work, the way of the *kṣatriya* and the way of the *bhakta*.

- (1) Better is one's own law of action, even if defective, than an alien law well performed. One does not incur sin when one acts in agreement with the law of one's own nature (18-47).
- (2) Abandon all Dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I will deliver you from all sin, do not grieve (18-66).

The first is self-evident and does not need elaboration. It asks Arjuna to do the appointed work without deviating from his own law of action, even if it cannot help him to avoid the evil consequences of killing his own people. If he thus acts, he will be free from the sin of violating his own law of action. This is the way of the *kṣatriya*. But the second verse needs a little more elaboration. It brings out the superiority of acting in accordance with the law of God to the law of action followed by the *kṣatriya*. If Arjuna does the work of battle according to the law of the *kṣatriya*, he would fulfil the appointed work, but not be able to get over the sin and grief that come to him on account of killing his own people. If, on the

contrary, he does the same work according to the law of God by taking refuge in Him, he would fulfil the appointed work and at the same time be freed from all sin and grief. The one essential condition for taking refuge in God is to surrender all laws of action evolved for the *kṣatriya*. This is the way of the *bhakta*.

Now begins the important part of our research. If we place these two verses 18-47 and 18-66 side by side and examine them in the context of the adjoining verses, certain words which appear to eulogise Krishna's teaching and Arjuna's devotion begin to acquire new significance. Look at verse 18-64 which precedes verse 18-66. It contains two important clues from which we can discover how Krishna considers the way of the *bhakta*. But in the case of verse 18-47, which sets forth the way of the *ksatriya*, there are no such clues to be found in the adjoining verses. In verse 18-64 Krishna says two things: (1) he will be speaking the supreme word, *paramam vacah*, i.e. a word which is superior to the one already spoken by him; (2) this word is spoken with Arjuna's good in view, *te hitam*, i.e. this word will give Arjuna a benefit not obtainable by the other word. If we read verse 18-66 in the light of these two clues, it becomes obvious that in Krishna's view the way of the *bhakta* excels the way of the *ksatriya* and can bring a greater benefit to Arjuna than the one assured by the latter. In other words, Krishna's intention is that Arjuna must choose the way of the *bhakta* and become free from the evil consequences of killing his own people. Arjuna is shrewd enough to take the hint from *paramam vacah* and drops another hint when he says *karisyevacanam tava!*

Between the two ways of fighting, Arjuna's choice is definitely in favour of the way of the *bhakta*, for that is the intention of the Master of Yoga.

N. JAYASHANMUKHAM

COMPARATIVE INDIAN LITERATURE

1

As Kunst, a great authority on Asian literatures, has observed, one may not be too far wrong if one considered the Indian subcontinent as parallel to the European continent in its linguistic development and diversity. If some of our regional literatures such as Urdu, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati and Oriya trace their development back to the Middle Ages, Sanskrit, Prakrit and Tamil have to their credit ancient and vast corpora of literary works. Whereas our classical works have stood the Johnsonian test of greatness based on longevity and are replete with passages that can challenge comparison with Arnoldian touchstones chosen from Greek, Latin and English, the twentieth century fictionists in Bengali, Marathi, Malayalam and Kannada deserve international recognition. The notorious blast of Macaulay against supporting Indian literature and culture among Queen Victoria's Indian citizens—"I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia"—will no more be taken seriously by any foreigner who is well-acquainted with one or two Indian literatures. But the irony is that while eminent French and German comparatists have been busy examining in detail the relations between different European literatures, the task of objective analysis of how each Indian literature has been fructified through contact with others has not yet gained momentum though a few half-hearted starts have been made in some corners of the country. It is unfortunate that even in this realm where we should be the sole monarchs, K. V. Zvelebil, G. L. Hart III and other non-Indians have been allowed to take the lead and to serve as sources of inspiration and guidance.

There are intellectual, emotional, cultural and political needs for giving paramount importance to such a study. Sri Aurobindo spoke of the incalculable harm done to India's integrity by the work done in the area of comparative Indian philology by foreigners, who, perhaps unwittingly, sowed the seeds of linguistic chauvinism and hatred which have now grown into trees of monstrous proportions in the form of fissiparous forces threatening to destroy the unity of the country. The great Indian seer wished that he could embark upon the healing task of establishing a common origin to Sanskrit and Tamil. A similar damage may be done in the case of Indian literatures by any thoughtless studies, which, in the name of objectivity, or on the pretext of revealing truths, can set one Indian literature against another leading to meaningless squabbles. Before such a mishap, trained comparatists should do the work with the primary aim of bringing to light the fundamental unity of Indian literatures. This will ultimately pave the way for national integration at an intellectual level, without which national integration at an emotional level will only be a day-dream. Had the

ground been prepared by close studies of the traffic and exchange between neighbouring Indian languages, which share a common ancestry as well as a common cultural background, the implementation of the three-language formula would not have been a dismal failure. If the intimate connections of these literatures are made known, the introduction of a three-literature formula for the benefit of at least a limited group of undergraduate or post-graduate students may become a *fait accompli*.

It is a sin and a shame that we have not yet been able to define the Indianness of Indian literature, even though we are aware of the existence of a great Indian tradition which subsumes regional peculiarities. Should it be difficult to arrive at the salient features of what may be called "ur-Indian" literature without at the same time ignoring the specialities of each of our regional literatures? The search for the concept of a national literature will only be, in the words of Professor Narasimaiah, an attempt at "clarifying ourselves" which may enable us to gain "an awareness of the expanding society of man and other living beings as an intimate part of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam [the World-Family]." We can hope to be sensitive to Indian culture only if we are sensitive to Indian literature.

Our regional literatures provide a fertile field for comparatists who may find copybook examples for all the complex theories propounded by Western comparatists. A subtle distinction is often made between "General Literature" and "Comparative Literature". The former is defined by R. A. Sayce as the study of literature without regard to linguistic frontiers and the latter as the study of national literatures in relation to each other. In General Literature, we discuss "questions of literary theory, poetics and principles of criticism in a supra-national context; in the other we are concerned with an examination of literary texts in more than one language through an investigation of contrast, analogy, provenance or influence or a study of literary relations and communications between two or more groups that speak different languages." It goes without saying that Indian literatures offer ample scope for studies of both types.

The links that unite our regional literatures are not far to seek. The Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Puranas, Buddhism, Jainism, the Bhakti-cult, Saivism and Vaishnavism gave sustenance to every major Indian literature at different stages of its growth. Sanskrit, the language of Hindu scriptures, the language of the Courts and of education in the past, with its incredibly vast body of literature had a lasting impact upon all the other literatures. The Buddha, his metaphysics and his message of love and compassion have been a source of inspiration to many Buddhist and non-Buddhist writers in Indian languages, the Buddha legend admirably fitting into 'santa rasa', with 'karuna' as its subordinate one. Two Sanskrit Puranas describe bhakti as a female child that was born on the banks of the Cauvery or the Tamraparani in Tamilnadu, was brought up in different parts of South India and grew into an old lady in Gujarat. This is only a symbolic representation of how the bhakti

movement had its origin in the soul-animating songs of Nayanmars and Azhvans and spread to various parts of the subcontinent during the period from 650 A.D. to 950 A.D., exerting an overwhelming impact on many literatures. In the modern period, Gandhiji and the freedom movement, the Marxian ideology, the psycho-analytic theories of Freud and Jung, the English Romantics and Victorians, the French Symbolists and the three great moderns—Yeats, Pound and Eliot—seem to have shaped the Indian creative writings in different languages. A study of the impact of any one of these potent forces on the regional literatures of a particular period by a team of specialists should be a fascinating one, throwing a flood of light on the genius of each language, the cultural background of each author, the influence of the region to which he belongs and the essential oneness of the Indian temperament and sensibility:

Influence studies are considered by Anna Balakian as “the bread and wine of comparatists.” The literary relations between any two neighbouring languages in the southern or northern part of India will present many illustrative examples of different types of impact identified by comparatists such as influence, reception, plagiarism and creative treason. Prof. T. P. Meenakshi Sundaram came out with many prize discoveries pertaining to the interaction between the four major Dravidian literatures, which share many common features in terms of society, art and architecture. For the story of Nandanar, a Harijan disciple of Shiva, Gopala Krishna Bharatiar was indebted to the Kannada version which was the first to introduce the landlord who insisted on Nandanar’s completing the harvest of his entire land if he should be allowed to go to Chidambaram. Krishnadevaraya’s *Amukta Malyada* in Telugu is the story of none other than the Tamil Vaishnavite poetess Andal, also known as Sutikotutta Natchiar. Various versions of the stories of Tamil Nayanmars are to be found in Kannada, Telugu and Marathi. Musical compositions like tohra, cisa patyam and tvipatam were borrowed by Tamil from Telugu and Marathi. In the Telugu poem *Kumarasambhavam*, Nannechoda’s account of the birth of Vinayaka is based on a passage in *Tevaram*. A few popular Telugu poems sing the glory of Tondarati-potialvar.

The contact between Sanskrit and Tamil, which should be more than twenty centuries old, offers a very complex and controversial area of comparative research, inasmuch as we have here a rich case of interanimation of two great literatures. Dandin’s *Alankarikas*, for example, translated into Tamil as *Tanti Alankaram* marked the rejuvenation of Tamil poetry at a particular stage in its history and figures of speech like rupaka, upama, slesa, utpreksa and dipaka were profusely used in the Tamil Bhakti poetry. Dandin, in turn, used his knowledge of the Tamil tradition in his division of poetry into two kinds *i.e.* tokai nilai and totar nilai, meaning anthologies of unconnected verses and narrative poetry respectively. A comparatist does not stop at the identification of such areas. It is easy to identify Kamban’s source in the *Ramayana*. “But the illuminating exercise is not to rest with that trivial acknowledgement but to discover the meaning of the differences.” As K. S. Srinivasan has pointed out in

The Ethos of Indian Literature. "If the Gathasaptasati of Hala, the Aham poems in Tamil, and the Subhashitas in Sanskrit were to be examined comparatively, the portrait of social life—real or idyllic—that these songs in the three disparate languages delineate is fascinating, not only as portrait, but as invitation to further exploration."

A critical survey of migration of themes from one literature to others is a domain in which comparatists have always felt very much at home. Raymond Trousson calls it "a task often demanding and arduous, sometimes ungrateful, but ever invigorating and new, revealing something of the secret, strong life of the great figures we have made, century after century, our own glorious doubles." What he says of European myths, legends, and "named personages" is much more applicable to the Indian context since our regional literatures have been fertile in attempts to pour old wines into new bottles—particularly in their re-interpretation of legends embodied in the two great epics, *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, which "contain within their limits the majority of the fictional material for all South Asia." The multitudinous manifestations of the story of Rama, the endless variations of the episodes of *Mahabharata* and the numerous incarnations of characters like Dharma, Arjuna, Abimanyu, Aswatthama, Ravana, Indrajit, Ahalya and many more in our regional belles-lettres as well as folk literature should be God's plenty for the discerning comparatists. Such studies become all the more complex and challenging because of the impact of two or more sources on the presentation of a single character, theme or motif. For instance, the particular version of Harishchandra's story in vogue in Tamil including *Arichandrapurnam* has an additional Kannada source called *Ragavanga* of the 13th century. The folk story of Mayil Ravana popular with the Tamil women in villages is indebted to the Bengali story of Mahiravana introduced into the Tamil land by the disciples of Chaitanya.

The historical-critical account of genres from a comparative point of view will also open a fruitful field of investigation. Weisstein rightly states: "Until very recently no systematic classification of literary phenomena according to their generic qualities was attempted in the Far Eastern countries, although the theory of genres has long been a basic element of Indian aesthetics." The problems facing the Indian comparatist in this area are many. The miserable undatability of almost all the ancient works and of literary movements in India has made it very difficult for us to accurately trace the origin and development of any major genre. The successful growth of certain genres, the disappearance of some, the contamination of a few and the subtle transformations a handful of them have undergone in different regional literatures should reveal so much about the strength and weakness of the language and the cultural variation of the soil concerned. Etiemble suggests that it is firmly anchored in a specific historico-geographical context from one culture to another. Because of the uniqueness of the Indian context, many major and minor genres that had their origin in our ancient literatures are seen to have flourished in others also.

In addition to the comparison of one literature with another, comparatists have often extended their area of investigation to the study of the relationships between literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts, philosophy, history, the social sciences, the sciences proper, religion, etc., on the other. The Indian cultural tradition has always given as much importance to painting, sculpture, architecture, music and dance as to literature but their inter-influence has been an extremely neglected subject. Almost every region in the country can boast of a unique but essentially Indian style in each of these arts and their vital connections may be revealed through a patient interdisciplinary study by a group of competent comparatists. Whereas in the West we do not have many examples of a successful combination of poetry, music and religion, which, according to T. S. Eliot, is a worthy ideal to be aimed at by a great poet, such a rare fusion was within the easy reach of many of our regional poets of the Bhakti movement. It should be a challenging but highly rewarding task to study how Saivism, Vaishnavism, Buddhism or Jainism or the ideology of Freud, Jung, Marx or Gandhiji has germinated into a work of art or has influenced one or more regional literatures of a particular period. For example, a seminar on Buddhism in World Literatures, held at the I.I.T., Kanpur, in October 1983, focussed its attention on a close analysis of the impact of Buddhism on several works of art including Harsavardhan's *Nagananda* (Sanskrit), Tulsidasa's *Ramacaritamansa* (Hindi), Tagore's *Abhisar* (Bengali), Bipra Nilambara's *Deula Tola* (Oriya), Chattanar's *Manimekalai* (Tamil), Kumaran Asan's *Chandala Bhikshuki* (Malayalam), and Siva Sankara Sastri's *Sad Vakyamu* (Telugu), and the participants could unearth startling but illuminating details.

If a multi-pronged attack on our literatures with the methodological weapon advocated by Western Comparatists is launched, the gains will be manifold. Apart from identifying the Indianness of Indian literature, we will be able to overcome our obscurantist attitude to our mother tongue, our language fanaticism, and our unjustified regional pride, laying the foundation for an intellectually, emotionally and spiritually integrated India.

Goethe, in his later works, very often underlined the value of "Weltliteratur," by which he meant an awareness of national traditions other than one's own, and openness to works written in other countries and other languages. We can derive this benefit from the literatures of our country, which is a miniature globe. As individuals also, researchers stand to gain, for, has not King Charles V rightly said, "The learning of a new language confers a new soul on a man"?

SRI AUROBINDO—THE SOUL OF INDIA

(Continued from the issue of 15 August 1991)

DINENDRA KUMAR ROY, Sri Aurobindo's Bengali tutor who was living in friendly companionship with him, had the opportunity of observing and forming an opinion of his life in action. He speaks thus of Sri Aurobindo in his *Arabindo-Prasanga*. "Desireless, a man of few words, balanced in his diet, self-controlled, always given to study." ¹ Sri Aurobindo did not speak about himself and acquiring knowledge was his sole mission in life. D. K. Roy found "Sri Aurobindo is not a man of this earth; he is a god come down from heaven by some curse."²

In 1901 Sri Aurobindo went to Bengal and married Mrinalini Bose, daughter of Bhupal Chandra Bose. Regarding his married life and his relations with his wife, nothing can be more revealing than his letters to her, written in Bengali. These letters, moreover, are Sri Aurobindo's first confession of faith, the first verbal statement of the sleepless aspiration of his soul, his inextinguishable thirst for God, his unfaltering resolve to be a flawless instrument in His hands. We perceive that behind the surge and glow of his militant nationalism, there was the blazing fire of his spiritual aim. In the light of his private communication to his wife, we seem to understand something of what he means when, later, in his *Uttarpara Speech*, he said, "I came to him long ago in Baroda, some years before the Swadeshi began and I was drawn into the public field,"³ and again in the same speech, he speaks of the "Sanatana Dharma, that is nationalism."⁴ The patriotism which fired his being was not merely his love for the country but a worship of India as the living embodiment of the highest spiritual knowledge and the accumulated spiritual achievement of the human race.

On his first meeting with Sri Aurobindo, Roy writes:

"Before I met Aurobindo, I had formed an image of him somewhat like this: a stalwart figure, dressed from head to foot in immaculate European style, a stern gaze in his spectacled eyes, an affected accent and a temper exceedingly rough, one who would not tolerate the slightest breach of form. It is needless to add that I was rather disappointed in my estimate when I saw him for the first time. Who could have thought that this darkish young man with soft dreamy eyes and long, thin, wavy hair parted in the middle and reaching to the neck, clad in coarse Ahmedabad dhoti and close-fitting Indian jacket, his feet shod in old-fashioned Indian slippers with upturned toes, a face sparsely dotted with pockmarks—who could have thought that this man could be Mr. Aurobindo Ghose, a living fountain of French, Latin, and Greek? I could not have received a bigger shock if someone had pointed to the hillocks about Deoghar and said: 'Look, there stand the Himalayas.'...

He had gone to England as a mere boy, almost on the lap of his mother, and it was much after the first flush of his youth that he had returned to his motherland. But what struck me as amazing was that his noble heart had suffered not the least contamination from the luxury, the dissipation, the glitter and glamour, the diverse impressions and influences, and the strange spell of Western Society.”

A few further revealing lines penned by Dinendra Kumar Roy: “His laughter was simple as a child’s and as liquid and soft. Though an inflexible will showed at the corners of his lips, there was not the slightest trace in his heart of any worldly ambition or of selfishness. There was only the longing, rare even among the gods, of sacrificing himself for the relief of human suffering.

“Aurobindo was always indifferent to pleasure and pain, prosperity, and adversity, praise or blame. He bore all hardships with an unruffled mind.”

There is not much adequate information as to how Sri Aurobindo resumed contact with his family in Bengal. We can have some fair idea about his relationship with his family members from a letter written by him to his grandfather Rajnarayan Bose.

January 11, 1894

My dear grandfather,

I received your telegram and postcard together this afternoon. I am at present in an exceedingly out-of-the-way place, without any post-office within fifteen miles of it; so it would not be easy to telegraph. I shall probably be able to get to Bengal by the end of next week. I had intended to be there by this time, but there is some difficulty about my last month’s salary without which I cannot very easily move. However I have written for a month’s privileged leave and as soon as it is sanctioned shall make ready to start.... As I do not know Urdu, or indeed any other language of the country, I may find it convenient to bring my clerk with me. I suppose there will be no difficulty about accommodating him.

I got my uncle’s letter enclosing Saro’s. The letter might have presented some difficulties, for there is no one who knows Bengali at Baroda—no one at least whom I could get at. Fortunately the smattering I acquired in England stood me in good stead, and I was able to make out the sense of the letter, barring a word here and a word there ..

If all goes well, I shall leave Baroda on the 18th; at any rate it will not be more than a day or two later.”

Believe me,
Your affectionate grandson
Arvind A. Ghose

Nirodbaran reports: “...but he did pay a visit to Bengal that year, the first since his return to India. He stayed for some time at the house of his grandfather

at Deoghar Naturally all the members of the family were jubilant. Sarojini, his sister, gives a pen-picture: 'A very delicate face, long hair cut in the English fashion. Sejda was a very shy person.' When his mother saw him, she exclaimed: 'He is not my Auro. My Auró was so small. Very well, let me see if he has a cut in his finger.' The cut was shown and she was satisfied. Those of us who attended on him after his accident in 1938 also remember that cut in his finger .."

How greatly Sri Aurobindo enjoyed this visit to the family can be appreciated from a letter to his sister Sarojini on his return to Baroda. Here are some extracts from the letter:

Baroda Camp
25th August, 1894

My dear Saro,

...It will be, I fear quite impossible to come to you again so early as the Puja, though if I only could, I should start tomorrow. Neither my affairs, nor my finances will admit of it. Indeed it was a great mistake for me to go at all; for it has made Baroda quite intolerable to me. There is an old story about Judas Iscariot, which suits me down to the ground. Judas, after betraying Christ, hanged himself and went to Hell where he was honoured with the hottest oven in the whole establishment. Here he must burn for ever and ever; but in his life he had done one kind act and for this they permitted him by special mercy of God to cool himself for an hour every Christmas on an iceberg in the North Pole. Now this has always seemed to me not mercy, but a peculiar refinement of cruelty. For how could Hell fail to be ten times more Hell to the poor wretch after the delicious coolness of the iceberg? I do not know for what enormous crime I have been condemned to Baroda, but my case is just parallel. Since my pleasant sojourn with you at Baidyanath, Baroda seems a hundred times more Baroda....

You say in your letter 'all here are quite well'; yet in the very next sentence I read 'Bari has an attack of fever'. Do you mean then that Bari is nobody? Poor Bari! That he should be excluded from the list of human beings is only right and proper, but it is a little hard that he should be denied existence altogether. I hope it is only a slight attack. I am quite well. I have brought a fund of health with me from Bengal, which, I hope it will take me some time to exhaust; but I have just passed my twenty-second milestone, August 15 last, since my birthday and am beginning to get dreadfully old....

With love,

Your affectionate brother,
Auro''8

At that time Barindra was fourteen years of age and Sarojini two years older than Barindra. The eldest brother, Benoybhusan, had returned to India by then

to make a career in the Cooch Behar State Service. Manmohan had just completed his studies at Oxford and earned his M.A. degree and been appointed Professor of English in Government Service. Amongst his family members his maternal uncle, Jogendra, the eldest son of Rajnarayan Bose, was perhaps the closest to Sri Aurobindo. He was a cheerful and kindly man and Sri Aurobindo always enjoyed his company, calling him "the 'Prophet of Ishabgul' for he used to prescribe this indigenous laxative to all with any kind of stomach complaint."

The Baroda period reveals considerable literary activity marked by a variety of inspiration. After a concentrated study of the great literature of India, Sri Aurobindo started writing poems on Indian subjects and surroundings. He revealed some of the beauties of Bengali and Sanskrit literatures. From Sanskrit he made translations of three remarkable works: Kalidasa's *Meghadūta*, *Vikramorvasie* and Bhartrihari's *Niti Shataka*. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar observes: "Indeed, some of these so-called translations are so good and so feast the ear and chasten the mind that they may more appropriately be described rather as transfigurations-in terms of colour, sound and in-wrought imagery."¹⁰

Sri Aurobindo devoted his time to acquainting himself with the culture and ideals of his country, its ancient lore. He was greatly impressed by Michael Madhusudan Dutta and Bankim Chandra Chatterji. R. R. Diwakar observes: "His acquaintance with Sanskrit was not restricted to religious or philosophical texts. He was equally at home with Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti as with the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita, and the Manusmṛiti."¹¹

In two subsequent articles I will give some glimpses of Sri Aurobindo's original poetical compositions of the Baroda period—narrative poetry, dramatic poetry, and other poetry both sacred and secular.

(To be continued)

NILIMA DAS

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- 5 *Sri Aurobindo for All Ages*, by Nirodbaran, p 33
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MEGHADŪTA: A STUDY OF THE INTERPLAY OF “DARK” AND “BRIGHT” IMAGES

(Continued from the issue of 15 August 1991)

IN another passage we are shown the temple-courtesans swaying the white chowries the handles of which are shining with the lustre of gems; to this brightness is contrasted the side-glances of the courtesans' dark eyes, glances which are made concrete by Sanskrit poets (Kālidāsa too utilizes effectively the convention) as a string of black bees—¹ *madhukara-śrenī-dīrghān kaṭāsān* [35]. The artful play of the black brows sends forth flashes of dark and bright light, *kṛṣṇasāra-prabhā*. The word *kṛṣṇasāra* means “white and black” and also “the spotted deer”. Both acceptations are to be kept in mind. Further, these flashes are compared to black bees flying after white jasmine waving in the wind, *kundakṣepānuga-madhukara* [47].

In one verse [44] first the poet speaks of the dark-blue peacock's feather with the bright luminous circles, the eyes of the peacock's tail which are skilfully compared to blue lotuses, *kuvalaya*; then in a few words he shows moonlight falling on the peacock, emphasizing especially the white corners of the peacock's eye: *dhautāpāṅgam Hara-śaśi-rucā...mayūram* [44], “the peacock, the corners of whose eyes are washed with the light of Śiva's moon”. Here we should remember that a peacock is also called by the descriptive epithet *śuklāpāṅga* “having white eye-corners”, an expression which Kālidāsa himself uses [22].

Using the mythological reference of the Gaṅgā falling from Heaven on Śiva's matted hair, the poet again creates a picture in which he mixes concrete and subtle associations of black and white. Gauri's frown, *bhrukuti* is contrasted with Gaṅgā's smile. Now the smile is the white foam; although no explicit mention of colour is made with respect to the frown, we can easily grasp the poet's intention, and psychologically and conventionally the Indian mind associates “dark” with frown. Gaṅgā's wave-hands caught at the crescent moon seized Śiva's hair [50]. Here too we see the foamy whiteness of the waves made whiter still by the moon against the blackness of Śiva's hair.

Finally in this section we will consider the last verse, in which the Yakṣa introduces Alakā, which is painted bright. But when the rains come, the clouds gathered on the city pouring bright drops of rain, are like the black hair of a lovely woman adorned with strings of pearls [63]

¹ To the non-Indian reader these conventions may seem strange. In this connection we may note what Franklin Edgerton says, “Some standard conventions of Indian poetry, () seem to us strange, why, for instance, should Hindu poets always think of laughter as white? We can only say that they do (We associate jealousy and envy with the colour green,)” *The Cloud Messenger* (Ann Arbor paperbacks 1964) pp 3-4, Intr

(iii) Alakā and the Yakṣa's Home

There is a marked difference between the description of the cloud's route and that of Alakā, the city lying on the slopes of Kailāsa. Alakā is said to be the beloved bride of the snow-white Kailāsa; she too is bright and lovely, the shining Ganges is her silken garment which slips down revealing her naked beauty *srasta-Gangā-dugūlā* [63]. A definite transition has taken place.

Rabindranath Tagore says that in the first part the strange and varied beauty of the earth is described. When one has journeyed through it, one arrives at the eternal beauty, *nitya saundarya*, of the city of Alakā.¹ Tagore's perception is just. Kālidāsa indeed makes this distinction clearly tangible from the very first mention of Alakā. The Yakṣa tells the cloud.

*gantavyā te vasatī alakā rāma yakṣeśvarānām
bāhyodyāna-sthita-hera-śiraś-candrikā-dhauta-ramyā* // [7]

You will go up to Alakā where the wealthy Yaksas live, there the city-palaces are whitewashed by the moonlight falling from the head of Śiva seated in the surrounding gardens

Śiva lives just outside the city, the moon on his head whitewashes the houses with its light. The nearness of Śiva shows at once the unearthly nature of the city and its whiteness and brightness.

We have seen that the Yakṣa fallen from his higher status lost his glory. This has made him lose his lustre, thus preparing the field for the metaphorical texture. On the earth, light and shade, dark and bright, together make up the pattern of beauty "There is a darkness in terrestrial things."² In Alakā there is no real darkness. The Yakṣa too was luminous when he was there before the fall and he will again be luminous when he returns after the expiration of his curse. In one of the verses he compares himself with the sun [77]. In Alakā he does not identify himself with the cloud. When he paints the city and his own house, the description glows with bright colours. There is hardly anything dark, only once [74] does he speak of the hills of *indrañīla*, sapphire, which has been used earlier to describe the darkness of the cloud [46]. But very astutely Kālidāsa notes that these hills are not natural to Alakā, they are artificial hills, *kṛdā śaila*; they are only playthings. As also the peacock *nilakañṭha* [76], the bird with dark-blue neck is a plaything.

The presence of the cloud too is greatly mitigated; even when the Yakṣa speaks of the cloud, it is not on the dark aspect that the stress lies: we feel his presence only as the messenger of the Yakṣa. Wherever this messenger cloud or

¹ *Op cit*, p. 392

² Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri—A Legend and a Symbol*, in Birth Centenary Library, Vols. 28-29, p. 17

other clouds become prominent in an image it is not to incorporate it and give it a central or even a significant positive part, but to show that darkness has no place in Alakā

In the first verse of this section [64] the cloud is compared with the city palaces, but the poet is careful enough not to mention the cloud's hue. The Yakṣa says that the cloud is comparable in many respects to the palaces; you have your lightning, they have their lovely women; you have the rainbow, they have paintings,. the palaces can bear comparison with you on various points—*taiṣ tair viśeṣaiḥ*—. But the colour-quality which was so strong in the previous part is altogether ignored here

Once again the cloud is mentioned only to show that it has no place in the love-scene of Alakā. The Yakṣa indirectly asks the cloud not to cover the moon, because when the moonlight falls on the magical *candrakānta* stone, drops of water will ooze out from it to soothe the fatigue of women exhausted in the embraces of their lovers [67]

Other clouds are shown flying out of the windows of the palaces like smoke [68].

The impression we get of Alakā is that of brightness. Here various bright colours are suggested: rich-hued-flowers [65, 75], precious stones, gold, crystals are scattered to make a brilliant, shining picture. A pool is thus described:

vāpī cāsmiṇ marakata-śilā-baddha-sopāna-mārgā .
haimaiḥ syūtā kamala-mukulaiḥ snigdha-vaidurya-nāliḥ / [73]

And there is a pond with a flight of steps that are of emerald stones, and decked with golden lotus-buds on shining stalks of lapis lazuli.

And this luminous city is the place of happiness where immortal lovers live in the joy of love's union: love which does not need the instigation of Kāma who fears to draw his bow with the string of black bees [71].

In love's union there is no darkness, the terrace on which the lovers meet is made of crystal, *sita-manī*, “white gem”, on which the light of the stars reflects like bright flowers—*harmya-sthalāni jyotiś-chāyā-kusuma-racanāni* [66]. And the whole love play which is concretely described is not a thing of the dark; the light-giving gems cannot be put out:

nivi-bandhocchvasana-sithilam yatra yakṣāṅganānām
vāsah kāmād anibhrta-kareṣu aksipatsu priyesu /
arcis-tuṅgān abhimukham api prāpya ratna-pradīpān
hrī-mūḍhānām bhavati viphalā-preraṇāś cūrṇa-mustīḥ // [69]

As their lovers, in passion, pull with naughty hands at the garments of the

Yakṣa-women—garments which the girdles hold no longer—they throw, bewildered in shame, handfuls of powder at the high-flaming jewel-lamps; the powder is thrown in vain even though it hits the mark.

Such is the bright picture that the Yakṣa conjures up before the cloud's eyes And he remembers the splendours of his home, remembers too that he was himself once bright and by his brightness made his house bright too. But now in his absence it will certainly not be like before.

*kṣāma-cchāyam bhavanam adhunā mad-viyogena nūnam
sūryāpāye na khalu kamalam pūsyati svām abhikyām / [77]*

...the house, its lustre now, no doubt, dimmer owing to my absence! When the sun sets the lotus does not cherish its own beauty, does it?

(iv) The Yakṣa's Wife

Like his home which has lost its brightness his wife, paragon of all perfections, most beautiful [79], most bright, has certainly become pale too. She is not dark: this pallor is only brightness diminished because of separation, because the Yakṣa was for their home the sun. Her lips which were red like ripe berries, *pakva-bimbādharauṣṭhī* [79] have become discoloured, *bhinna-varna* [81]. Her sun is now far away, it does not give any warmth; for her it is winter, the cold of separation has withered her brightness. The Yakṣa says, "I fear she has changed as a lotus afflicted by winter",

jātārṁ manye śísira-mathitām padminīm vānya-rūpām / [80]

Her beauty which was luminous, fair as the moon's, has now diminished, the brightness has fallen from her body. The Yakṣa describes her face thus:

*hasta-nyastārṁ mukham...
indor dainyam tvad-upasaraṇa-klista-kānter bibharti / [81]*

"Face resting on her hand has assumed the miserable appearance of the moon whose loveliness is befogged by your (cloud's) approach"

Or again, using the same image of the moon:

prācīmūle tanum iva kalā-mātra-śesām himāmsōh / [87]

She is “like the slender form of the cold-rayed moon left in the Eastern horizon with just one digit left” The image is significant. It shows that she has not lost all her fairness, that she has not died and been robbed of her beauty but that she is at the point of dying like the pale moon in the East just before disappearing completely.

Another simile suggests very clearly that the light has not completely disappeared from her life or beauty from her body:

sābhre 'hniva sthala-kamalinīm na prabuddhām na suptām / [89]

“She is like a *sthala-kamalinī*¹ on a cloudy day, neither awake nor asleep”

Here again we find the metaphorical relation of the Yakṣa with the sun. The simile also suggests oppositely the diminution of the brightness both of the Yakṣa who is far away, symbolically associated with the cloud—in this line “the cloudy day” suggests the association—as well as of the Yakṣa’s wife who is like a half-faded flower

The paleness is also indicated by her neglect of ornaments. She does not care about her garments, which are soiled and dull-coloured [83], she has abandoned on the very first day of separation the garland that adorned her hair, *śikhā-dāma* [85]. She no longer wears the string of pearls she usually wore: *muktā-jālam cira-paricutaṁ* [93]

The idea that the pallor is not an absence of brightness, but is subdued, diminished brightness, is brought out adequately by contrasting it with light. The Yakṣa asks the cloud not to flash forth his lightning. Don’t make it brighter than the pale glow of fireflies, *khadyotālvilasita-nibha* [78].

In the description of Alakā and of the Yakṣa’s wife darkness has practically no descriptive significance. The poet avoids almost all things, dark or black. However, we should mention two exceptions: the hair and the eyes. Though in this section Kālidāsa gives them hardly any prominent or metaphorical value, he mentions them in several places as part of the beauty he is depicting. The hair and the eyes—side-glances, *katākṣa*—are such an integral part of the Indian aesthetic world, part of woman’s beauty, that it is hardly possible to avoid mentioning them without doing violence to the poetic description. And hair and eyes, we should not forget, are always dark in India.

(B) Imagery in the Lyrical Passage

In the Yakṣa’s message two parts are to be distinguished, one in indirect speech [98-100], the other in direct speech [101-109]. The tone of the first part is

¹ Lit “land-lotus” *hibiscus mutabilis*. It opens in the morning with the rise of the sun, and as the sun declines it changes its colour and fades in the evening

controlled, the Yaksa is mentioned in the third person. But in the second part the Yaksa's *persona* comes forward without any go-between.

The dominant thing here is not the image-making; the Yaksa's emotions, his yearning, the pangs of separation, anxiety, passion, express themselves in an outburst of impressions and memories; but they do not get concrete form. It is not often that we get such an outburst of feelings in Sanskrit poetry which, on the whole, proceeds from image to image. But here we have a rapid flow; sometimes images come, but there is no rest so as to elaborate them into perfect pictures. The Yaksa sees his wife's reflections in the entire Nature:

*syāmāsvangam cakuta-harini-preksite drṣṭi-pātam
gaṇḍa-cchāyām śaśini śikhinām varha-bhāresu keśān /
utpaśyāmi pratanusu nadī-vīcisu bhrū-vilāsān
hantaikastham kva cid api na te bhuru sādṛśyam asti //*

I see your body in the *śyāma* creepers; your glance in the eyes of the startled deer; the colour of your cheeks in the moon; your hair in the thick plumage of the peacocks; the artful play of your brows in the tiny ripples of the rivers. But alas! O timid girl, there is nowhere to be found, gathered in one place, the image of you.

But they are all passing impressions, he cannot grasp her, not even in imagination—no sooner has he painted her picture, than it is washed away by his own tears [102],—nor even in dream [103].

The metaphorical texture is not significant here; impressions, dreams, memories rise up, then perish immediately, to make room for other impressions, dreams, memories. All the senses seek but none can grasp her.

Such being the general tone of this part, we find no metaphorical texture with significant imagery of dark or bright. We can perhaps speak of one genuine embodiment in concrete form without the use of similes, which becomes concrete only by the strength of the feeling. The second half of the last verse of this lyrical passage is the climax and the concrete form of love:

*snehān āhuḥ kim api viraha-hrāsīnas te hy abhogād
iṣṭe vastuny upacita-rasāh prema-rāsībhavanti / [109]*

People say that affection diminishes in absence. Not so; when the cherished object is not enjoyed, affection stores up its essence and grows into love's vastness.

The verb *rāsībhū* gives us the impression of crystallisation. But we cannot really speak of any impression of colour, though after having read the poem one

may be tempted to think of this crystallized heap of love as the bright snow-capped peaks which are, so to say, the accumulated laughter of Śiva,—*rāśi-bhūtaḥ...tryambakasyāṭṭahāsah* [58]—who burnt to ashes *kāma*, before accepting to marry Pārvatī who had purified her love by *tapas* of self-purification. Also here Kālidāsa hints at a transformation, at two gradations of love, *sneha* becomes *preman*.

In this study we have taken only a fragmentary aspect of poetic imagination. If one wants to apprehend and appreciate more fully one must also inquire into the texture of sound, form, touch, smell and rhythmical and metrical devices. Kālidāsa has used, with wonderful sensibility and vision, various figures of speech; "...the figures," says Edwin Gerow speaking about poetry in general and Sanskrit poetry in particular, "far from being extrinsic, constitute the very form of its expression and are the very means through which poetry is distinguished and becomes *voll Gesinnung*. From the figures of speech derives that particular charm which is the innermost mark of the poetic apprehension"¹

And Kālidāsa is supremely representative of classical Sanskrit poets. In his works, sound and sense, with all their figures, *śabdālankāra* and *arthālankāra*, have found their highest expression. Therefore, for a full poetic apprehension one must take the various textures; nevertheless, even from the investigation of one partial field, we can acquire a greater insight into Kālidāsa's poetic world. We see that his creative imaginative *pratibhā* does not merely fabricate brilliant scenes, but creates a world which becomes real. Even if, following Susanne Langer, we say that poetry is "virtual life", yet, while reading Kālidāsa, we forget its virtuality and experience life in its sensuous, imaginative beauty and symbolic insight.

(Concluded)

RANAJIT SARKAR

¹ *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech*, (The Hague—Paris 1971) p 15

THE STORY OF AN OLD HOUSE

ALL houses have a story behind them, specially the old ones. One always feels curious to know who have lived there, what kind of lives they have led, what happy or sad events have taken place within their walls. Here, in Pondicherry, the old colonial villas remind one of ladies well past their prime, sitting sedately dressed in silk and lace and hiding their secrets behind their fans. It is not so easy to find out their histories but sometimes one stumbles across something interesting.

The centre-piece of this tale is the house which is diagonally across the Ashram Main building and is a hostel for girls of the Ashram school. Now it stands in dignity, painted light grey and matching harmoniously with all the other houses of the Ashram. But it was not so twenty-five-years ago. In those days it was the only house that did not belong to the Ashram in its close vicinity. Its walls were a dull yellow but with rain and neglect they had almost turned black. Its pavements were so dirty that no-one ever stepped on them. Some poor rickshaw-pullers had settled there, with their numerous children and often it became the stage of their dramatic quarrels. The doors and windows of this house remained always shut. Sometimes a dim light was seen burning on the ground floor but no sound ever escaped from those walls. The only thing that came out of the house was the foul smell of stagnant drain-water. Although it was next to the school it did not in any way attract our attention, at least not the small children's.

As we grew older, however, we noticed that every morning the window which was nearest to the cross-road was opened and a thin old lady came and sat at it. She would look at the passers-by as if she were watching a film. Often she sat there the whole morning and when it was time for her lunch she shut the window and went in. It was almost a ritual for her to sit at her window, motionless, day after day. Once in a while we saw another person hovering around her, another thin and tall old woman. We understood she was her sister because they looked very alike. They were both dark and thin, wore loose faded frocks and tied their grey hair in two braids. But the sister always remained in the shadow and we could only see the lady who sat at the window.

We children began to call her "the witch". With the innocent cruelty so natural to children we used to often shout at her from our classroom window which was on the first floor across the road. "Witch, witch!" we called out, and when she looked at us with her beady eyes we ran away.

One day we were explained by our teacher that if we continued to behave in this fashion we would give the old lady a very bad impression and that she would never sell this house to the Ashram. The teacher made us understand how important it was for the Ashram to buy this house as it was so close to the Main Building.

“Why don’t you say ‘bonjour’ to her? Or smile at her when she looks at you?”, we were told. But all this good advice had little effect on us.

When the Art Room was built next to our classroom we spent most of our free time there. From there we had a better view of “the witch”’s house because now we could see the whole front portion. Behind the massive gates was the garden—or what must have once been the garden. It was wholly covered with weeds and wild creepers. There was a quaint-looking well at the far end. Squirrels ran in the wild grass and over the rusted grill of the verandah on the first floor. Pigeons roosted on every pillar. In the centre of this neglected garden was a circle in brick, as if to demarcate the place of a special plant or a rare tree but there were no plants in it now.

A few years later we heard that the witch had breathed her last and so had her sister. We also came to know that the Ashram had bought the house. Soon it was repaired, repainted and totally transformed. Then we were told that it was going to be turned into a hostel for the girls of the school.

In due time we went there, bag and baggage in hand. Finally, we could see the inside of “the witch”’s house, but when we approached the window where she used to sit there was no eerie feeling, no ghosts lingered. The place had been fully exorcised. The doors and windows had been flung open and the house almost smarted in front of all that sunshine.

The first thing we wanted to do was to start a garden. We began by removing the brick circle in the centre of the plot because it did not fit into our plans. But hardly had we dug a foot that we had to stop, for to our astonishment we found, buried in the pit, nearly twenty wine-bottles. We were so astonished that we did not know what to do. We threw them away and got along with our work after a while.

But the question remained in our minds: “Who had buried those bottles?” Surely it wasn’t our witch. It dawned on us then that some people had lived there before, some French family who had probably built it. Some people who called it home and passed it from father to son. But who were they?

Fifteen long years have passed since that day when six young-girls had unearthed those old wine-bottles in the front yard of their hostel. Only now their question has been answered. The story was recounted by a French lady, well in her sixties, who had come to visit Pondicherry, the town of her birth. She had left it forty years earlier in a ship that had left from the old pier which is no more.

“Oh, that house!” she exclaimed when asked about the people who had lived there. “But, of course you found wine-bottles there. It belonged to a family of wine-merchants. They sold, in Pondicherry, the finest wine from Bordeaux. I may add that the gentleman who was the master of that house was my great grandfather from my mother’s side. That was his way of keeping wine cool before serving it. He used to ask his servants to fetch wet sea sand. When they had filled the pit with it they buried the bottles for an hour or so. And this is how

chilled Bordeaux wine was served on hot evenings at his table in Pondicherry. It seems that keeping the bottles underground helped to preserve wine longer in this climate so far away from France, and this tradition continued for a long time."

"But that is not the only marvellous thing about that old villa," she continued. "One of the great love-stories of those days took place there. And it was told and retold from one generation to another until the French left Pondicherry and took it with them in their hearts."

The wine-merchant and master of that house was known for his lavish dinners which were served when special guests were invited. He was particularly interested in inviting the captains of the ships which cast anchor at our little port. This served two purposes: one, to get news of France—the other, to show off the cuisine of his house so that its fame might spread by word of mouth as the ship continued its journey around the world.

To one of these dinners was invited a captain who was more enchanted by the daughter of his host than all the delicacies of creole cuisine. This young girl, who had blonde hair and blue eyes, was so lovely that by the end of the dinner the captain, a man from a very well-to-do family, asked for her hand in marriage. The father, at first a little taken aback, agreed to his proposal but laid a condition. The suitor could marry his daughter only if he decided to live in Pondicherry, giving up his career as a sea-farer and giving up the social status he enjoyed in France, for he could not bear the thought of being separated from his daughter. The captain was so smitten that he agreed to this. He took his ship back to France and returned within a few months to marry the wine merchant's daughter and settle down in Pondicherry. They lived happily ever after, raised a large family and lived long enough to see their grandchildren grow up.

This is where the story ended, the rest being left to our imagination. Probably, when Pondicherry became a part of India and the old French families left for France they sold their properties to the local people. Maybe this is how our "witch" acquired or inherited this house. Not being young and inclined to gardening, she had left it to us to discover the treasure which lay buried in her garden.

SUNAYANA

NEW AGE NEWS

COMPILED AND PRESENTED BY WILFRIED

Homoeopathy Today

SRI AUROBINDO has commented, in his letters and talks, on most of the well-known medical systems, recommending a pragmatic, flexible approach which recognizes the specific merits of each system as well as its limitations. It is not a question of allopathy versus homoeopathy versus naturopathy, but rather of combining them or selecting any one of them for the benefit of the individual patient. An open-minded homoeopath may send a patient, if the case is complicated, to the allopath for a sophisticated diagnosis, before starting his therapy with those tiny balls of sweet white powder. He would not deny either the great efficiency of allopathy in disciplines such as surgery or emergency treatment. But he does have his own role to play in treating a large number of disorders.

Homoeopathy is very much in line with the Mother's view that each illness is to be considered on an individual basis. Therefore, homoeopaths often spend much time, during the first meeting, asking the patient dozens or scores of questions in the effort to find the right medication. At the end they may prescribe a drug such as XY D30. This means that the substance XY has been diluted in the powder in such a way that it could be compared to putting a drop of XY into a gigantic terrestrial basin containing ten times the water of all the earth's oceans taken together. This mega-dilution has traditionally provoked many allopaths, who ridicule the system, calling it unscientific, bogus or quack. On the other hand, they cannot deny the numberless successful cures of the followers of Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), the German founder of the system, himself originally an allopath. How to explain those cures? Well, it is just the psychological placebo-effect, say the critics. In other words, if you would give simple powder and tell the patient it is precious medicine, his faith in the doctor and inner expectation would have the same result.

For the patient it does not matter, of course, how exactly he is cured. If it is "merely" the psychological effect, so much the better. From a spiritual standpoint, a cure effected through psychological collaboration of the individual has a much higher value than the passive experience of biochemical processes in the body. Hahnemann himself believed in the principle "Similia similibus curantur": the similar is cured by the similar. He discovered this principle when once he took some China-bark to observe its effect on his body. To his surprise he noted that this substance, used for treating malaria, induced symptoms in him that are normally associated with malaria, a kind of intermittent fever. So the doctor concluded—rather boldly—that the same substances which make healthy

persons ill could help to dispel illness in the sick. However, the respective substance was to be administered in those enormous dilutions whose precise potencies he determined in numberless experiments.

Recently, the position of homoeopathy got new substantial support from experiments conducted by Prof. Gunther Harisch, who teaches biochemistry at the Hannover Veterinary College. To test the effect of highly diluted drugs on laboratory rats, he administered very high potencies such as Phosphorus D1000 or Kalium cyanatum D30. When he and his assistant examined the rats, they were amazed to note very significant changes in the metabolism of the animals. Thus, the tissue hormone histamine was found in increased quantities, or there was the higher production of numberless enzymes—all of it brought about by the drop-in-the-ocean medicines.¹ Prof. Harisch has no personal interest in supporting homoeopathy, but he affirms the correctness of his experiments. "We believe in our results," he said, "but we cannot explain them."

The professor deplors the attitude of his colleagues who reject the system without bothering to examine it, an attitude which he qualifies as "unscientific". Meanwhile, patients all over the world are little worried about the objections of critics. As the magazine *Der Stern* reports in its title story (14-3-91), homoeopathy enjoys great popularity in Germany today. It is known to be especially effective in treating chronic troubles such as arthritis, skin allergies or asthma. And, contrary to popular belief, it can also produce spectacular cures occasionally. *Der Stern* describes the case of a 49-year old forest worker who suffered from a very painful trigeminal neuralgia (chronic inflammation of a facial nerve). In a long history of allopathic treatment he was advised to have all the teeth of the lower left jaw removed, and the jaw itself was surgically flattened on that side. Without the slightest effect. The man constantly needed very heavy medication including powerful pain-killers to cope with the symptoms. When he finally approached a homoeopath, he was hardly able to open his mouth and speak. The healing practitioner (not a doctor) found that eight symptoms corresponded to *spigelia* (male fern). He administered five drops immediately. The patient felt a positive effect after a few minutes and could speak more easily. After two more weeks he was completely cured.

*

The journal *esotera* (3-3-91) reports that two homoeopathic drugs recently passed very strict scientific tests at clinics in Great Britain and France. In both tests there was a parallel giving of placebos to other patients or to the same persons alternately, but neither those persons nor the doctors nor the experts evaluating the tests knew who was given what substance.

¹ Harisch has published the detailed results in a book titled *Jenseits vom Milligramm* (Medizin-Verlag Springer, Heidelberg 1990)

In the first case the patients were given *Rhus toxicodendron 6c*, a substance from ivy, diluted 1 to 100 six times successively and thus totally useless from the viewpoint of allopathy. Nevertheless, the homoeopathic treatment of fibrositis, a very painful rheumatism of muscles, tendons, etc., was so successful as compared to the placebo-treatment that the renowned "British Medical Journal" felt prompted to publish a note on the matter, for the first time in its long history as a journal of orthodox-school medicine.

The test in a French clinic investigated the effectiveness of "oscilococcium" on influenza within 48 hours, with 500 patients and 149 doctors participating. The substance of this drug is from the heart and liver of ducks, diluted 1 to 100 no less than 200 times. One can mathematically figure out that hardly a molecule of the substance as such is left in the medication at the end of the dilution process. Again, placebos were given (this time exclusively to a parallel group) and none of the participants, doctors included, knew who was given medicine or placebos, respectively. Two days later, 17.1% of the patients given homoeopathic treatment had visibly improved, as compared to 10.3% of the placebo-patients. The British medical journal, *The Lancet*, published a commentary that this kind of difference was remarkable and would be evaluated as significant in any other test of medical drugs. The journal openly acknowledged that the effectiveness of homoeopathic treatment could not be doubted in this case.

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Finally, some interesting information provided by the French news magazine *L'Express* (21-3-91). It reports on a poll, conducted on January 7-8, 1991, among Frenchmen aged 15 or older. They were asked whether, in the case of illness, they would in certain cases take help from homoeopathy, acupuncture, psychotherapy or hypnosis. Homoeopathy finished on top of the scale, with 81% of the interviewees answering "Yes, at least in certain cases", 16% "in no case" and 3% no response. Acupuncture came second with 78/21/1%. Psychotherapy and hypnosis got only 59/23% "Yes" votes. Internationally, homoeopathy today seems to be the leading system of alternative medicine. Nevertheless, the number of truly competent practitioners is said to be very small. In the absence of experience and intuition, even a computer program such as "MacRepertory" won't help: if asked which symptoms might require a prescription of phosphorus, for instance, the computer will name 1198 indications and print out 71 pages.

Students' Section
THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

Seventieth Seminar

21 April 1991

“WHAT ARE THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN
SRI AUROBINDO'S YOGA AND OTHER SPIRITUAL PATHS?”

The Doctrine of Māyā and Sri Aurobindo's Integral View

Speech by Desikan Narasimhan

AN adequate treatment of the subject of our seminar would require a comparison of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga with all the other major spiritual systems. But such an exhaustive comparison is quite beyond the scope of my paper and I shall leave it to others here to accomplish this stupendous task. I shall restrict myself to a theme which has long bewildered me with its diverse propositions.

Mayavada has been a strong cultural and philosophical issue in India for long centuries. As a philosophical doctrine it came into existence with the great spiritual, philosophical and literary genius, Shankara, supposedly in the 9th century A.D. The propounder of this *Weltanschauung* was a most dynamic personality and even during his life-time, which is believed to have been exceedingly short, his thought had become fairly influential in the vast sub-continent. The succeeding centuries witnessed a rapid growth and dominance of it and the philosophers, who made their appearance on the stage of Indian life during this time, on the whole either accepted him and wrote elaborative commentaries on his works or rejected him and wrote refutations of the view that the world is Maya, an illusion, *mūhyā*, false or *asat*, non-existent or *vyāvahārika*, purely empirical and phenomenal. However, it continued to be the major and dominant trend of Indian thought with the exception of a few intrusions upon it by later philosophers like Ramanuja, Nimbarka and Vallabha who wrote scathing criticisms of its tenets. It survived these attacks until about the middle of the 19th century, when primarily through the impact of the West a new ferment started in Indian life. A reaction set in against the doctrine of Maya and its world-and-life-denying attitude. Thinkers and yogis of Indian life, one after another, emphasized action and the values of the life in the world. The climax of this movement came with Sri Aurobindo's splendid refutation of the doctrine of Maya in *The Life Divine*. But before we proceed to Sri Aurobindo's objections let us take stock of Mayavada itself as propounded by its leading

exponents. We shall now briefly sum up their position.

The fundamental contention of Mayavada is that the world of multitudinous names and forms that we experience is not permanent, not real, is devoid of any real value or content. *Jagatprapañca* or the flux of cosmic existence derives whatever reality it seems to possess from Maya, which is the cosmic principle of illusion. Maya is of the nature of Ignorance or *ajñāna* which is not mere absence of knowledge but an indescribable power of creativity that projects false appearances on the basis of the one abiding reality, *nirguṇa* Brahman. Maya or *ajñāna* is said to have a twofold function or power: one is *āvaranaśakti* or the power of hiding or obscuring the true nature of reality, and the other is *vikṣepaśakti* or the power of projecting or superimposing false appearances on the locus of the hidden reality. But this does not involve the slightest change or modifications of the nature of Brahman who is the eternally unchangeable substratum of this phenomenal show. But in what sense is the world *mūṭhyā*? In the view of Mayavada, the world is *mūṭhyā* neither in the sense of being a mere nothing or zero, *śūnya*, nor in the sense of being a meaningless self-contradiction, *tuccha*, nor in the sense of being a fancy, *alīka*. Eminent authorities on the teaching of Shankara-Vedānta are agreed that the world is *mūṭhyā* in the sense of being *anurvacanīya* i. e., logically indescribable.

Thus, Mayavada is essentially an expression of a sense of inexplicability, *anurvacanīyatā*, in the presence of a logical contradiction between, on the one hand, the normal experience of the world of multiple finite objects and, on the other, the supernormal spiritual experience of an undifferentiated infinite existence. The quality and the intensity of the latter, its undifferentiated unity in contrast to the multiplicity of names and forms of the normal experience and a rigid adherence to the logical law of “non-contradiction” are sufficient to show Mayavada as a logical philosophical consequence. Unity being undifferentiated, in fact absolutely featureless, and then more intense as an experience, multiplicity must naturally become unreal and illusory.

Srī Aurobindo refutes Mayavada both experientially and logically. In the development of his own yogic realisation, the Nirvanic experience of Shankara which saw the world as a shadow-play of symbols signifying nothing was later followed by a still greater spiritual experience which came to him quite unasked and which, affirmed the reality of the world. I make no apology for quoting a portion of a letter on the subject *in extenso*. He says:

“...to reach Nirvana was the first radical result of my own yoga. It threw me suddenly into a condition above and without thought, unstained by any mental or vital movement; there was no ego, no real world—only when one looked through the immobile senses, something perceived or bore upon its sheer silence a world of empty forms, materialised shadows, without true substance. There was no One or many even, only just absolutely That, featureless, relationless,

sheer, indescribable, unthinkable, absolute, yet supremely real and solely real. This was no mental realisation nor something glimpsed somewhere above,—no abstraction,—it was positive, the only positive reality,—although not a spatial physical world, pervading, occupying or rather flooding and drowning this semblance of a physical world, leaving no room or space for any reality but itself, allowing nothing else to seem at all actual, positive or substantial. I cannot say there was anything exhilarating or rapturous in the experience, as it then came to me,—(the ineffable Ananda I had years afterwards),—but what it brought was an inexpressible Peace, a stupendous silence, an infinity of release and freedom. I lived in that Nirvana day and night before it began to admit other things into itself or modify itself at all, and the inner heart of experience, a constant memory of it and its power to return remained until in the end it began to disappear into a greater Superconsciousness from above. But meanwhile realisation added itself to realisation and fused itself with this original experience. At an early stage the aspect of an illusory world gave place to one in which illusion* is only a small surface phenomenon with an immense Divine Reality behind it and a supreme Divine Reality above it and an intense Divine Reality in the heart of everything that had seemed at first only a cinematic shape or shadow. And this was no reimprisonment in the senses, no diminution or fall from supreme experience, it came rather as a constant heightening and widening of the Truth; it was the spirit that saw objects, not the senses, and the Peace, the Silence, the freedom in Infinity remained always, with the world or all worlds only as a continuous incident in the timeless eternity of the Divine.

“Now, that is the whole trouble in my approach to Mayavada. Nirvana in my liberated consciousness turned out to be the beginning of my realisation, a first step towards the complete thing, not the sole true attainment possible or even a culminating finale. It came unasked, unsought for, though quite welcome. I had no least idea about it before, no aspiration towards it, in fact my aspiration was towards just the opposite, spiritual power to help the world and to do my work in it, yet it came—without even a ‘May I come in’ or a ‘By your leave’! It just happened and settled in as if for all eternity or as if it had been really there always. And then it slowly grew into something not less but greater than its first self. How then could I accept Mayavada or persuade myself to pit against the Truth imposed on me from above the logic of Shankara?”¹

Sri Aurobindo’s objections to Mayavada as a doctrine from the logical standpoint are equally fascinating but we shall have to satisfy ourselves with only a few peeps for want of more time. The importance Sri Aurobindo attributes to the doctrine of Maya is amply evidenced by his painstaking but none the less

* In fact it is not an illusion in the sense of an imposition of something baseless and unreal on the consciousness, but a misinterpretation by conscious mind and sense and a falsifying misuse of manifested existence.

splendid refutation of it in *The Life Divine*.

Sri Aurobindo's objections to the doctrine of Maya are fivefold. They may be broadly summarised as given below:

1. If Brahman is the only reality, why speak of Maya at all? If you do, he says, there will always be some kind of ultimate dualism.

2. The second objection is to the effect that the world cannot be an illusion, since it has real objectivity in any conceivable sense of the term.

3. The third objection proceeds from the fact of experience of other selves and their seeking for knowledge and liberation.

4. The fourth in some sense resembles the first. It asserts that if the world is an illusion then the illusion in some sense is.

5. Finally, the Brahman, the Supreme Reality, is That which being known all else is known—*yasmin vijñāte sarvam vijñātam bhavati*; but in the illusionist solution it is That which being known all else becomes unreal and an incomprehensible mystery—*yasmin vijñate sarvam ajñātam bhavati*.

For Sri Aurobindo "...the doctrine of Maya simply comes to this that Brahman is free from the circumstances through which He expresses Himself.' This limited play is not He, for He is illimitable; it is only a conditioned (partial) manifestation, but He is not bound by the conditions (circumstances) as the play is bound. The world is a figure of something of Himself which He has put forth into it, but He is more than that figure. The world is not unreal or illusory, but our present seeing or consciousness of it is ignorant, and therefore the world *as seen by us* can be described as an illusion. So far the Maya idea is true. But if we see the world as it really is, a partial and developing manifestation of Brahman, then it can no longer be described as an illusion, but rather as a Lila. He is still more than His Lila, but He is in it and it is in Him; it is not an illusion."²

We are forced to conclude therefore that Mayavada's uncompromising rejection of the world and experience is not acceptable; its logic is too rigid and exclusive; and its attitude towards individual life and the sum of human culture in general is too foreign to the present-day outlook upon life and existence.

But what has been Mayavada's contribution and what is the next step to be taken? Sri Aurobindo explains:

"The Buddha applied his penetrating rational intellect supported by an intuitive vision to the world as our mind and sense see it and discovered the principle of its construction and the way of release from all constructions, but he refused to go farther. Shankara took the farther step and regarded the supra-rational Truth, which Buddha kept behind the veil as realisable by cancellation of the constructions of consciousness but beyond the scope of the reason's discovery. Shankara, standing between the world and the eternal Reality, saw that the mystery of the world must be ultimately suprarational, not conceivable or expressible by our reason, *anurvacaniya*; but he maintained the world as seen

by the reason and sense as valid and had therefore to posit an unreal reality, because he did not take one step still farther.”³

The next crucial step, Sri Aurobindo emphatically affirms, involves the vision of the integral Reality, the Nirguna Brahman and the world perceived in the unity of a self-evolving and self-revealing Absolute. This integral unity of a total existence fashioned by his discovery and manifestation of the principle called the Supermind is the essence of his realisation

NOTE

I owe gratitude to all those from whom I have borrowed thoughts and ideas to write this speech.

- REFERENCES

- 1 *Letters on Yoga* (Cent Ed , vol 22, pp 49-50)
- 2 *Letters on Yoga* (Cent Ed , vol 22, p 48)
- 3 *The Life Divine* (Cent Ed , vol 18, p 464)