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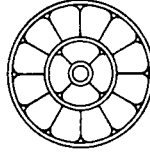
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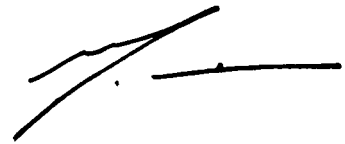
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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute,  
A new light breaks upon the earth,  
A new world is born.  
The things that were promised are fulfilled



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# MOTHER INDIA

## MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. LI

No. 9

“Great is Truth and it shall prevail”

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## ASWAPATI ANSWERS THE SEER

O DEATHLESS sage who knowest all things here,  
If I could read by the ray of my own wish  
Through the carved shield of symbol images  
Which thou hast thrown before thy heavenly mind  
I might see the steps of a young godlike life  
Happily beginning luminous-eyed on earth;  
Between the Unknowable and the Unseen  
Born on the borders of two wonder-worlds,  
It flames out symbols of the Infinite  
And lives in a great light of inner suns .  
Although in pauses of our human lives  
Earth keeps for man some short and perfect hours .  
Yet rare that touch upon the mortal's world  
Hardly a soul and body here are born  
In the fierce difficult movement of the stars,  
Whose life can keep the paradisaal note ..  
Behold this image cast by light and love,  
A stanza of the ardour of the gods  
Perfectly rhymed, a pillared ripple of gold!  
Her body like a brimmed pitcher of delight  
Shaped in a splendour of gold-coloured bronze  
As if to seize earth's truth of hidden bliss  
Dream-made illumined mirrors are her eyes  
Draped subtly in a slumberous fringe of jet,  
Retaining heaven's reflections in their depths.  
Even as her body, such is she within,  
Heaven's lustrous mornings gloriously recur,  
Like drops of fire upon a silver page,  
In her young spirit yet untouched with tears  
All beautiful things eternal seem and new  
To virgin wonder in her crystal soul  
The unchanging blue reveals its spacious thought,  
Marvellous the moon floats on through wondering skies,  
Earth's flowers spring up and laugh at time and death;  
The charmed mutations of the enchanter life  
Race like bright children past the smiling hours  
If but this joy of life could last, nor pain  
Throw its bronze note into her rhythm'd days!  
Behold her, singer with the prescient gaze,  
And let thy blessing chant that this fair child

Shall pour the nectar of a sorrowless life  
 Around her from her lucid heart of love,  
 Heal with her bliss the tired breast of earth  
 And cast like a happy snare felicity.  
 As grows the great and golden bounteous tree  
 Flowering by Alacananda's murmuring waves,  
 Where with enamoured speed the waters run  
 Lispering and babbling to the splendour of morn  
 And cling with lyric laughter round the knees  
 Of heaven's daughters dripping magic rain  
 Pearl-bright from moon-gold limbs and cloudy hair,  
 So are her dawns like jewelled leaves of light,  
 So casts she her felicity on men.  
 A flame of radiant happiness she was born,  
 And surely will that flame set earth alight.  
 Doom surely will see her pass and say no word,  
 But too often here the careless Mother leaves  
 Her chosen in the envious hands of Fate  
 The harp of God falls mute, its call to bliss  
 Discouraged fails mid earth's unhappy sounds;  
 The strings of the siren Ecstasy cry not here  
 Or soon are silenced in the human heart.  
 Of sorrow's songs we have enough. bid once  
 Her glad and griefless days bring heaven here.  
 Or must fire always test the great of soul?  
 Along the dreadful causeway of the gods  
 Armoured with love and faith and sacred joy,  
 A traveller to the Eternal's house  
 Once let unwounded pass a mortal life.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Savitri*, Revised Edition, 1993, pp 421-23)

## THIS IMPERISHABLE WORD THAT IS OM

अथ हैनं शैब्यः सत्यकामः पप्रच्छ—स यो ह वै तद् भगवन्  
मनुष्येषु प्रायणान्तमोङ्कारमभिध्यायीत क्तम वाव स तेन लोकं जयतीति ॥१॥

- 1 Then the Shaibya Satyakama asked him. “Lord, he among men that meditate unto death on OM the syllable, which of the worlds does he conquer by its puissance?”

तस्मै स होवाच एतद् वै सत्यकाम परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोङ्कारः ।  
तस्माद् विद्वानेतेनैवायतनेनैकतरमन्वेति ॥२॥

2. To him answered the Rishi Pippalada: “This imperishable Word that is OM, O Satyakama, is the Higher Brahman and also the Lower Therefore the wise man by making his home in the Word, wins to one of these.

स यद्येकमात्रमभिध्यायीत स तेनैव सवेदितस्तूर्णमेव जगत्यामभि सम्पद्यते ।  
तमृचो मनुष्यलोकमुपनयन्ते, स तत्र तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया सम्पन्नो महिमानमनुभवति ॥३॥

- 3 “If he meditate on the one letter of OM the syllable, by that enlightened he attains swiftly in the material universe, and the hymns of the Rig-veda escort him to the world of men: there endowed with asceticism and faith and holiness he experiences majesty.

अथ यदि द्विमात्रेण मनसि सम्पद्यते सोऽन्तरिक्षं यजुर्भिरुन्नीयते सोमलोकम् ।  
स सोमलोके विभूतिमनुभूय पुनरावर्तते ॥४॥

4. “Now if by the two letters of the syllable he in the mind attains, to the skies he is exalted and the hymns of the Yajur escort him to the Lunar World. In the heavens of the Moon he feels his soul’s majesty: then once more he returns.

य पुनरेतं त्रिमात्रेणैमित्येतेनैवाक्षरेण परं पुरुषमभिध्यायीत स तेजसि सूर्ये सम्पन्नः ।  
यथा पादोदरस्त्वचा विनिर्मुच्यत एवं ह वै स पाप्मना विनिर्मुक्तः  
स सामभिरुन्नीयते ब्रह्मलोकं स एतस्माज्जीवधनात्परात्परं  
पुरशियं पुरुषमीक्षते तदेतौ श्लोकौ भवतः ॥५॥

5. “But he who by all the three letters meditates by this syllable, even by OM on the Most High Being, he in the Solar world of light and energy is secured in his attainings: as a snake casts off its slough, so he casts off sin, and the hymns of the Sama-veda escort him to the heaven of the Spirit He from that Lower who is the density of existence beholds the Higher than the Highest of whom every form is one city Whereof these are the verses —

तिस्त्रो मात्रा मृत्युमपत्य प्रयुक्ता अन्योन्यसक्ता अनविप्रयुक्ता ।  
क्रियासु बाह्यान्तरमध्यमासु सम्यक्प्रयुक्तासु न कम्पते ज्ञः ॥६॥

6 “ ‘Children of death are the letters when they are used as three, the embracing and the inseparable letters’ but the wise man is not shaken. for there are three kinds of works, outward deed and inward action and another which is blended of the two, and all these he does rightly without fear and without trembling.

ऋग्भिरेतं यजुर्भिरन्तरिक्षं सामभिर्यत्तत्कवयो वेदयन्ते ।  
तमोङ्कारेणैवायतनेनान्वेति विद्वान् यत्तच्छान्तमजरममृतमभय पर चेति ॥७॥

7. “ ‘To the earth the Rig-veda leads, to the skies the Yajur, but the Sama to That of which the sages know. Thither the wise man by resting on OM the syllable attains, even to that Supreme Quietude where age is not and fear is cast out by immortality.’ ”

SRI AUROBINDO

(*The Upanishad*, SABCL, Vol 12, pp 309-10)



# **NEVER FORGET THE GOAL**

## **A REMINDER FROM THE MOTHER**

WHATEVER you do, never forget the goal which you have set before you. There is nothing great or small once you have set out on this great discovery; all things are equally important and can either hasten or delay its success. Thus before you eat, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the food you are about to eat may bring your body the substance it needs to serve as a solid basis for your effort towards the great discovery, and give it the energy for persistence and perseverance in the effort.

Before you go to sleep concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the sleep may restore your fatigued nerves, bring calm and quietness to your brain so that on waking you may, with renewed vigour, begin again your journey on the path of the great discovery.

Before you act, concentrate in the will that your action may help or at least in no way hinder your march forward towards the great discovery.

When you speak, before the words come out of your mouth, concentrate just long enough to check your words and allow only those that are absolutely necessary to pass, only those that are not in any way harmful to your progress on the path of the great discovery

To sum up, never forget the purpose and goal of your life. The will for the great discovery should be always there above you, above what you do and what you are, like a huge bird of light dominating all the movements of your being.

THE MOTHER

## DYUMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE MOTHER

(Continued from the issue of August 1998)

*My dear Mother,*

*At this moment a question comes to me. how is it that my head at once gives a money value to everything? Only if the money allows it, do I think of proceeding further!*

It is all right We must avoid as far as possible all wastage.

Always with you, my dear child

24 September 1935

*My dear Mother,*

*Give me a very, very quiet head, for it is into a quiet head that the true knowledge and consciousness will descend. Then there will be a true action and a worthy expression of Your true instrument. Beloved Mother, a very, very quiet head.*

Yes—it is true, a very, very quiet head is indispensable for a clear understanding and vision and a right action.

My consciousness is always with you to give you a quiet head.

25 September 1935

*My dear Mother,*

*Today I saw that my body is strong and that it can work; it is good that it does not remain slothful.*

*My dear Mother, may peace and quietness increase in my physical.*

My dear child, I am always with you, and together we will fight the battle and win the victory.

Do not worry about the reactions of people, however unpleasant they may be—the vital is everywhere and in everybody full of impurities and the physical full of unconsciousness. These two imperfections have to be cured, however long it may take, and we have only to work at it patiently and courageously

Always near you, supporting and guiding you

27 September 1935

*My dear Mother,*

*Jealousy prevails in Aroumé. Here I give You a letter from B and one from C. I have answered them both*

Jealousy comes from a narrowness of the mind and a weakness of the heart. It is a great pity that so many are attacked by it Your answers are all right.

*My dear Mother, what a fine instrument the dark forces have found! Jealousy spoils the entire life, the entire sadhana and brings troubles of every kind. Dear Mother, may it get rooted out*

The only answer is a quiet and luminous patience in the manifestation of the truth and in the consecration to the Divine

28 September 1935

*My dear Mother,*

*Whatever the circumstances may be, my heart shall always remain turned towards You in all love and consecration and confidence*

Well, surely when unfaithfulness prevails all around it is the time to be truly faithful and to stand untouched and unmoved in the storm

Love and blessings to you, my dear child

29 September 1935

*My dear Mother,*

*Money can always come to the Ashram in showers, provided that the sadhaks are devoted and consecrated, faithful and sincere. If a sadhak says today 'Mother, I want to leave,' and tomorrow 'Mother, I want this and that,' I feel that money cannot pour in. The Ashram has to turn more and more inward in pursuit of the Divine if it wants to manifest the Divine in all its richness*

What you say is perfectly true, but there is also the divine Patience which waits for the obscurity to vanish

*In humbleness, my dear Mother, I am at Your feet, at Your disposal, always for You, an eternal gift*

Yes, my dear child, I know that you are mine, and it is with full trust that I take you with me on the way

30 September 1935

*My dear Mother,*

*Wheat-drying finishes on Saturday. The coolies are showing fatigue from carrying*

*the bags of wheat up and down But there are only two more days of this work.*

You must be careful not to overburden them. If they get sick I shall have to bear the consequences

All love and blessings to you, my dear child

2 October 1935

*My dear Mother,*

*Ah, where is the stability! And the work! Where is the work? It is not even half the work that we used to do in this compound*

Equanimity—equanimity It is the only practical answer to all this confusion which is bound to come to an end one day

*My dear Mother, pride challenges the Divine Grace whereas humble consecration and self-giving call the Divine Grace, then it becomes effective and protects By becoming humble and giving myself to the Divine I lose nothing May the shallow "I" become a portion of the Divinity.*

Yes, humility and sincerity are the best safeguards Without them each step is a danger, with them the victory is certain.

My dear child, humility and sincerity will take you to the goal

3 October 1935

*My dear Mother,*

*It is my earnest wish to have good relations with one and all Hardly a day has passed in which I have not cried within myself about my disharmonious relation with D I never meant it to turn out like this*

Do not worry or be impatient All the disharmonies will disappear, but it must be on the true basis of a settled luminous consciousness leaving no room to the play of the ego.

My love and blessings are always with you.

5 October 1935

*(To be continued)*

# OMNI-REALISM

## SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS A KEY TO THE PROBLEM OF PERCEPTION

LAMB once met Coleridge, and Coleridge held one of Lamb's coat-buttons and started enlightening him on the difference between "subjective" and "objective". After about an hour, Lamb, finding Coleridge too rapt in philosophy to heed the passage of time, cut off the button and leaving it between his friend's fingers went away. On returning an hour later, he saw Coleridge still fingering the button and discoursing on "subjective" and "objective".

Coleridge was typical of the philosophical mind in getting so engrossed in this problem. He might have been idiosyncratic in the way the engrossment showed itself, but most philosophers in their own ways have been deeply absorbed in deciding where exactly mind begins and matter ends when an act of perception occurs. The problem, in precise terms, is: "We have the perception of a world. This world seems to be external to our perceiving mind. But, really, what we are aware of is our own sensation—something subjective. How far does sensation provide us with genuine knowledge of an objective world? Can we say that the world is as we perceive it? Can we even say that it exists outside our mind? Where, if at all, can we draw a line between the objective and the subjective?"

### 1

Let us commence with a short clarification about what we mean by a perceived world on the level of human intelligence. What we perceive basically are "qualities" like red or hot or hard or sweet or triangular or five feet high. Sensation is just our awareness of such qualities. These perceived qualities have certain relations among themselves, by which they are constituted into a world of perception. In the first place, there is the relation of general dependence: for example, colours are observed in relation to the state in which the atmosphere is. This dependence may be said to condition a quality. In the second place, each kind of quality is related to some or all of other kinds: thus every colour is always accompanied by a certain dimension or extension, it is a spot or a patch of a certain size and shape and that spot is also an actuality or possibility of experience in terms of qualities like "hot" or "hard" or "sweet". This interrelated cohesion of different kinds of qualities—a cohesion slowly or rapidly changing—may be said to make a "thing" or "object" out of qualities, a thing or object like a rose, a stone, a table or a human body. And, in common parlance, we refer to this interrelated cohesion into thing or object as the possessor of qualities. Unless another connotation is openly indicated, whenever in the course of our discussion we speak of objects and their qualities it is in this connotation. In the third place, a quality is never perceived except in comparison, explicit or implicit, to other

qualities of its own kind. Thus, when a rose is perceived as red we imply that it is not brown like a tree's bark and when it is perceived as of a certain shape and size there is always comparison with the shapes and sizes of other things. These comparisons may be said to define a quality. In the fourth place, any quality of an object is related to a quality seeming to be identical with it in other objects. Thus, there is the red of a rose and the red of a wound and the red of a drunkard's nose. Even what we call a rose is recognised by its having a rosiness which it shares with other flowers which too we call roses. Every quality or cohesion of qualities belongs to a class the class denotes the common factor present in certain qualities. It is the "universal" in the "particulars". No universal is ever known without either the perception of a particular or the remembered image of one, however implicit rather than explicit the remembrance may be. No particular is ever known without a universal identically present in several particulars. The universal may be said to distribute a quality. To sum up: qualities making up what is termed the world exist, on the level of human intelligence, in a state of relation which conditions, "thingifies", defines and distributes them. And in this state of fourfold relation they are present in our perception.

Now we have to investigate whether perception really gives us a world external to the percipient. Let us get one point clear: a quality can never be called a quality without its being in a state of fourfold relation. Hence we cannot suggest that a quality may be objective but this or that or all of the four relations are mind-made, mind-imposed, subjective. Here, either everything is subjective or everything is objective. Perhaps it may be strange to be told that the relation called the universal can be anywhere except in our mind. The dogma is widespread that perception originally supplies us with only the individual or particular and that we go on by abstraction to the universal. We imagine that animals and children, before they learn to talk, have no general ideas. But, as Morris Cohen tells us, "careful attention to the actual growth of knowledge shows that it is mainly progress not from the particular to the universal but from the vague to the definite. The distinction between the particular and the universal is generally implicit and only comes to explicit or clear consciousness in the higher stages of knowledge. Animals and infants at birth are first adjusted not to individual things so much as to certain phases of their environment, such as the warm and the cold, pressure, pleasant and unpleasant tastes, light and darkness, etc. In ordinary life we perceive trees before we perceive birches, we see Chinamen before we notice their distinctive personal features. Indeed the process of discrimination by which we learn to recognise individuals begins with a vague perception of difference. We are impressed with a stranger's beauty, agreeableness or reliability before we can specify his features or traits. It is therefore quite in harmony with fact to urge that the perception of universals is as primary as the perception of particulars. The process of reflection is necessary to make the universal clear and distinct, but as the discriminating element in observation it aids us to recognise the individual." Yes, perception supplies us at the same time with both the universal and the particular. To urge that the universal is just a "concept", a mental existent, is to forget the question "If that is *all* it is, how do we

know what concepts to apply to which things?" The answer can only be. "The things must have identity and difference, and so must the concepts." If we wish to consider the universal as subjective, we must consider the particular as no less so, and *vice versa*. As subjective or objective, either has its own manner of being, but there is in the manners nothing to render one of the two subjective and the other objective.

To return to our point. None of the four states of relation stands out with a special claim to being mind-imposed; and if any is mind-imposed, the quality itself is also such, for each state is part and parcel of the quality in its fullness. Our investigation, therefore, boils down to asking: Is a quality external to the percipient? Philosophers at one time used to think that, though qualities like colour, odour, temperature and taste differ with percipients and could sometimes vanish altogether, qualities like size, shape, substantiality and motion were invariable and inhered in an object. The former were named "secondary", the latter "primary." But ever since Bishop Berkeley's day the primary qualities and the secondary have been put on a par. Size and shape, even size as felt by the touch, vary. As Olaf Stapledon reminds us, if our fingers are swollen a penny will seem bigger than usual. Again, after handling farthings pennies will seem very large. Substantiality also varies: a leg with "pins and needles" feels less the substantiality of a thing and at times is so numb as to feel nothing. Motion varies, too. In Stapledon's words: "When two trains are running abreast at different speeds, the slower seems to passengers in the faster to be moving backwards." Further, when two trains move at the same speed (as judged by an observer outside both), they seem to the passengers to be standing still. So, all qualities, whatever, vary with percipients and can disappear in certain circumstances. They are conditioned by our sensation. But, from this, are we justified in saying that, if there is anything outside experience, all we can state about it is that it has "powers" by which it produces impressions on us which we term "qualities"? Must we conclude that what the impressions are and whether they will or will not be produced depend on conditions prevailing in us? Have we no right to assert that there are any objective qualities resembling those which figure in our awareness? In ordinary parlance, does an object or thing possess the qualities we perceive?

One point should be noted. Sensation, in the above discussion, is taken to be experience of qualities not only by an act of consciousness but also by an impact which objective reality's "powers" make upon sense-organs. Size and shape, substantiality and motion, no less than colour, odour, temperature and taste, are described as experienced through physical organs of sensation. But, as soon as we speak of such physical organs, we assume just what is sought to be doubted! Physical organs are as much a matter of qualities as the things which come into contact with them and get known to us. Unless in physical organs the qualities of size and shape and substantiality and motion are actually there, we cannot speak of physical organs at all or of their functioning. In the very process of trying to prove that primary qualities cannot be objective we involve their objectivity—namely, as sense-organs! Surely this is circular reasoning. If primary qualities are objective as sense-organs they must be objective

everywhere And, since we found primary qualities and secondary ones to be on a par, we must grant objectivity to all the qualities we perceive.

*(To be continued)*

AMAL KIRAN  
(K D SETHNA)

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## SONNET 154

SILENCE IS as a cave in which I dwell  
Alone and unaffected by the storm  
About me it hath cast a magic spell  
Which makes a rocklike image of my form.  
Days come and go like panthers spotted black  
With several nights, passing my cave by  
I let them go unnoticed on their track,  
Beneath an ever-changing fickle sky

I am withdrawn in such a real way  
That the Eternal knows Itself in me,  
So what have I to do with the night or day  
Who keeps in touch with all Eternity?  
Silence is as a cave in which I live  
Above creations that are fugitive

10 to 9, morning  
24-12-34

HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

Sri Aurobindo's Comment. Exceedingly beautiful

Editor's Notes The poem has been taken from the author's typescript book entitled *The Fountain* (Vol 2)

Sonnets 151-155 were written on the same day and all have, on each one of them in pencil, in the middle of the left margin, Sri Aurobindo's comment "Exceedingly beautiful"



**“INSPIRATIONS FOR PROGRESS”**

*(Continued from the issue of August 1998)*

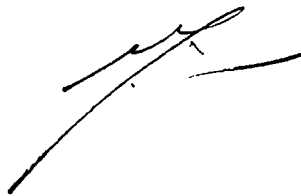
21-9-67

To Kishore

with love

and

Blessings



FEAR nothing

Grieve over nothing.

Relying on His All-Powerful Love, remain absolutely confident

He is the sure Friend who never fails

Abandoning all other things, take refuge in Him alone

He will deliver you from all obstructions, He will remove all veils, He will bring union with Him in the truth of Eternal Love.

24-9-1967

\*

Hearken to His Voice that calls to New Life.

Yield to, acquiesce in His Pressure that liberates from the old chains.

Arise, awake from the torpid slumber.

The bright splendour of the Sun of His Truth is swelling all around

Open your mind, your heart, your whole being to it, and let it flood you and cleanse you of all dark shadows—let it bring New Birth and New Life in His Truth

O fold no longer upon yourself—simply and wholly turn to Him, utterly and unreservedly open to Him, and let His Truth-Light fill and flood you, change and transform you completely into His image

27-9-1967

\*

Hold firmly to your view, but without dogmatism; for in all other views that contradict yours, there is an element of truth which you have not seen.

In all contradictions there is a meaning; they are pointers to things which are needed to make your own view complete

Do not therefore be dogmatic but take special care to see and to learn what the contradictions have to teach you

What is true of contradictions on the mental plane, is true of all contradictions on all the planes

Each difficulty, each conflict, each opposition is an opportunity to learn a lesson  
Learn it and the difficulty will disappear

27-9-1967

\*

From the defects and difficulties, do what is possible to remove them but if they persist, recur or even increase, do not feel guilty or frustrated, do not despair.

Rather stand apart, detached, separate from them, consider them as not your own and offer them constantly to Him to remove them

Do not struggle with defects and difficulties but offer them to Him and call for His help to liberate you from them

Do not identify yourself with them, do not feel ashamed or unfit, do not entertain any doubt or despair or fear

Remember always that He is always with you and there is no difficulty or defect that He cannot remove

Trusting in His unfailing Love, relying on His Power, take entire refuge at His Feet and constantly offer to Him all weaknesses, all defects, all difficulties and ask Him to remove them

Be very sure that He will remove them, be absolutely confident that His All-Powerful Love never fails

Relying on Him, taking refuge in His Love, simply open yourself more and more to Him and cast away all fear and all grief.

29-9-1967

\*

Persistently, with a firm and resolute will, throw away all defeatism, all pessimism, all thoughts, feelings and suggestions that bring in dark despair and fear and doubt

The bright Sun of His Truth *is here* Open widely to its Light and Laughter; let its golden rays enter into all the bleak nooks and corners of your being and sweep them clean of all clinging shadows.

Relying on Him, who is now very close, remain deeply and entirely confident  
Remember Him always and forget all negation.

He will bring New Birth and New Life and all things that are bright and lovely and true

29 9 1967

\*

The most important, the indispensable thing to do now is to concentrate in the heart, to go deep within it and to establish a direct conscious contact with Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Once the contact is established, all the parts and all the movements of the being must be given up in Their Hands without any reservation

Once the contact is established constantly Their direct guidance can be had in all things.

I must now establish that contact with Them, surrender all the being and all the life to Them and follow Their Truth-Impulsions in all things

Then alone there can be true harmony and order and constant growth in the Truth  
30-9-1967

*(To be continued)*

KISHOR GANDHI

(Compiled by Arvind Akki)

## **C. P. BEACHCROFT'S JUDGMENT IN THE CASE OF ARABINDA GHOSE AT THE ALIPORE BOMB TRIAL, DATED 6.5.1909**

[Typed verbatim from a photocopy of C P Beachcroft's handwritten document, held at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives Also printed in *The Alipore Bomb Trial* by Bejoy Krishna Bose, pp 154-177 + 185-186 ]

*(Continued from the issue of August 1998)*

Now come to documents of other classes said to affect Arabinda

Ex 1099 is a document found at the search of the Bande Mataram office in July 1907 It is Counsel's opinion on the question as to what would be the position of the shareholders in case a prosecution were instituted against the paper for sedition It is argued that this shows that the publication of seditious matter was contemplated Now no seditious matter published subsequent to this opinion has been shown to me in the Bande Mataram, and that is curious if the document indicates an intention to publish such, for Counsel's opinion favoured the view that fine was the only penalty that could be imposed on the corporation, apart of course from any individual liability of the persons directly responsible

Ex 990 is a Jugantar peon book in which apparently Arabinda signed for the receipt of two letters This is worth nothing as evidence

Taken with this is the letter Ex 999 from one Abinash asking for help to print the paper I have referred to this before It does not support the view that Arabinda was connected with the Jugantar, even taking the view that the letter was written by the accused Abinash & that Arabinda was the addressee

Ex CLXXXIV is the railway guide found in the garden with what purports to be a draft telegram from Ghose at No 23, "wire Charu's address" The prosecution suggests this is in Baren's writing but that Baren intended that the recipient of the telegram should understand that it was Arabinda who wanted the information There is no certainty who Charu was It is suggested that it was Charu Chandra Dutt the Sessions Judge of Ahmedabad, & that the telegram was to be sent in connection with the visit of Sishir & Hemendra It is possible that the prosecution suggestion may be right, it may be that Baren sent or intended to send the telegram on his own account & gave the address at 23 to avoid interception in the garden

Ex 792-1b is a slip of paper found in a book at the search of Hrishikesh's house It bears the words "19-3 Choku Khansama's Lane, Mirzapore, 4.10 '07" We know Arabinda had this house about this time With reference to this slip of paper, Kedareswar Chakrabarti, who held the search says he remembers there were two slips of paper in the book, he did not note them particularly not thinking them to be of importance, but he remembers each has a name on it, & he printed them in the book. This slip was not shown to him when examined before the Magistrate, but considering

the mass of documents dealt with this is not surprising. There seems no reason to suppose that the paper has been introduced subsequently. Arabinda denies knowing Hrishī Kesh before the case began.

Attention was drawn to certain entries in Ex 311-1, e.g. entries about Vibrona & Sudhir & Fleriline. These entries naturally would be there if Abinash was managing Arabinda's household as he said. Stress is laid on one entry in particular in this book, "Khoka's tram fare Rs 1-8-." The importance of this is in connection with Ex 299-7, which will be dealt with later.

Exs 311-3 & 4, receipts for the rent of No. 23 were found at No. 48. There is nothing surprising in this. Abinash was living in the Navasakti office at the time of the arrest. The receipts don't prove connection with the Navasakti office, though they show connection with Abinash.

Ex 315-7 is a receipt for the whole of the premises No. 48 for Falgun, the rent being paid by Satyaranjan, the son of Manoranjan. It is argued that as there was no division of the premises then there was none when Arabinda went to live there. We don't know on what terms the house was occupied when Arabinda & Abinash lived there, but from the fact that the previous owner of the Navasakti occupied the inner portion of the premises, we cannot assume that the persons who later occupied that portion were in fact interested in the Navasakti.

Ex 311-2 suggests that Arabinda was connected with the Navasakti. This is a set of rules providing that the Navasakti is to be managed by a committee, which Arabinda is to nominate. It may be that Manoranjan was trying to convert the paper into a company & was putting this forth as an attraction. But the importance of this exhibit so far as regards Arabinda lies in the supposition that the Navasakti was a revolutionary paper. No doubt there was a good prospect of its becoming so when it fell into the hands of Abinash, but we do not know when this scheme was drawn up. That half the income was to be used for serving the country is a provision which gives food for reflection, in view of the similar though less literal provision in the Chhattra Bhandar.

Ex 300-27 found in Arabinda's room is a list of articles for physical exercises. The suggestive part in it is that it includes daggers & simple sticks.

Ex 1098 is a book with the suggestive name "Human Bullets" presented to Arabinda by a brother Nationalist "in affection of his work for Nationalism in India." It is dated Tokyo 10th April 1908. The book was found at the Bande Mataram office. How far the views of persons, not shown to be conspirators, as to the nature of Arabinda's work can be taken against Arabinda is open to question. It is not shown whether there is anything of a violent nature in the book beyond the title & the first picture, which shows a bursting shell,—in connection with a conspiracy of course anything connected with war is looked on naturally with suspicion,—but in Ex CXXIII we find a short appreciation of this work. "It is a wonderful revelation of the Japanese point of view, in regard to patriotism, obedience, the hereafter, fellowship with those in a subordinate position & magnanimity towards captured enemies. The horror of butchery is curiously mingled with purpose & dignity of mind." Such a book in this

case is calculated to bear a somewhat sinister aspect in view of the constant reference to papers connected with the conspiracy to Japan & [its] success against the Russians; the moral being success of the East against the West

Possibly the most dangerous piece of evidence against Arabinda that comes under this head is to be found in Ex 239 In the entries under "11th Jan & onwards" we find 3 which may refer to Arabinda They are, "J B to be informed of A G.'s movements " "A.G 's rules to be got out of him " "Dr. Dhude to be kept in the garden & Ullas & A G & B G informed " If A G. refers to Arabinda this is a most damaging piece of evidence The defence says it is not proved that A.G. stands for Arabinda It could not be proved The only person, who could & was willing to speak, is Narendra Gossain He is dead The other persons to be informed are Ullas & B.G. Evidently the prominent persons are to be informed & we have no knowledge of any other prominent person suggested, who bears those initials In conjunction with B G they are significant

It is suggested that if A.G means Arabinda, Baren may have told him they had a religious organization for the purpose of concealing facts from Arabinda That might explain the 2nd entry, but what of the other two?

It is conceded that Arabinda finally came to Calcutta from Baroda about the middle of 1906 His arrival was followed at a short interval by the starting of the scheme for National Education, and by the formation of the Chhattra Bhandar & Bande Mataram companies Arabinda admits that he was concerned in starting the latter company, in fact he was for a short time managing director, but he does not admit connection with the Chhattra Bhandar. In this company Subodh was doubtless largely interested and a good deal of the case against Arabinda rests on his connection with Subodh Arabinda's connection with the Chhattra Bhandar did not ostensibly go beyond the signing of his name as witness to the signatures of the promoters on the memorandum of association Nor is there any evidence beyond his intimacy with Subodh to suggest connection with the Chhattra Bhandar. Pabitra's account is that the promoters went to Subodh's house to have their signatures witnessed as he was a big man & his name might attract people, and as Arabinda happened to be there he also signed So far as Arabinda is concerned this explanation may be perfectly true A good deal of suspicion which attaches to his signature is due to the fact that Pabitra is so anxious to conceal his knowledge of this institution and that Subodh so shortly after having apparently no interest in it beyond that of a mere witness, became so large a shareholder.

Arabinda's association with Subodh is capable of a perfectly innocent explanation. He was much interested in national education, a scheme in which the prosecution admits there was nothing of itself harmful, and we find that Subodh contributed Rs 100,000/- to the establishment of the National College

Arabinda's connection with the garden is sought to be established by the fact that persons from the garden frequently visited No 28 That Sailendra was more than a mere casual visitor we have evidence of in the postcard, Exhibit No 305-8 which was readdressed to him at No 23 from 48 Grey Street I have already pointed out that visits

to 23 of conspirators may be explained by the fact that Abinash was living there

A good deal is made of the incident of the 18th April when it is said that shortly after Baren & Abinash left No. 23 Arabinda was seen to open the window. The incident is of very little importance in itself but it gave rise to much crossexamination intended to show that Arabinda was not in Calcutta on the 18th having left for Kishorganj on the previous day. And in due course two of the prosecution witnesses came forward to prove the alibi. I am not disposed to accept the evidence on this point of either of these witnesses, one was at Kishorganj just long enough to see Arabinda on his arrival, he fixes the date by the fact that he reached the place on Friday: he fixes his recollection of the fact that it was Friday, by the fact that the day before was Thursday, but he can fix nothing more. There is a small piece of evidence which to some extent supports the theory that Arabinda was absent on the 18th. A postal peon who came to deliver a money order did not find him at home, & did not find him at home till the 3rd day. This does not prove that he was absent from Calcutta & it is unnecessary to pursue the subject further.

A piece of evidence to the effect that he was directly connected with one of the centres of conspiracy is the statement of a postman, witness No. 114, that he saw Arabinda at No. 15. He also identified Narendra Bakshi as seen there, though in the Magistrate's Court he identified Krishna Jiban. These two are somewhat alike. But I do not believe that he saw Arabinda there: it is impossible that a man so closely watched as Arabinda could have visited a place so closely watched as No. 15 without detection.

I now come to deal with what are the really important documents as against Arabinda. Most important of all is Ex 295, which is known as the "sweets" letter. It purports to have been written on 27th December 1907, the second day of the Congress, and runs as follows: "Dear brother. Now is the time. Please try & make them meet for our conference. We must have sweets all over India ready made for emergencies (sic) I wait here for your answer. Your affectionate Barendra K Ghose." This was found in Arabinda's room: an envelope was also found with "A Ghose confidential" written on it apparently in Baren's writing. The defence say the letter is a forgery; if it is it is a splendid specimen of the forger's art. The suggestion of the prosecution is that "sweets" means bombs. The term would be a not unnatural one to use and in view of Ex CL, in which apparently Mr. Kingsford is spoken of as the bridegroom and the accounts in Ex 239 in which under the heading "marriage expenditure" is the item "[Bengali script] (Riv) Rs 52/-"—that being the abbreviation in the vernacular for "revolver",—there is reason in the suggestion. The prosecution argues that the extremist having won a victory on the first day of the Congress was so elated that Baren sent this letter to Arabinda to have immediate action all over the country on the line followed in the garden & No. 15.

The finding of this letter in Arabinda's house is attacked. In fact the honesty of practically every search conducted in this case has been challenged, though when it came to arguing the case very little use was made by the defence counsel of the crossexamination on the subject of searches. Taken as a whole the crossexamination in

this part of the case seemed to betray an utter want of the sense of proportion Counsel seemed to forget that the primary object of the police in making a search is to find things, it is not to be constantly considering what to do to meet possible suggestions that will be made later. No doubt it is desirable that the two should be as far as possible combined, but counsel for the defence would have the second made a fetish. Where the findings of a search are few in number it is easy while making a list on the spot to number or mark everything, but where the papers found run into hundreds and where the searching officers have been waiting up practically all night it is beyond human nature for them to sit down and spend the whole day numbering & initialling every document on the spot The main thing is for them to take such steps as will enable them to say afterwards that a particular thing was found at a particular place and if they do that it should be enough for the court, which will not start with the presumption that every police officer is dishonest and that every document not marked on the spot is a subsequent interpolation

I take one instance Item No 80 of the garden search list is “some books found on a shelf and in a tin box—some maps & books in Bengali on modern warfare & pictures & papers” The words after “maps” look as if they have been put in after being somewhat cramped though evidently written with the same pen I will assume that they have An explanation is simple A large box with a number of books is found & in turning it over it is discovered that some of the books are of an important nature The item is amplified by a description of them There is nothing dishonest in this, yet if the next item is written down before the addition is made, we get charges of dishonesty of all kinds. Probably in the stress of cross-examination the police officer may forget the true explanation & guess. In this instance nothing is gained. The findings at the garden were quite sufficient without the necessity of adding there books on modern warfare. The prosecution could have served their case much better by putting them somewhere else. Similarly because some of the list is written on blank paper & not on printed forms we get similar suggestions, ignoring the perfectly reasonable explanation that the supply of printed forms was exhausted

Much stress is laid on the difference in the evidence of Superintendent Creagan & Inspector Radha Govinda Kundu & Benod Gupta in regard to the examination of documents from 48 Grey Street, as affecting the “sweets” letter. The examination was conducted by Mr Denham at 25 Royd Street. Creagan says he had the findings of No. 48 in his possession at his house He took them to 25 Royd Street & some, including the letter in question, were examined & taken back by him to his house He says he was present at the examination of the documents that day

Radha Govinda says that the persons present at the examination were Mr Denham, Gupta & himself no one else was ever present. The documents were brought bundle by bundle from Park Street & taken back after examination

Gupta’s evidence is surprising He first speaks of Creagan having brought the documents on the 4th & 5th [May,] after being questioned about the examination of them, he says “I kept the documents from 48 Grey Street after they came to Royd



Street in my custody ” Later he speaks of returning documents to Creagan for production in court In crossexamination on the first day he said “It would not be true to my knowledge to say that Creagan kept all the documents found at No. 48 till the 11th May in his house I don’t think it is correct to say that he brought them to Royd Street on the 11th May and some were examined and taken back to his house ” On the second day of crossexamination he stated that Creagan took back the documents which were examined the first day, and said he never had charge of any of them before that day.

Reading his evidence in chief one would naturally imagine that he had charge of these documents from the 4th or 5th till they were returned to Creagan finally for production before the Magistrate. It is to be noticed, however, that he does not specifically say where they were between the 4th & 5th & the day they were first examined, nor was he asked With regard to the statement in crossexamination on the first day the first impression is that he was giving a different version from Creagan. I think the key to the difference lies in the introduction of the date, 11th May. He is first asked whether it is correct that Creagan kept the documents in his house till the 11th May: he says “No” The next question is one of Mr. Dass’ portmanteau questions involving 3 points of fact (1) whether Creagan brought documents on 11th May (2) whether some were examined (3) whether those examined were taken back The witness says “No.” Now it is quite obvious that to him the gist of the question lay in the date following as it did the previous question In fact it appears later that Gupta speaking from memory thought the documents were examined before the 10th And having that impression in his mind, a wrong one as it happens, he naturally answered both the questions put to him in the negative But the argument that is built in it ignores the fact that he thought the date given was wrong and is based on that portion of the question which was not prominent in the witness’ mind And read in this light his answers on the next day of crossexamination are not inconsistent

Radha Govind had evidently not a very clear idea of what he was talking about, when he says that no one was present but the 3 persons named, at the examination He evidently means throughout The point which the defence wants to make from his answers is that the documents were brought from Park Street to Royd Street for examination. This point is achieved by putting indefinite questions He is first asked about the general procedure in dealing with the findings at searches & says that documents were carried backwards & forward between Park Street & Royd Street Then he is asked some questions about the “sweets” letter; then he again begins to speak generally as is evident from the sentence “after the examination was over the bundle was retied and if done with was sent back to where it came from namely Park Street ” And again an argument for a special occasion is founded on a statement of a general nature

Mr Denham’s evidence makes it clear that the papers were brought by Creagan & that the bundle in which this letter was examined on the 11th May, the first day on which he examined documents from 48 Grey Street. And thus taken with Creagan’s evidence it makes it clear that Creagan all along had the documents, examined on that

day, including the sweets letter, in his possession; and that it was found in No 48 is clear from the fact that Creagan initialled it at the time. He does not remember the letter on the 2nd May, but it has his initials. He initialled nothing except at the time of the search, and the search witnesses all signed & one has added the date. & Creagan says that the rule was for them to initial a document before he did.

It is suggested that the document is a forgery & it is argued that Sarat Dass is a forger. In fact Sarat Dass denies that he is a forger, for the purposes of the argument it is not a matter of much moment whether he is or not, from his previous history, whether a forger himself or not, he doubtless would have no difficulty in getting hold of one.

But to my mind the letter could not have been written to Arabinda by Baren. I don't take account of the argument that if both were at the same place one would probably not write to the other, or that the other would not have preserved the letter, explanations can easily be found for both these points. But I judge from the internal evidence of the letter. Baren is the youngest of 5 brothers, Arabinda is the 3rd. The assessors say that in such a case Baren could not have intended Arabinda by "Dear brother" that expression could only mean the eldest brother, if meant for Arabinda it would have been "Dear Sejda". That is a point on which I cannot question their opinions. But speaking for myself I cannot understand Baren signing his name in full if writing to Arabinda. In letters between Arabinda & other relations Baren is spoken of as Bari. The brothers were on friendly terms,—they must have been if the prosecution theory is to be accepted that the visits to No. 23 were to Arabinda,—and it is highly improbable that Baren would sign in this way writing to Arabinda. He might write to some one else & use the phrase "dear brother" corresponding to the use of the word "bhai" in the vernacular. In such a case if it was intended to reach Arabinda the [question] suggests itself, if both brothers were at Surat why did not Baren write to Arabinda direct. That the word "emergencies" is spelt "imergencies" is nothing for in Ex 667 Baren spells "philosophy" "phylosophy".

Though then I find that the document was in fact in Arabinda's house on the 2nd May, it is of so suspicious a character that I hesitate to accept it. Experience tells me that in cases where spies are employed documents do find their way into the houses of suspected persons in a manner which cannot be explained by the accused.

Another important document found in Arabinda's house is Ex 299-7. This is a page of scribbling in a note book, mere incoherent rambling. In it there are references to Bhababhusan, Khoka, Baren, Sudhir, Profulla. It speaks of failures and suggests that there will [be] success next time if the writer is present instead of trying to hide himself, and of a "small charge of the stuff".

The prosecution suggests that these are the ramblings of a visionary communing with himself & letting his hand run idly over the paper, trying to pluck up courage to make some attempt in person, disappointed at the ill success which had attended attempts by other conspirators. It is pointed out that the names are all names of persons connected with the conspiracy or found in documents relating to it. And it is argued that it could not be a forgery as Bhababhusan's name was not known before.

In regard to this last point it must be noticed that Ex 1089, a letter by Bhababhusan, was found so far back as 1907

The other argument the defence does not answer, in fact it is a very difficult argument to answer depending as it does on supposition. It is, however, pointed out that the book is a very old one, not one likely to come to Arabinda's hand if he sat down to scribble in an aimless way. The scribbling bears no resemblance to his writing, it is formless and such as any one might write.

Arabinda says the scribbling was not in the book while in his possession. The suggestion is that it was forged later. There is no reason to suppose that it was. The documents were in the custody of the District Magistrate's Court officers from the date of filing. This notebook was filed on the 20th May. It could not have been forged before that or the Magistrate's attention would have been called to it at an early date. Therefore if forged it must have been done while the books were in his court. There is no reason to suppose that any person likely to forge it had access to the books. The scribbling was not discovered till August by Mr. Denham, but that is not a matter of surprise considering the mass of documents to be examined. This would naturally escape notice, being in an old book and apparently nothing of importance unless closely examined. On the other hand if Ex 295 was inserted among Arabinda's papers before the 2nd May, this book may in the same way have been abstracted and replaced there. Again the long delay in discovering it suggests that it was not made for a particular purpose: though the mind [which] was crafty enough to evolve the plan of manufacturing such a piece of evidence, would be equal to the desirability of such an entry in an old & apparently useless book not being brought to light too soon.

I look upon this piece of evidence as the most difficult point in this case.

Ex 300-21 was found in Arabinda's house in an unopened envelope, addressed to Sudhir Kumar Sirkar, c/o late Raj Narain Bose Esq., Baidyanath, Deoghar & across the envelope is written "Confidential". The envelope bears the Baidyanath postmark of 24th November. It was opened by Mr. Denham on 11th May. The point of this is to prove that Arabinda knew Sudhir the accused. Sudhir says that he stayed at Deoghar for 2 or 3 weeks after the Pujas and that in March he put up at Raj Narain Bose's house. We know that Arabinda was at Deoghar in November. It does not follow that the two were there at the same time. On the contrary the fact that the letter was not delivered to Sudhir at Deoghar suggests that he was not there when the letter arrived. In para 17 of his written statement Arabinda gives an explanation as to how Sudhir stayed for a short time at Deoghar. He says he does not remember ever seeing the letter. There are two possible explanations for this letter being in Arabinda's possession, one that he took it expecting to see Sudhir & to give it to him, the other that he took it accidentally among his papers. In the former case one would naturally expect Arabinda to give the letter to Sudhir when he saw him. But his counsel says that Arabinda is absent minded. That might explain why Arabinda did not give him the letter. It might also explain its accidentally coming to be among his papers and being overlooked. The contents of the letter do not affect Arabinda in any way.

There is one more important letter, by which it is sought to connect Arabinda with the garden. This is Ex 1128 a letter from Birendra Chandra Sen to Arabinda saying that the writer's father is ill & wants to see Sushil & mentioning that some money is being sent. The letter states that as Biren does not have Arabinda's Calcutta address he is addressing the letter to Baidyanath. Arabinda says he never received the letter. He says that he only knew some of the names, whom he names, before his arrest; Sushil is not one of those. This letter was written from Baniachong on the 26th April 1908. It was found in the garden.

Ex 905 is a money order for Rs 8/- payable to Arabinda Ghose. It is addressed to the house of the late Raj Naram Bose, Baidyanath, Deoghar. It was readdressed to 23 Scott's Lane, then to 6 College Square. The receipt was signed by Sarojini Ghose on the 8th May. The money order bears the Harrison Road road [sic] [stamp] dated 5th May & the Bow Bazar stamp 8th May. This is money order No. 240 for which the post office receipt, given at the time of sending to the sender, was found in the house of the Sens.

The prosecution suggests that the money order represents the money which the letter says is being sent. The defense suggests that it can't be because of the difference in date, while the letter says money "is being sent". The expression might apply to money which was about to be sent just as well as to money actually dispatched. It is not really material whether the letter refers to the money order or not. The point is that the letter was found in the garden.

It is said to be item No. 2 of the search list, "a piece of paper with Bengali writing (in the pan)". This pan was found in the verandah of the house and contained 6 brown balls, apparently moulds for casting shells. The letter found its way to the Chemical Examiner in the pan & was handed over by Major Black to Mr. Denham.

It is suggested that this letter is not the document that is mentioned in the search list. It is initialed & dated 2nd May by Satish Roy who was making the search list and also by Mr. Corbett, who superintended the search & Inspector Frizzoni. The name of the search witnesses on it shows nothing, for they were called to the Thana after the search to initial documents, which were pointed out as found at the search. It is open to doubt whether Satish Roy can remember, as he says he does, that it had Arabinda's name on it. If he had then noticed that it is probable that more notice would have been taken of it. I think it very doubtful whether he read the name at the time. Considering the immense quantity of things that had to be dealt with in the garden it is probable that Frizzoni merely dictated what is written in the search list & Satish wrote it down.

That it was then found there there seems no reason to doubt. Mr. Corbett would certainly not have initialed the document unless found there.

Much is made of the fact that it was not found when Gupta was taking over charge of the exhibits. According to him there was some discussion between himself & Satish about it. He asked Satish for it, Satish said it was in the pan & Gupta not seeing it said it was not. Apparently neither of them thought of emptying the balls out of the pan, and when folded the letter would be easily concealed by these balls. The material objects were kept separate from the documents and such as were to be sent to the Chemical

Examiner were sent before the documents were examined

It was argued that the letter could not have reached Calcutta in time to be in the garden. Even supposing the letter went to Baidyanath, via Calcutta,—and there is nothing to show whether a letter from Sylhet would go through Calcutta to get to Baidyanath,—there would be time for the letter to be redirected & reach Calcutta before the 2nd

To my mind the prosecution attaches unnecessary importance to the finding of this letter in the garden. It is out of the question that Arabinda took it there himself, for if he had gone there some one is sure to have seen him going. And if he gave it to some one else to show to Sushil it does not follow that he expected Sushil to be found in the garden

What then are the chief points against Arabinda? In the letters we have the ambiguous references to the movement requiring unlimited money, and Abinash no longer doing Arabinda's work. As regards association with persons we have the fact that he was a friend of [the] Subodhs, that he was acquainted with Lele and Ram Chandra Prabhu that he employed for the purpose of looking after his house, Abinash, who is a conspirator the possibility that he knew Upen & Birkumar, a name appearing in the garden, because a letter comes for the first to No. 23 & a telegram from some one giving the name Birkumar goes from the second from No. 23 the possibility that he knew Hrishikesh, by the finding in the latter's house of the slip with the address 19-3 Choku Khansama's Lane and the probability that he knew Biren Sen & Sushil, & knew the whereabouts of the latter at the end of April. As regards connection with associations we have the suggestion that he was connected with the Midnapur Chhatra Bhandar, arising out of the reference to him in the letter of Manik to Nikhil. As regards association with the garden we have the fact that he was part owner of the garden, but no evidence that he ever went there. It was argued that he did not attempt to sell it as he wanted it to be kept for the purposes of the conspiracy. He says that he asked people to try to sell it, and so far as one can gather from his letters & writings, personal attention to business is not what one would expect from him. There is the further fact that 3 entries with the initials A G were found in the garden Exhibit 239, and that the draft telegram, which may be his, was found in a book in the garden. As regards No. 15 there is the finding of No. 385-2 & Ex 774, and they only connect him with the conspiracy if it be clearly established that he is the Karta referred to. In the case of the first letter I have pointed out that there is reason to think he is the Karta because of the mention of Baren & No. 23. But it is not clear who was the writer or who the addressee, & its connection with the conspiracy can only be assumed from the fact of its being found at No. 15 & the mention of Baren. The other contains direct reference to a garden & being addressed to Upen at Sil's Lodge, doubtless has connection with the conspiracy. And further as regards knowledge of the conspiracy there is the piece of scribbling found in the old notebook in his house.

I should hesitate before saying that his complicity in the conspiracy can be considered established on these facts.

In his favour we have the fact that he has in the columns of the *Bande Mataram* depreciated violence there is such an article dated 28th May 1907 And so late as 10th April 1908 there is an article saying that the national movement cannot be allowed to be driven inward & made an affair of a secret society as it would if outward expression were stopped. His connection with the conspiracy can only be considered established if we find that while writing one thing he has been doing another

Of course it is possible that a man might join a conspiracy to deprive the King of the sovereignty of British India, in which his share would be to preach discontent with the existing order of things and that he might be entirely ignorant of that branch of the conspiracy which concerned the collection of arms & ammunition It is possible that Arabinda may have been in that position in this case, but in such a case it must be clearly shown that his preachings were part of such a conspiracy, and in the present case it would be difficult to do that without showing some connection with the part which the garden plays in the case. Considering the circumstances of India it may be dangerous for a man to publish doctrines inconsistent with the existing order of things, in certain circumstances it might justify a charge of sedition Whether such a charge could be laid at Arabinda's door does not now concern me The point is whether his writings & speeches, which in themselves seem to advocate nothing more than the regeneration of his country, taken with the facts proved against him in this case are sufficient to show that he was a member of the conspiracy. And taking all the evidence together I am of the opinion that it falls short of such proof as would justify me in finding him guilty of so serious a charge

In dealing with this case generally I have endeavoured to work on broad lines rather than to elaborate petty details, which would have confused the real issue in a judgment which has already grown to excessive length I have not in dealing with Arabinda's case referred to the Midnapur incident, nor to his connection with the fund for the support of Basanta's family during Basanta's imprisonment for these do not affect the main issue One word with reference to his connection with the meeting to welcome Bipin Chandra Pal on his release from jail Whether his views agree with Bipin's or not there is nothing calling for comment in the fact that he joined in welcoming a man imprisoned for refusing to give evidence in a case in which Arabinda was the accused.

A few words as to the opinions of the assessors One of them speaks of this conspiracy as a "childish conspiracy" He seems to have utterly failed to realise the significance and danger of it or the extent to which it had spread The assessors evidently dislike the idea of a conspiracy while both find that certain persons collected arms in circumstances which amount to an offence under [Section] 122, one of them thinks that the collections were made by persons independently of each other In fact the offence under [Section] 122 is more serious than that under [Section] 121 A involving as it does forfeiture of all the offender's property as a compulsory sentence . .

[Page 336 of facsimile manuscript ends here Pages 337 to 353 were not photocopied by the Archives Page 354 continues below:]

In conclusion I must thank Mr Birley for his really excellent commitment order I believe that practically without assistance he disentangled the mass of important facts and documents to which he referred in his order from the chaotic state in which they then were, and produced a really first class piece of work

C P Beachcroft  
6 5 '09

C P BEACHCROFT'S JUDGMENT IN THE CASE OF NOLINI KANTA  
SARKAR\* AT THE ALIPORE BOMB TRIAL, DATED 6 5 1909

[Typed verbatim from a photocopy of C P Beachcroft's handwritten document, held at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives ]

Against Nolini Kanta Sarkar also the case is weak. He was arrested in the garden He admits that he used to go there occasionally, but did not spend whole days & nights there, but he was arrested there as he had been reading there too late the previous night & stopped there He says he went there from about the middle of April as he heard that Indian philosophy & yoga were taught there as he was a student of philosophy He apparently had been staying at 44-3 Harrison Road and it is quite possible he was caught in the same way as other boys there An Imperial Library card in his name was found in a book there He says he gave it to Upen for safe custody This may or may not be true, in any case the finding of it there does not prove continual residence there nor do the studs & links, ownership of which he also denies

The name Nolini is found in Ex LXXVI, & the initials N S in Ex 239 & 667 It is possible he is not the person referred to A Nolini is mentioned in letter Ex 538-1, as staying with Sushil. The Nolini in Ex LXXVI might be this man, in one place in that book the name comes next to the name of Sushil

The name Nolini also appears in Abinash's notebook Ex 311 There is nothing to show it is the accused On the other hand in Ex 932, the Jugantar Students' account there is the name Nolini Kanta Rai so it is quite likely that that is the Nolini referred to in Ex 311

He is also said to have been seen at No 15 & No 4 There is no evidence with whom he was seen at No 4, it is a bookshop & his presence there may be perfectly innocent. At No 15 he was seen only by Sarat Dass and in the absence of corroboration I am not prepared to accept his statement

Ex 371-4 is a pamphlet on the imprisonment of Bipin Chandra Pal It was found at 38-4 & bears the name Nolini Kanta Sarkar This is written in the vernacular & there is

\* Young revolutionary Nolini Kanta Gupta's name as it appears in the Judgment He had given to the police his surname as Sarkar, to hoodwink them —Editor

no vernacular writing of his with which to compare it He denies knowing this exhibit and says he did not know Arun Dass before the arrest

He is one of the accused who had the good sense to answer questions For though as I said before there is no compulsion as an accused to answer questions, explanations given by an accused personally are more valuable than possible suggestions made by his counsel for him, & it is not perhaps sufficiently realised that straightforward answers to the court are far more likely to impress the court than specious excuse invented for an accused

There remains only the fact that he was convicted under the Police Act for taking part in a political procession in Rangpur That may have been nothing more than a foolish piece of schoolboy bravado

There is no sufficient evidence to connect him with the conspiracy or to affect him with knowledge of the existence of a design to wage war

*(Concluded)*

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## BEFORE DAWN

So many times I have passed by the trees  
 Which stand by the street that goes to the beach,  
 Yet never I saw  
 And never I heard  
 A bird  
 But last Sunday morning long before dawn  
 There hundreds of birds were calling the sun.  
 This never I knew,  
 Could never adore  
 Before

RUTH

Amal comments: The secret caught is attractively voiced



## RELEVANCE OF BANDE MATARAM

“MEN of genius scatter their ideals broadcast Some of them fall on congenial soil. Time and the forces of Time nurse them They ripen into an abundant harvest fraught with unspeakable good to future generations,” wrote Sir Surendranath Banerjea. Bankim was such a genius or *Rishi*. He gave us the vision of our Mother, the Motherland The idea of the Motherland was not in itself a great driving force; the mere recognition or the desirability of freedom was not an inspiring motive. It was not till the Motherland revealed herself to the eye of the mind as something more than a stretch of earth or a mass of individuals, it was not till she took the shape as a great Divine and Maternal Power in a form of beauty that dominated the mind and seized the heart that the petty fears and hopes vanished in the all-absorbing passion for the Mother and her service, that patriotism worked miracles and saved a doomed nation Bankim had that vision and he revealed it in *Bande Mataram* The Mother of his vision held trenchant steel in her twice seventy million hands and not the bowl of the mendicant Once such a vision of the Mother was given to the people there was no rest, and no further slumber till Her temple was raised and Her image installed and the sacrifice offered. This is exactly what happened and what *Bande Mataram* achieved.<sup>1</sup>

Bankim Chandra, according to Radhakumud Mookerji, elevated patriotism into a religion in his *Bande Mataram* and the Motherland (*desa narika*) into a regular deity To Bankim, Motherland is the great Mother of all Mothers, recalling our ancient maxim, *janani janmabhumscha swargadapi gariyasi*. (Mother and Motherland is greater than Heaven itself ) This eternal truth finds further expression in the *virat deha* of the Mother (India) who is richly endowed by Nature The poet conceived the Mother as the Mother of Mothers and described her divine manifestations such as Durga, Kamala or Lakshmi, Vani or Saraswati, the source of all that maketh Man, his knowledge (*vidyā*), his religion (*dharma*), the very core (*marma*) of his heart (*hrit*), the very breath of his life (*pranah sareere*), prowess (*śakti*) of his arms and the devotion (*bhakti*) of heart. The Motherland is the deity enshrined and worshipped in every temple because it is through love of the country that one achieves the breadth of vision and purity of heart that lead to the attainment Truly, the service of Man is worship of the *śakti*, the Primeval Mother.

Bankim Chandra was no doubt inspired by the Vedic conception of Democracy. Radhakumud Mookerji says: “Bankim Chandra’s National Song was no doubt inspired by a hymn of the Rīg Veda, the last Sukta of the last Mandala of the Rīg Veda, the prayer offered by Rishi Angrasa to his chosen Deity, who from his name, may be taken as the Deity of Democracy. That name is a most singular and abstract name ever given to a Deity of worship He is called the Deity of Saminana or Samajnana, a name which, according to Sayanacharya, symbolizes the national, collective, political consciousness evenly spread (*sama*) among a whole people, what may be called the National Mind whom individual minds are to invoke as the source of their own vitality It is *visvachaitanya*, cosmic consciousness, oversoul, in which the individual soul is to be

merged in Yoga. For Yoga is but the Union of Jivatma with Paramatma. The Rig Veda describes the *mantra* with which this Deity of Democracy is to be worshipped by its votaries, the *mantra* of complete inner union of their hearts (*hrudaya*) and minds (*manah*), their hopes and aspirations and in national policy (*mantra*)”<sup>2</sup>

To Sri Aurobindo *Bande Mataram* was not only a song, but it was also a *mantra* of the nation, like an individual, every nation had a triple-form of existence—the gross, the subtle, and the causal. The truth of one’s soul-existence was stronger than his physical. Only the Seer, the *Rishi* could see the Soul-truth, Bankim was such a *Yogi* or *Rishi* of India, who had not only seen the inner truth but also had given a *mantra* of it, that *mantra* was *Bande Mataram*.

During our struggle for freedom, we needed a voice, we needed strength, dignity and soft beauty in our self-expression. Bankim in his immortal song divined our need and was inspired to meet it; he gave us a means by which the soul of India could express itself. The Mother was revealed to us. *Bande Mataram* gave us the religion of Patriotism.

We conclude this Chapter with Prime Minister Nehru’s words: “*Bande Mataram* is obviously and indisputably the premier national song of India, with great historical tradition and intimately connected with our struggle for freedom. That position it is bound to retain and no other song can displace it. It represents the passion and poignancy of that struggle, but perhaps not so much the culmination of it.” *Bande Mataram* was created by history and in turn it created history. It was immortalised by Bankim Chandra and he was, in turn, immortalised by it.

P. THANKAPPAN NAIR

(Extracts from *Indian National Songs and Symbols*)

### References

1. Adapted from Sri Aurobindo’s “Rishi Bankim Chandra”, *Supplement*, SABCL, Vol 27, p 347
2. From R. K. Mookerji’s Foreword to Ghoshli Book House’s *Our National Insignia*, Amalapuram, 1954, p xiii

## OUR SUNIL-DA

Nearer and nearer now the music draws,  
Life shudders with a strange felicity,  
All Nature is a wide enamoured pause  
Hoping her lord to touch, to clasp, to be.

For this one moment lived the ages past,  
The world now throbs fulfilled in me at last

(Sri Aurobindo, *Collected Poems*, SABCL, Vol 5, p 139 )

ON the morning of 26-1-1966 the Mother saw me in her interview-*cum*-music room  
As always, she recited the selected passages from *Savitri* which corresponded to  
the *Savitri*-paintings.

She heard the recording of her voice and remarked

It is all right.

At that time I felt strongly within me that there must be some background music to  
the Mother's recitations

I expressed my feeling to the Mother She was very pleased and said

I will speak to Sunil who will compose the music and put it along with my own  
music It will be very interesting

Then the Mother wrote to Sunil-da He answered that if she wanted, he would  
certainly do so, but he was not sure that he could do justice to the wonderful lines of Sri  
Aurobindo's *Savitri*

The Mother encouraged him on 11-2-66.

Sunil, my dear child,

Those who are really capable are always modest Come on the 15th at 11  
o'clock Huta will be there and I will introduce you to Huta

With my tenderness and my blessings

Much later the above letter was shown to me by Sunil-da himself

On 15-2-66 the Mother saw me in the morning and greeted me with a beautiful  
bouquet and said enthusiastically

Good news for you I have called Sunil here at 11 o'clock I shall introduce you to  
him and explain to him what is to be done in music

After our work on *Savitri* the Mother asked me to call Sunil-da, who was waiting outside

The Mother gave him a big smile as he entered the room.

Then she introduced us. He and I exchanged smiles with a nod.

After that the Mother explained to him in detail how she wanted the music to be composed along with her own organ music which would serve as a background with her recitations.

The Mother asked me all about the Twelve Books of *Savitri*, their Cantos and the passages selected by me. I apprised her of everything.

The Mother asked Sunil-da how many hours it would take to see the slides of *Savitri*-paintings and hear the music. He replied that it would be three hours or so. The Mother said:

Oh, it is too much for people. They cannot sit so long.

I said: "Why, Mother, when there is a cinema, they can sit for four hours!"

She laughed softly and said:

"Ah, yes, my child, but don't you know that it is for their amusement, while this is something serious?"

We all had a good laugh.

Finally it was decided by the Mother that when the slides were many they could be shown in two parts. Thus the sitting hours each time would be diminished.

Then she looked at Sunil-da for a few minutes with her shining eyes—as if she was pouring her force, light, consciousness, Grace and Love in order to fill his whole being for this exquisite work.

In fact, the Mother wanted Sunil-da to compose the music of the future—of the New World.

He bowed down at the Mother's feet. She smiled charmingly when she gave him a full-blown red rose.

Sunil-da and I took our leave.

My memory flew back to the year 1957.

One evening I went to the Mother at the Playground. My heart was beating uncontrollably fast—my nerves in a jumble. I sat near her feet, feeling totally nervous and lost. She leaned forward from her couch, taking my hands into hers, and said sympathetically:

Child, be peaceful. Put your head on the couch. Presently we shall hear the music composed by Sunil. It is the 'Light without obscurity'.

Then she called Gauri, Sunil-da's wife and the Mother's attendant in the Play-

ground, and asked her to instruct the people of the Projector Room to play the piece. She also asked her to switch off the light. This was done.

I sat near her feet—her couch was low so I just put my head on it. The Mother caressed my hair. The music started. A heavenly atmosphere was created. Peace descended—her warm proximity, her delicate perfume mingled with the scents of flowers intoxicated me. I lost my existence in her bliss.

The music was extremely soothing—I felt as if I were relaxing on huge waves of the ocean. I really wanted it to go on and on forever. . . But the music stopped. I was dazed and drowsy. With a great effort I opened my eyes and raised my head from the couch.

The Mother and I looked at each other in utter silence. She smiled and gave me flowers. I left. But I had been reluctant to budge from her room.

I had never met Sunil-da at that time, yet his music haunted me.

\*

On 28-3-66 the Mother finished reciting the 23 passages of Book One Canto One. The copy of the recorded tape was given to Sunil-da.

It was Thursday—7-7-66 at 10 30 a.m. Sunil-da, Niranjana and myself were there when the Mother entered her room and sat on her chair with a smile.

She heard the first music of *Savitri*, Book One, Canto One. She exclaimed: O, it is magnificent! It is excellent!

The Mother held Sunil-da's hands and looked deeply into his eyes and revealed

Sunil, your music is not vital or mental. But something spiritual.

I could clearly see the expression of contentment and happiness on Sunil-da's face. And these verses from Beethoven [in English translation] sprang into my mind:

O lead my spirit,  
O raise it from these heavy depths,  
transported by that art,  
that fearlessly  
and joyfully it soar up to Thee  
For Thou, Thou knowest all things,  
Thou alone canst inspire.

Later I congratulated Sunil-da. He said: "Huta, now I will have to read the whole of *Savitri* in order to understand the epic and then compose the music according to the Divine's inspiration. You know, it was my aspiration to compose *Savitri*-music. If you

would not have recorded the Mother's recitations and given me the tapes, I would not have composed the music. And your tape-recording is very nice—like a professional one."

I said "Sunil-da I am honoured! You are very kind and appreciative. You see, everything is decided and arranged by the Supreme Lord. We are His instruments. I am fortunate and very happy to be one."

\*

On 13-6-66 the Mother wrote to me

My dear little child Huta,

Today itself I am sending word to Chimanbhai to come on 7th at 10 a.m. for settling the slide affair.

I have kept one morning this month (Friday 27th) in addition for reading *Savitri*. So everything will be all right.

With all my love.

In the beginning Chimanbhai K. Patel took the slides of *Savitri*-paintings up to Book One.

Afterwards an American, Richard Eggenberger, took up the job till the end of Book Twelve. He also took the slides of the paintings of Sri Aurobindo's poems.

\*

On the morning of 18-5-1967 I heard with the Mother Sunil-da's composition of *Savitri*-music Book One Canto Two. It lasted for 1 hour and 10 minutes. The Mother was very much absorbed in it. Then she spoke:

Sunil's music has come from a very high level—from the higher and luminous worlds.

The Mother gave a red rose and her blessings packet to him and looked at him for quite a long time.

Then she nodded approvingly, joyously.

\*

Towards the end of 1967 the Mother completed her recitations from the whole of *Savitri*: 468 passages.

Gradually I gave to Sunil-da all the recorded copies of the Mother's recitations. He was very appreciative and happy.

On 7-2-1968 I heard along with the Mother Sunil-da's music of Book One Canto Three.

As always she praised his music and gave lovely red roses to him and Victor, his colleague.

\*

In March 1968, according to the Mother's wish, people saw in the Playground the slides of *Savitri*-paintings accompanied by Sunil-da's music and the Mother's recitations

\*

On 4-10-1969 the Mother and I heard the *Savitri*-music composed by Sunil-da.

Some passages of *Savitri* were in French, translated by the Mother

There were also the Mother's recitations in English with the same music by Sunil-da.

After hearing the music the Mother remained silent.

Then she gave red roses to Sunil-da and Victor

Later Sunil-da told me: "Huta, English recitations recorded by you sounded very powerful with my music."

I wrote a letter dated 11-10-69 to the Mother:

My dearest Mother,

You have heard Sunil's music along with the French passages. A few days back Sunil came to my house and asked me whether you would like to hear the same music with English passages bit by bit on Fridays

Mother, on Fridays if I am able to see you at least at 10.30 a.m. then we can do our usual work *About Savitri* which takes 40 or 45 minutes. But, in case I am called in rather late i.e. at 11 or so, then we cannot work in hurry. So perhaps hearing a part of the music may be more practical, for then we shall take only 10 or 15 minutes. Thus we can have our short meditation. But, of course, this is only an idea, if you prefer something else, that indeed will be the right thing.

Finally, I am ever grateful to you for helping me and leading me to my goal  
Love

Yours ever  
Huta

The Mother replied on 11-10-69:

It is all right, the proposal is good. We shall hear Sunil's music  
With love and blessings

So we heard Sunil-da's beautiful composition along with the Mother's recitations.

On 23-11-69, Sunday, in the Playground at 7 45 p m there was the last show of the slides of *Savitri*-paintings Book One Canto Five along with Sunil-da's music and the Mother's recitations

The Mother heard Sunil-da's music up to the end of Book One

\*

On 19-12-1969 the Mother saw me in her room After our work she said

On 26th come at 9 45 to listen to the New Year music by Sunil After that we shall work on *Savitri*

I was delighted

The day arrived. We heard the charming music I felt the divine vibrations all over my body I also heard the Mother's New Year message in her own words

The world is preparing for a big change. Will you help?

The music lasted for about 20 minutes. It was, indeed, very impressive

As always, the Mother was extremely happy with Sunil-da and his remarkable composition

All went away after receiving red roses from the Mother. She and I worked on *About Savitri* The Mother recited verses of *Savitri* and then gave comments on them, which I tape-recorded

Once again she spoke to me about Sunil-da's extraordinary composition of the New Year

I believe this very music was played when the Mother was given Samadhı on 20-11-1973

\*

On 24-2-71 I wrote to the Mother

My dearest Mother,

First, all the recorded tapes of your recitations are complete and ready Secondly, I requested Sunil whether he could compose the music for the whole of *Savitri*, which will be played along with your recitations when the slides of *Savitri*-paintings are shown in the Ashram Theatre on the occasion of Sri Aurobindo's Centenary Year—1972 He said that it was not possible to finish the composition by that time Thirdly, your organ music is there ready for the purpose It may serve very well as background music to your recitations during the slide shows Besides, it was your wish to take your music in this regard Fourthly, I would very much like you to hear a few passages of your recitations



with your own organ music Fifthly, I truly adore Sunil's music but he is unable to finish his composition in time Moreover, his music is rather long for the slide-shows

Sixthly, since I have given to Sunil the copies of all the recorded tapes of your recitations, I sincerely wish that he may carry on with the *Savitri*-music. It would be good if his music is played in the Playground during the meditation—on Thursdays and Sundays. That will be *Meditations on Savitri*, the name given by you for the *Savitri* project

Also, his music may be used for creative dances, dramas and other numerous programmes Besides, many people would like to have his music along with your recitations

Finally I pray to you to decide and do the needful.

Love

Yours  
Huta

She wrote:

All right

On 26-2-71 the Mother heard her own organ music along with her recitations She liked it very much and fully approved of her music which was to be taken throughout her recitations during the slide-shows

Then I started the work with Arun in the Projector Room. We took various compositions of the Mother's own organ music. The Mother had given names to her music: *Mystic Solitude*, *Quiet Power*, *Joy*, *Compassion of the Divine*, *Life in Eternity*, *Construction of the Future*, and so on

The Mother arranged for Sunil-da's music to be played in the Playground during the meditations Thursdays and Sundays In this connection she gave me a special blessings packet for Sunil-da. He was very pleased

\*

In the beginning of 1972 the Mother's voice was not up to the mark So, with her approval, I recited Sri Aurobindo's Poems on the recorder I gave the spool to Sunil-da and requested him to take as a background the 1970 New Year music composed by him He recorded this in two parts which the Mother heard; she liked them both very much I was really encouraged.

Along with the slides of the *Savitri*-paintings the slides of Sri Aurobindo's poems were also shown These paintings too were done under the Mother's direct guidance

Sunil-da's music was, and is, used for many purposes. A few remarkable pieces here and there were included in the *Savitri*-movie made in Germany by Michel Klostermann

The Mother expressed her wish to make a movie of the *Savitri*-paintings along with her recitations and her own organ music I took Michel to the Mother. She gave him her special blessings and instructed him how she wanted the movie to be made: full of light, vibrations and liveliness.

He has completed his job according to the Mother's wish

\*

When Sunil-da was composing the music of Book Three he wrote to me in the late 70s a letter as follows

My dear Huta,

I hope to do Book III of *Savitri* this year. I should be working it out But Victor can make the tape of the Mother's recitations without the music just now Will you please lend us your tape for a few days?

We would like to revise the two first cantos of Book II, I will be thankful to you if you could lend me that tape also for a few days.

I have not seen you for a long time How are you? My thoughts are very often with you

I was not keeping very good health, but I am a little better now  
Sending you much love

Yours  
Sunil-da

I marvelled at his modesty and nobility

I gave him the original tapes of Book II and Book III I remember to have said to him that in future all the original tapes would go to him.

And that was done recently

Unfortunately, he could not complete his *Savitri*-music up to Book Twelve Nevertheless whatever he did up to Book Nine, the music is out of this world. He and his music are immortal

I am forever thankful to our dear Sunil-da for his wonderful collaboration in the Divine's work

Let me quote Moore

Music, oh how faint, how weak,  
Language fades before thy spell!  
Why should Felicity ever speak,  
When thou canst breathe her Soul so well?

HUTA

## MY REMINISCENCES OF NAGIN-BHAI

THERE are some people who may not be quite known to us but are very significant in God's eye. Today I am going to write about a person whose relation with God and God's attention to him were very intimate.

He did not possess any special skill nor was he a hard-working person, though he was here from the age of eighteen for more than sixty years. He was not a creative genius, neither writer, poet, nor an orator. The one thing which he had was a strong urge to devote himself to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo's Yoga. Sadhana was the main theme of his life.

It is already one year since Nagin-bhai's passing away. My friends have been repeatedly asking me to write something about him for they know I was closely associated with him during the last three years of his life. His intensive sadhana, following the path of the Integral Yoga, and instances of Sri Aurobindo's graceful attention to him had slowly attracted me towards him.

He had come to know me through a common friend of ours, an elderly person who would share our spiritual talks. Through me he wanted to convey his messages and yogic experiences, as well as his difficulties, to that friend. He had some general feeling or notion about me, that I had some contact, in some life, with Sri Krishna. Nagin-bhai was also a lover of Sri Krishna. My contribution to our friendship was simply my love and regard for him.

It was my first experience of missing something personally when I came to know of his passing away. I was literally crying. I have love for every devotee of God, but towards Nagin-bhai it was exceptional. That it was so I realised only after his passing away. I felt the loss of a Yogi and of a friend whom no one can replace. He was a Yogi and had deep love for his friends, a thing which I hardly see anywhere else. We were intimate and in our relationship he always showed his pure love towards me. I will never forget his smile which was so spontaneous and open-hearted, full of modesty and love, that it drew me always closer to him.

From the age of 18 to 81 Nagin-bhai had only a single objective in mind, to remain constantly on the path of Yoga, to collect corals of spiritual experiences from the vast spiritual sea. Days and nights, weeks and months, year after year, he was busy with the practice of truth and the finding of the soul in him.

He had no attachment to work nor group activities in the Ashram, except for doing them in time as service to the Lord. In him there was no place for common human desires, no ambition of gathering popularity. He knew popularity could divert him from the path of Yoga. He was one of the obedient disciples of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

A simple young boy from Bhavanagar of Gujarat, he had come to Pondicherry in 1931, at the age of 14, with the intention of taking back his father from the Ashram. That also gave him a chance to stay here for a month. His father did not return, but Nagin-bhai, while still in the train, felt something within him that was taking him far

away from this earth, beyond this horizon. He was deeply immersed in that experience. That was his first experience. The result was that, once back in Bhavanagar, he could not stay for more than 2 days in his house or go to school. He rushed back to Pondicherry, for good. A boy had come to steal a person from God, but was himself stolen by God.

I came in contact with Nagin-bhai when he was extraordinarily happy in the path of his sadhana. I found that he was very disciplined and sincere regarding matters concerned with sadhana. Once I asked him about his experiences. Normally he never spoke to any one about these. The following he told me once. He was standing by the side of the Samadhi and meditating. Sri Aurobindo told him in that state: "Nagin, you enter in me." He saw Sri Aurobindo sitting in the Samadhi and calling him, by extending his two arms. Nagin-bhai said: "Lord, I don't know how to enter in you." Sri Aurobindo answered: "All right, watch how I am entering in you, practise like that and you will be successful." He felt Sri Aurobindo's presence concretely when he entered in him. Nagin-bhai also started practising the process in a similar fashion. We may also understand from this why he meditated at a particular place close to the Samadhi.

Once Nagin-bhai came to know that Sri Aurobindo wanted him to meditate on Sri Jagannath; he wanted him to do that every day at a fixed time, so that Parambrahma Consciousness should enter into him before his final days. It seems he was the only person in the Ashram who could do that. One week passed, one month, but he didn't get anything. He was worried. He asked me to approach our common friend to find out whether the Guru had any remark about his disappointment. Nagin-bhai kept on practising the Guru's word. After a few months he started getting the results of his meditation. One day, at 9.30 in the morning, he went to Sri Aurobindo's Room. Because of knee trouble he sat for meditation on a chair just at the entrance of Sri Aurobindo's Room. When he looked at Sri Aurobindo's photo he saw there Sri Jagannath's Temple of Puri, the Temple of Parambrahma. A light came out from the Deity and entered into his heart. He was lost and sunk in that consciousness. The vibration and palpitation was very fast, which he could not easily bear. He wanted to immediately go away from the Room. It was so difficult for him to hold the power of the light that was entering into him.

On another occasion he went to the Meditation Room for Pranam. He stood in front of the picture of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother painted by Promod Chattopadhyaya. He found that Sri Aurobindo was smiling from the photo and lovingly calling him. He said: "Nagin, when you meditated on Sri Jagannath, it was I who waited for you there when he came out, it was I who entered into you." These two lines show how much Sri Aurobindo was constantly guiding Nagin-bhai's movements of sadhana and taking care of him during his last days.

Nagin-bhai was very affectionate to his friends, at the same time unattached. So, whenever I requested him for something, he normally consented. Once I requested him to come for my birthday to one of the Ashram Guest Houses to have dinner with my

friends A week before the birthday he told me that he would attend the party since the Guest House is very near to his house, on the seashore But just a day before the birthday he told me seriously ‘‘While I was going to the Ashram I heard Sri Aurobindo’s voice telling me ‘You should stop going to the places where there are big crowds It will not help you You tell this to Krishnendu He will understand it ’’’

Nagin-bhai was always happy in our small company Once I had called him to my house for dinner But he left us at 6 He was particular about going to the Ashram at a fixed time for his meditation at the Samadhi. Such was his serious concern for sadhana

Coming to the last days of Nagin-bhai He used to always consult my above-mentioned friend in several matters of his sadhana On 26th April 1997, evening, I came to know that Nagin-bhai, while taking his bath in the morning, had a peculiar kind of feeling While rubbing his body he felt suddenly that his soul wanted to leave the body. More or less immediately after that Dr Datta examined him, found everything medically o.k. Nagin-bhai, however, sent a message to my above-mentioned friend to find out the reason of such a feeling She didn’t give much importance to it, knowing that he was a nervous type of person But within a few days he got worried about this matter He complained to my friend that his sadhana had come to a stop He felt as if someone had put a big stone across his path. He was worried about his sadhana, which was going on in full swing He wanted it to continue for a few more years, bringing him full success He told all this to my friend Of course, it was not fear of death that made him worried; rather the concern was his sadhana and progress. Only one thought had haunted him all along and made him wonder why his soul wanted to leave the body, particularly when the sadhana was progressing rapidly But probably he was not aware of his achievements, that he had progressed more than was expected from him in this life

Nagin-bhai was resting in his room Sri Aurobindo appeared before him in his luminous body. He was spell-bound by the majestic appearance Sri Aurobindo was very happy with him and blessed him But the result was, he forgot to ask the Lord why his soul wanted to leave the body

I was meeting Nagin-bhai regularly for a short while almost once or twice in a week. He would tell me about his physical weakness and his inability to go to the Ashram every day He would also tell me about his feeling of the soul wanting to leave his body, etc. I didn’t give much importance to it because, whenever he fell ill, Sri Aurobindo in an unbelievable way always took care of him Once, just a year before his passing away, his legs partly lost their sensation This continued for some time. At this advanced age normally this kind of problem is incurable But Nagin-bhai earnestly prayed to Sri Aurobindo The reply was that he would be cured, he was also advised to have patience. Within a few months he recovered from the ailment fully So, I had always an optimistic feeling about him, that the Lord would take care of him and that he would come out of the present crisis too.

Just two days before his passing away, on 7th May 1997 Wednesday, evening, I along with my above-mentioned friend went to see him in his room We had some

snacks together His hospitality to his friends was so praiseworthy that he never allowed anyone to go out from his room without eating something But looking at his condition that day I took his words seriously,—that his soul wanted to leave the body I asked him if he was sure about what he was saying, whether he would trust his feeling of the soul wanting to leave the body He answered “It’s a concrete feeling and perfect in expression It cannot be wrong Of course, it is difficult to explain such things, but its effect on my outer life is considerable Slowly I have started losing interest in almost everything, even in my routine work No interest in eating, sleeping, talking, meditating, etc. There is some kind of restlessness” This was his condition at that time Probably the soul had already decided to leave the body It might have completed all the sadhana for which it was destined in this life. But his physical mind was not ready to accept the decision of the soul He was more attached to it than to his soul’s option But I had to take note of the seriousness of his condition and, in spite of his resistance, arrange for someone to attend upon him during the night Every day in the morning I used to visit him and enquire about his condition My young cousin doing night duty for him would also report to me about him Nagin-bhai always told me that he was better and keeping well On Friday morning, 9th May 1997, I went to see him as usual. When I found that he was in the bathroom I wanted to go away without disturbing him

But as he was very fond of me, on hearing my voice he immediately came out in spite of his weakness He then started talking to me I asked him about his condition He replied that he was feeling considerably weaker. I offered him help if he wanted any He smiled and replied that he could manage for himself in the house, but he was feeling rather bad that he was not able to go to the Samadhi. At this point, before taking my leave, I expressed my regards to him, he also reciprocated with kindness to me I never knew that this would be our last meeting. I got a message the same day that he was taken to the Nursing Home This was to inform me that my cousin need not go to his house at night to attend to him In the evening, around 7 50 p m , as I was coming out of my parents’ house I got a message that Nagin-bhai had breathed his last in the Nursing Home He left his body at about 7 p m , but at 6 30 he had asked the nurse to ring the doctor to come immediately his soul was preparing to leave the body He was fully conscious of his soul till the last moment I was shocked by the news It was the full-moon night, the Buddha Poonima Rabindranath Tagore’s birthday also happens to be on the same day. It was on this auspicious day that Nagin-bhai’s soul finally decided to plunge into Eternity to take another birth The Jivatma met Paramatma, it entered the ocean of peace I touched his feet to pay my last homage to him

I lost a very dear friend, one who was so close to me It was really by the Grace of God that I had come in contact with him and enjoyed his loving company, the *satsang* not possible with any one else He was to me always sweet, gentle, modest, simple and frank, always like a child I will never forget his sweet and simple love for me On my birthday he would wait near the Samadhi to greet me with flowers Such humility! He would himself bring for me the permission card to visit Sri Aurobindo’s Room Just the

day after his passing away I felt intensely his deep love for me I wept It was for the first time in my life that I was crying for someone even after his funeral. My weeping was uncontrollable. I felt that sometime in the future I would meet him again. We had a group meditation on the 12th day after his passing away. The same night I saw him in a dream I was happy and reassured

KRISHNENDU

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## THE LIFE IMMACULATE

I AM the blue of the cloudless sky  
Poised in the depth of being!  
Pain and passion touch me not,  
I watch the world from within .

Above, the Almighty looks after me;  
Below lie the rigid rocks and the turbulent sea—  
Thunder clouds assail me often;  
I take recourse to the Sun Supreme!

I invoke the highest Light to flow  
Through the blind alleys of lower life—  
And build amidst men the golden bond  
For the reign of the Race Divine.

O my Lord, let Thy shining sword  
Cut asunder the roots of futile strifes—  
And make the suffering soil  
Reflect for ever the Heavenly smile

CHUNILAL CHOWDHURY

## AMONG THE NOT SO GREAT — VIII

### YOGANANDA

#### Chasing a Dream — Fulfilling a Destiny

*(Continued from the issue of August 1998)*

In the very early days the sea was out of bounds for us Ashramites. We could not even wet our feet. Later (I think Birenda was the cause) the Mother permitted sea swimming. Large numbers used to go for a swim. There had to be some supervision. Yogananda volunteered. He stood on the beach, a motor-car inner tube tied to a long rope at the ready, a whistle in hand and a sash across his chest with a large 'LIFEGUARD' printed on it. How effective he would be in an emergency was never proved. But the sincerity, regularity, punctuality and enthusiasm were never in question. Later candidates did not impress as much.

The Swimming Pool was ready at last in 1957. The Mother inaugurated it on Her birthday, 21 February. Gerard (of Auro-orchard) and I were inducted into service, to take care of the Pool. Complete ignorance was our plus point. Gerard left after a few years. Yogananda, who may have volunteered or been recruited—whatever the means—he came to replace Gerard. So started an interesting, long and fruitful partnership between us. He was nearly 65 years of age, experienced, having seen and suffered much and I was not half his age, green, having seen very little and suffered nothing—though seemingly so disparate, we got along well till he retired many years later till his last days. He was older, so he took charge. But, he knew I had a better know-how about the Pool than he—so there was more symbiosis than the nuisance of a hierarchy. His kind did not talk of 'give and take'. Their concern rather was 'give and give' (offer). He often tried to rub into me the inherent values and virtues of work. He would say "Kajo ekta force. Kaj korlei, tar shathe shokti ashe." (Work itself is a force. If you work, you get the strength also with it.) If I hesitated to start a big job he would push me—"Shuru kore dao, bhebona. Shokti peye jabe, babostha hoye jabe." (Start off, don't think so much—you will get the strength and all arrangements will be made.) Work seemed to inspire him. Though now past 70 years, he would be ready for action—back into his old battle dress, khaki shorts, white shirt, pith helmet or umbrella. Sun or rain, if work was on, he would be there supervising and lending a hand where he could. When we were building the eastern compound wall in the Sports Ground (just a fence existed before 1968) we mixed the mortar inside the ground a hundred metres away from where it was required. He would watch over every mix (correct amounts of sand, lime, cement, water and the mixing), load it into a wheelbarrow and accompany it those hundred metres. All he needed in return was a punctual time out for lunch and even more correct time out for tea (4 pm). These were inviolable.

We often emptied the Pool in those early days. We sometimes worked through the



night He would enjoy being there, on deck, helping, and brewing that ambrosial drink—tea—for all the workers

Work inspired him, but behind the inspiration there lurked his old enemy—his temper The eruptions were often justifiable The cause could be small or big, but the effect was usually big and immediate. The Sports Ground was big—as big as it is now—but too small to contain two departments with two managements Yogananda and I ruled the Pool Vasudev and Bikhabhai ruled over the Ground and Track Shoulder rubbing was inevitable For the usual reasons, known and unknown, Yogananda and Vasudev often went opposite ways and rubbed each other the wrong way Friction, spark and fuel—resulted in a small ‘Boom’ The Mother caught some of the echoes She questioned me I had to explain. She asked “How was it before, when Gerard was there?” I said, “Gerard and I steered clear, kept an insulating distance by drawing an imaginary line and a no-man’s-land between the two units” She said, “Draw it again and explain it to them” I tried Later Vasudev and Bikhabhai left the Sports Ground for safer if not greener pastures Barun Tagore replaced them The two units became one—yet Barun mainly looking after the Ground and Yogananda looking after the Pool I was assistant to both

Then did Barun blunder. The Annexe Ground was to be planed It was to be done carefully after planning and preparations Barun got impatient and suddenly decided to do it He called for a tractor and got the ground ploughed! Neither Yogananda nor I knew about it Yogananda came early morning to collect flowers, saw the messed up ground—his blood boiled over. Barun was in the lavatory I was near the volley-ball courts Yogananda saw me, jumped off his bicycle in front of me, face dark, eyes mere slits and lips trembling with rage He fired volley after volley at point blank range Not directly at me, but shots ricocheted off me at Barun I wisely held my tongue during the quarter hour blitz He finally said, “Tomake bole ki labh” (useless telling you), got up on his bicycle and pedalled off Barun wisely emerged only after Yogananda left. The outcome was strange and fateful for me. Both Yogananda and Barun went to Pranab-da and tendered their resignations as ‘In-charge’, to step down and push me up as the in-charge Pranab-da called me and gave me the information. I agreed to give it a try—there was nothing to try The work was the same, only a change in the suffixes—meaningless in our situation.

On another occasion we the Sports-Ground people had a problem with the Coco-Garden people. To settle the matter Pranab-da was called and all concerned met, sat around a table. As it happened the order in which we sat was Khirod-da, Chamanlal-ji (who was new, a visitor then, giving service in the Coco-Garden during his stay), Pranab-da, Yogananda, myself and then Barun. This order was fortuitous. Each one was saying what he thought was right Yogananda too was doing so, but with a little more heat and conviction. Chamanlal-ji happened to remark “If he [Yogananda] keeps losing his temper, the Mother’s work will be disturbed” Yogananda would not take that sitting down He jumped up, raised his umbrella to strike, found it awkward,—with Pranab-da in between pulling him down and trying to pacify him. But he shot back,

“Dui din age eshe amake Mayer kaj bujhachche?” (He has come two days back and he is trying to teach me what the Mother's work is!) Pranab-da saved the day. The meeting was over. Each one knew the other a little better.

Pranab-da himself was at the receiving end once. I cannot recall the reason why I was not present on the occasion. Yogananda told me of it, that he had met Pranab-da and told him “I don't care for anyone, not you nor any other. This is the Mother's kingdom. None can hold me down. My gerua (ochre robe) is ready. I can put it on and go away.” 2-3 days later I met Yogananda in the Sports Ground. He held out two Ganpatram toffees, saying, “Ei nao, Pranab diyechhe” (Take these Pranab has given.) He was in a good mood. I took them and asked what had happened. He said he and Pranab had made up, shaken hands—so the toffees.

There was another interlude with Yogananda, Pranab-da and Dhīrananda. Dhīrananda came to live here, through Yogananda, in 1947. He was very teasing, so we boys had a lot of fun. He and Yogananda had an argument. Yogananda said: “Sri Aurobindo is an Avatar.” Dhīrananda said, “Mahapurush, Yogi, Rishi... Yes, but Avatar—No!” The inevitable took place. Yogananda was the stronger by his stronger convictions. Both lost their tempers. Yogananda went into action. Dhīrananda received a few blows (with a *khadam*, I believe). Yogananda finished with “Eikhane theke, khey, Sri Aurobindo Avatar noy bolchhish. Chole ja.” (Living and eating here you dare say Sri Aurobindo is not an Avatar! Get away.) Dhīrananda went back to Mymensingh (Pakistan). Then in one of the exoduses from there to India, he too turned up as a refugee. He wrote to Yogananda if he could come here. Yogananda asked Pranab-da if his old friend (friendship not dented by a mere *khadam*) could come and work in the Sports Ground. Pranab-da said, “Yes”; then, more in jest, asked Yogananda “Was it not you who hit him and sent him away?” Yogananda without hesitation or regret replied: “Jodi dorkar hoy, abar mere tadiye debo!” (If need be, I will thrash him and send him away again.) Dhīrananda came, worked in the Sports Ground under me (probably did not recognise me as one of his tormentors of 1947). He was older than Yogananda. A few years later, after his coming here, his eyes failed and he passed away shortly after that.

Whatever one may think or say about Yogananda's temper, he was usually very just. The servants were often singed by him. They bore him no grudge. He worked with them—that they admired.

Years passed swiftly by. Yogananda was getting old. We were no longer tenderfoots. He decided it was the right time to retire. He announced this, adding “Ami achhi, kono bodo kaj hole, dakbe amake” (I am yet ready—if any big job is in the offing—call me.) He asked Nolini-da for a milder job. Nolini-da with all his goodwill suggested duty at the Filters (drinking-water tanks at the back of Children's Dispensary). The duty was to open and close the water taps, so that all didn't handle the taps. He declined, saying “Am I an invalid?” He took up work in the newly founded “Sri Aurobindo's Action” under A.B. Patel—delivering a magazine to subscribers living within range of his cycling. He decried the prevailing, prestigious but wasteful habit of

posting the magazines even to the next-door man

Yogananda next took upon himself the job of getting the ‘‘Jules House’’ built (At present his sister-in-law and family live there.) It was a demanding job. He did it; it was his last job. His health was failing, he was 80. Some years passed; he fell ill often, was taken to our Nursing Home. He was brought back to his Room in Arogya House where he had lived nearly six decades. His family members looked after him. He slowly sank—until 14th March 1991 when his soul departed to seek and sit on his Mother’s lap—at last—to realise his dogged dream of long ago!

Yogananda was a man of steel in body and mind. Therefore he was hard and could hurt, but also he could give support and strength—if close enough. Moreover, I believe, a vein of gold ran at the core. Again, if close enough in friendship, one could glimpse that gold through some chinks, for chinks he had, some borne unwittingly and some had to be seen with a blind eye. All that we need to know is—steel rusts and perishes and gold endures

### BHARAT BRAHMACHARI

To better know and understand Yogananda and his life it is necessary to know more about his first Guru—Bharat Brahmachari. It is he who moulded, guided—one can say almost gave ‘‘re-birth’’ to Yogananda’s life, from 1918 to 1932, from the time he joined the Gauri Ashram to the day he met Sri Aurobindo and joined this, the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

Yogananda had written and asked questions to Sri Aurobindo about his first Guru, Bharat Brahmachari. Sri Aurobindo spoke highly of him. Some letters from Sri Aurobindo to Yogananda provide an exceptional testimonial to Bharat Brahmachari and reveal what he really was and achieved.

### Letters to Yogananda from Sri Aurobindo

Have you a photograph of your former guru? If there is one, the Mother would like to see it.

\*

Yogananda,

What you wanted to know was about your Guru being here or not or being one of those in contact with the Mother. For that the photo was necessary as it is by the appearance, not the name, that the Mother identifies those who came here to her—as she did from the photo of his Guru [Lokanath Brahmachari]

May 1933

(Yogananda had great difficulty getting a photo of his Guru. He was considered a

renegade by his old co-disciples. Finally he did procure one )

\*

The Mother saw with interest the photograph of your Gurudev. She had seen Lokanath Brahmachari very often, but your Gurudev has always been near her for many years, long before you came, probably before his death even. When she saw the photograph a wonderful light appeared through it. And through his face is expressed a remarkable soul of aspiration, vision, faith and bhakti.  
26 1934

\*

In the following letters I quote only relevant portions from what Sri Aurobindo says about Bharat Brahmachari and his Yoga

Your Guru's teaching and that of this Yoga are essentially the same, what he called 'chittasuddhi' is what we mean by the psychic change. The teaching here is more developed because it includes the Supramental means of creating a divine life.  
19 6 35

\*

..As to the details he gave from time to time, in all these prophecies of what is to come the main fact can be accepted but this or that detail may point to something that is trying to be but may take place with a slightly different turn to what the mind expected.  
17 9 34

\*

I do not gather from what is quoted as said by your Guru that he claimed to be the Avatar. It seems to me that he claimed to be a Power preparing the way for the work of the Divine Mother.  
25 8 1935

\*

Bharat Brahmachari got an *adesh* in 1925-26 to go to Brindavan to invoke the Mother. He of his own volition never went anywhere, but since it was Her *adesh*, he went. He reached a lonely place and prayed and practised austerities. The Mother gave him

Darshan She was not the usual traditional Kali—black, naked and many-armed She was a resplendent white form, sari-clad, the head covered by the *anchal* and wearing a golden diadem She was two-armed, sitting on a lion. She told him that She would manifest on Earth with all Her Divya-Shakti. He called this form of the Mother “Bharateshwari”

To us here the date 1926 evokes special memories The 24th of November 1926 is the day of Siddhi—Descent of the Overmind in the physical The beautiful sari-clad figure evokes even more special, near and fonder memories—we see our Mother on Darshan and Blessing Days Are all these mere coincidences?

Bharat Brahmachari had a *murti* (idol) made, replicating this vision of the Mother. He installed this *murti* in the precincts of his Chitradham Ashram (another of his Ashrams) A reproduction of a painting of the *murti* is printed in Yogananda's book titled *Mahabirbhab*—The Great Manifestation Much of what I have written and all that I have quoted are from this interesting book

Yogananda more than once asked Sri Aurobindo: “Is she, our Mother, the same Great Universal Mother of Bharat Brahmachari’s vision?” At first Sri Aurobindo, though he replied to more than a hundred letters in a single night, did not reply to this question—or later, replied in vague terms But Yogananda persisted He said to me. “Ami chhadbar lok noyi” (I don't quit easily) Finally, he got what he wanted Each one has to draw one’s own conclusions from all the material presented The mystery deepens or the mystery stands revealed

Later I got some information that could be a confirmation of the identity of Bharat Brahmachari’s vision

Yogananda had described all that he knew and had seen (the Murti at Chitradhama Ashram) to late Sanjiban-da, one of the artists of our Ashram (Pondicherry). The latter made a painting based on that description and it was shown to our Mother She said, “Yes, this is Kali who has come down on Earth amongst men to do Her work, down here, to uplift and enlighten them And that is why She is seen with two arms and not the usual four”

The original is now somewhere here I had seen it in Yogananda’s room often enough I for one think the picture and the symbol are clear

Yogananda and others sometimes talked to Bharat Brahmachari about Sri Aurobindo What he had to say about Sri Aurobindo is also significantly revelatory. Even before they brought in the name of Sri Aurobindo, the Brahmachari used to talk of a Mahapurush on some seashore He did not mention the name of the Mahapurush or the place When Sri Aurobindo the freedom fighter left Calcutta, many hoped he would come back and lead the nation. But Bharat Brahmachari shook his head and said “From what I can see, this is not to be Anyone who has reached the Upper World He (Sri Aurobindo) is in, does not come back.”

Sometime in 1920 Bharat Brahmachari said that the Vishnu-Shakti had gone from Badrinath (the deity at Badrinath is Badrinarayan, a form of Vishnu) to settle in Gandhi But two years later he said that the Vishnu-Shakti had retreated from Gandhi

He added that Gandhi would not be able to bring about the freedom of India. A Mahapurush settled on some seashore would free India.

Bharat Brahmachari also asserted that there was no greater yogi than Sri Aurobindo this side of the Himalayas, so to say, and that Sri Aurobindo was the "elder" of Swami Vivekananda. Sri Aurobindo explained this last utterance: "No, certainly no physical relation. What he must have meant was a superior in knowledge or power or generally greater than Vivekananda." (8.7 1937)

After this talk on Swami Vivekananda, Dhīrananda brought out from somewhere a picture of Sri Aurobindo and showed it to Bharat Brahmachari who said, "Yes, this is Sri Aurobindo. If any of you see Him you will leave me, love me no more."

Bharat Brahmachari once told Yogananda that some day he (Yogananda) was destined to meet this Mahapurush living on the seashore. As for himself, the Mother had granted him the inner vision, so he did not need to go to anyone. But IF for Her work She asked him to go—he surely would. And the one person She might ask him to go to was Sri Aurobindo. There were in this period quite a number of sadhus, sannyasis and gurus. Each guru's disciples hoped and claimed that their guru was an Avatar. One such guru was Prabhu Jagatbandhu of Faridpur. After his passing away, the disciples preserved his body, firmly believing that his soul would re-enter the body and he would live again. Yogananda and others talked or questioned Bharat Brahmachari about these claims. An hour or two after one such causerie, Bharat Brahmachari came out on to the verandah and said "Mayer khata dekhechhu. Oi khataye kono nam naiti—Ek Sri Aurobindo chhada." (I have seen the Mother's book. There no other name was written but that of Sri Aurobindo.)

Bharat Brahmachari passed away in 1928. His guru Loknath Brahmachari passed away earlier. Now the Gauri Ashram hardly exists. Parul, Badol and their father Jogendra (Yogananda's brother) visited the Ashram in 1980. What they saw brought tears to Jogendra who had seen it in its pristine days. One old man was somehow carrying on as caretaker. There was nothing much to take care of. Before leaving the Kutir, Parul asked the old man if she could place a photograph of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo on the dais. The old man was overjoyed. He had heard much about the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, but never seen their photograph.

Bharat Brahmachari lives on. He did not care as to who cared for him, knew of him, or who followed him. He lived in the Mother's Light and Love. He did what She willed him to do. That was all he cared for. That was his mission—THAT goes on. As Sri Aurobindo assured Yogananda in this context on 19.6.1935: "Nothing true in a mission can fail, either it persists or takes another form."

*(This part concluded)*

PRABHAKAR (BATTI)

## A RISHI'S INTEGRAL VISION OF SOCIETY\*

The tradition of dialogue to discuss and elucidate important issues dates as far back as ancient civilisations. The Greek philosophers would walk with their students in the academy and, through questions and answers, formulate their ideas on philosophical, social, political, ethical, literary and scientific matters. These peripatetic teachers have left behind them perennial systems of thought and wisdom that are as fresh and living as they were in their own great times. Symposia belong to the same classical spirit of active interaction between several propounders and thinkers. The Greek drama itself is an excellent example of multi-ranging and wide simultaneous thinking, at once taking care of many conflicting viewpoints in the statement and resolution of issues.

In India of yore there was the teacher-disciple or Guru-Shishya relationship for imparting esoteric knowledge to the chosen and fit ones. In the Upanishads we have any number of such instances. Thus was the young Bhrigu taught about the fivefold Brahman by his father Varuna, the boy Nachiketas learnt about death from Yama himself, Rishi Pippalada gave the Knowledge of the supreme Spirit to the seekers who had approached him with due reverence and preparation. Similarly, the whole of Bhagavadgita with all its luminous spirituo-metaphysical contents is in the nature of a dialogue between the divine Teacher and the human disciple standing on the battlefield of life, *krishnārjuna samvāda*. In fact, Vyasa adopted the technique of such discussions to narrate the entire Mahabharata itself. The merit of the technique is always to bring into focus the fundamental issues of concern and give to them straight and immediate answers, leaving no ambiguity of any sort nor any scope for parenthetical statements that otherwise tend to distract the attention.

In our own times we have professional seminars, workshops, colloquia, panel discussions, rendezvous, conferences and similar modes of meeting and exchanging ideas. We are reminded here of a well-documented interview between the famous historian Arnold Toynbee and his son Philip Toynbee, himself a literary and creative writer, they spanning two generations of upbringing and thinking, and talking about the present-day civilisation, about earlier cultures, religion, the arts, and the newer sciences. The technique of introducing a great contemporary or presenting his works through a dialogue is a modern innovation and has the advantage of putting forward a brief and pointed argument rather than labouring through full-length biographies or treatises on difficult and abstruse topics. Thus in *Comparing Notes. a dialogue across a generation* there is a passage as follows:

Philip Toynbee. If you try to believe in a God who is both good and omnipotent, the problem of absolutely superfluous suffering, gratuitous suffering, is a real one, isn't it?

Arnold Toynbee. Oh, it is. I have thought quite a lot about it and I admire

\* Foreword to *Freedom and Future* by Daniel Albuquerque, printed and published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry, 1998

Indian religion and philosophy for grasping that nettle I think Christianity has always tried to evade the problem It has made the Devil responsible — saving God's omnipotence by saying He created the Devil, and yet that He isn't responsible for the thing He created Now the Indians say that God is evil as well as good because He is omnipotent and He includes everything In the Bhagavadgita there's that terrifying vision of Krishna as a sort of trampling monster, grinding everything to bits with his gnashing teeth

On this point of omnipotence and goodness, the comprehensiveness, the catholicity, of Indian religion have made a great impression on me, and I feel very much in sympathy with it I feel that this is the kind of religion that is needed for our times

The informality of a discussion avoids all ponderous considerations of scholarship and forthwith puts us in touch with the truth perceived and realised by the speaker

The present work of Daniel Albuquerque is a kind of a *tête-à-tête* between the one who is standing in our time and the timeless other who unfailingly is ever there in our midst The author regrets that he has come to this world rather late and that he did not have direct contact with Sri Aurobindo, he would have liked to have corresponded with him in person and posed to him questions, questions about the true nature of freedom and about the prospects the future holds for the world But he has already realised the great truth that Sri Aurobindo is indeed very much here and that "his words are alive in his works and one can read and listen to his voice, if one cares to do so One cannot avoid his presence while reading his writings" It is this strong feeling of his presence that inspired him to write this dialogue and he is justifiably happy to have succeeded in it

How does the author engage himself in the endeavour? Not that he would read selected passages from Sri Aurobindo's works and model, apropos of these, suitable questions That would be quite an easy manufacture, but then it would have the inevitable danger of making the whole exercise dull and jerkily deliberate, and hence also perhaps irrelevant Nor is it a compilation of another kind, a long session of quotations Instead, what we have here is the ever-living voice of the eternal Yogi and Rishi whose concern has always been to lead humanity in the ways of the spirit, as much as to infuse it with its dynamism

No wonder therefore that what Sri Aurobindo wrote some seventy-five years ago has the excellence of remaining pertinent even today That makes the dialogue quite meaningful to the present context as well His answers are valid now also and are quite applicable to our sociological, economic and cultural problems, — if only we know how to read them and profit from them, get light from them Of course, the author is fully aware of the fact that no cut-and-paste method can be employed in the case of Sri Aurobindo, he appreciates that his writings invariably have several shades and nuances of meaning, always to be perceived and gathered in the overall textual development It may also appear at times that this particular dialogue-mode has the defect of tending to become somewhat stiff and unyielding, but there is inspiration behind it and the breath of



the living spirit vigorously blows over it, making it profitable as well as enjoyable

In this imaginary dialogue, in six sessions with Sri Aurobindo, Albuquerque has restricted himself essentially to socio-political rather than literary, philosophical, poetic, scriptural, occult, yogic or spiritual aspects. The thematic contents of these discussions are generally in the context of India's problems, though at times they also touch upon much wider issues. While the first session gives an overview of Sri Aurobindo's life before his coming to Pondicherry, the other five deal with political freedom, economic liberation, prospects of science, the foundations of a new society to build the future order of the world, and religion and spiritual democracy.

To just illustrate the method adopted by Albuquerque in conducting the dialogue with Sri Aurobindo, we may pick up an example—the question of the Individual versus the State. It is an age-old problem, the Sophoclean problem of *Antigone*, of freedom vis-à-vis the functioning of a democratic government. While theoretically it is easy to postulate the complementary and harmonious working of the two, in practice there is the discordance and antagonism of an unreconciliatory character. Liberty in a country is possible only when also go hand in hand with rights and duties, that in order to be free one must obey law. The Individual has certain duties towards the State. The State is there to take care of him by assuring him welfare and protection. But then it becomes a contentious issue also.

DAN: It is a paradoxical situation—man, who is born free, surrenders a part of his freedom to form an aggregate of his fellow men—the State—to achieve some common good. There comes a stage when the State puts curbs on the individual freedom or imposes its will on the individual. The State becomes supreme and the individual secondary.

SRI AUROBINDO: The State tends always to uniformity, because uniformity is easy to it and natural variation is impossible to its essentially mechanical nature, but uniformity is death, not life. A national culture, a national religion, a national education may still be useful things provided they do not interfere with the growth of human solidarity on the one side and individual freedom of thought and conscience and development on the other; for they give form to the communal soul and help it to add its quota to the sum of human advancement; but a State education, a State religion, a State culture are unnatural violences. And the same rule holds good in different ways and to a different extent in other directions of our communal life and its activities.<sup>1</sup>

Contrast this statement of Sri Aurobindo with, for instance, what Daniel Webster wrote a little more than 150 years ago: “Nothing will ruin the country if the people themselves undertake its safety; and nothing can save it if they leave that safety in any hands but their own.” The statement is quite pithy and epigrammatic, with the sure mark

<sup>1</sup> *Social and Political Thought*, SABCL, Vol. 15, p. 283

of a politically mature and well-accomplished mind behind it. We may easily read in it the formation of a communal soul and the enlightened promotion of communal life and its activities but, then, nowhere do we get the confidence of a free and revelatory psychology with the luminous *modus operandi* to achieve it. Sri Aurobindo further points out

Democracy is by no means a sure preservative of liberty, on the contrary, we see today the democratic system of government march steadily towards such an organised annihilation of individual liberty as could not have been dreamed of in the old aristocratic and monarchical systems. There is a deprivation of liberty which is more respectable in appearance, more subtle and systematised, more mild in its method because it has a greater force at its back, but for that very reason more effective and pervading. The tyranny of the majority has become a familiar phrase.<sup>2</sup>

In a similar manner he recommends the swift and assertive resplendent dynamism of life itself, fulfilling itself in the richness and plenty of the world:

The acceptance of poverty is noble and beneficial in a class or an individual, but it becomes fatal and pauperises life of its richness and expansion if it is perversely organised into a general or national ideal.<sup>3</sup>

Or

a narrow religious spirit often oppresses and impoverishes the joy and beauty of life, either from an intolerant asceticism or, as the Puritans attempted it, because they could not see that religious austerity is not the whole of religion, though it may be an important side of it, is not the sole ethico-religious approach to God, since love, charity, gentleness, tolerance, kindness are also and even more divine, and they forgot or never knew that God is love and beauty as well as purity.<sup>4</sup>

The truth of capital importance is that, the dismissal of the spirit from the world is as lopsided as of the world from the spirit, a fact that was never recognised by mediaeval thought and religion. In a certain sense we may therefore say that Sri Aurobindo is actually re-infusing the resplendent and robust life-dynamism of the ancient Aryan and Greek founders and builders of society, he wants us to receive the gifts of the spirit in the wholesomeness of the individual and of the organised collectivity. That indeed is the entire thrust in the thesis of freedom and future.

When Sri Aurobindo speaks of *sanātana dharma* as a nationalist's creed, he does not speak about it in a sectarian sense. Nor is the definition of nationalism restrictive in

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 485

<sup>3</sup> *The Hour of God*, SABCL, Vol. 17, p. 103

<sup>4</sup> *Social and Political Thought*, SABCL, Vol. 15, p. 165

any constricted fashion; in fact, people often find patriotism and nationalism difficult to define. Even Tagore thought that the concept of a nation is not an Indian concept but of an alien origin, one which we have borrowed from Western thinking. But it must be well recognised that nationalism is not a mere political programme based on occidental ideologies. "Nationalism is a religion that has come from God. Foundation of nationalism is the country and not race." It is that which indeed sees "the Motherhood of God in the Country." At the same time, we have to properly understand that Sri Aurobindo is not recommending a theocratic society or a theocratic form of governance of some particular brand. During the Second World War he saw the grave danger in our not comprehending and following the spirit of true nationalism. One example of it is our non-acceptance of Sir Stafford Cripp's Proposals containing the Dominion Status for India. Sri Aurobindo not only found the offer deserving our positive consideration; he actually went out of his way and made a special appeal to the worthy and esteemed leaders of the time to unite and unreservedly go in for it. Unfortunately, however, the advice was rejected and the results made the partition of the country inevitable. We are too well aware of the horrendous consequences of that deplorable rejection which has easily set back by several decades the clock of real progress, of destiny itself.

People oftentimes confuse *swadeshi* with patriotism. So too they generally mix up *sanātana dharma* with religion. But all that is patently wrong and mistaken, even ill-conceived. Religion no doubt promotes the aspirations of the human soul in a great way, but very rarely does it understand that spiritual life cannot be based on dogma or any kind of fetish, not on any diehard worldly conviction. On the contrary, it tends to become an instrument of retrograde development in the hands of violent and reactionary individuals or groups. It is a fact of history that there were far too many religious wars in the past. In practice religion always posed more serious problems of societal management rather than helping man in the growth of a more harmonious collective life. State versus Religion, Reason in conflict with Religion, the Secular in opposition to the Esoteric, Science dismissing Faith, — these are well known issues. To these and to several other issues of a deeper import, Albuquerque finds answers in Sri Aurobindo.

He quite emphatically drives home the point that, in a wider context, in the context of the greater destiny awaiting humanity, what Sri Aurobindo is recommending is the vision of a forward-looking and progressive spiritual society in all its gleaming dimensions.

...he who sees God in all, will serve freely God in all with the service of love. He will, that is to say, seek not only his own freedom, but the freedom of all, not only his own perfection, but the perfection of all. He will not feel his individuality perfect except in the largest universality, nor his own life to be full life except as it is one with the universal life. He will not live either for himself or for the State and society, for the individual ego or the collective ego, but for something much greater, for God in himself and for the Divine in the universe.<sup>5</sup>

5 *Ibid.*, p. 244

The mountain-streams of true religion had their beginnings in spirituality, but soon in these worldly lands they got dried up, if not cut off from the ever-so-desirable and crystalline purity of the source. Now what remains behind are wildernesses of the suffocating spirit. Thus neither religion nor any abstruse metaphysical theorisation can satisfactorily explain, for instance, the appearance of evil and suffering in the beneficent and beautiful God's original creation. The ethico-religious mind shudders to think of a frightening Godhead poised for universal destruction. But the Indian concept and intuition, the ancient Indian experience has the boldness to accept even such an aspect of God the Terrible, — as Arnold Toynbee very perceptively recognises, a fact he arrives at by studying his own discipline. Not only that, we should also remember that the office of the Spirit is a very complex and strange office and that it does allow terrible agencies to reign.<sup>6</sup>

It is to these terrible agencies of the Spirit the gullible and superficial approach of the ethico-religious mind can readily fall prey. In it is the danger of Hitlerism, or in the modern parlance of Neo-Nazism, preparing to destroy the entire civilisation, of promoting the establishment of the anarchical Rule of the Asura himself. There is in the working of the universal process always such a mischief-laden possibility. Can we then say that Mahatma Gandhi's "spiritual democracy" involving compassion, sacrifice and identification with the lowly and the lost would really save the world? His was a lofty ideal no doubt but it was of a Western variety, based on Tolstoyan-Christian ethics. And the difficult thing which he was trying to do was to bring such pious and holy ennobling doctrines, full of mass-appeal, to the world of abominable politics where prevail unbridled ambitions of the worst kind. We may even go farther and admire the ingenuous Mahatma, in that he was not particularly interested in any conventional form of government, that he was right in saying that "that Government is the best which governs the least." This is a great statement indeed and it does make a vast improvement over the Western concept itself, the traditional idealistic theory of a decent and elitist political democracy which more often than not functionally tends to become exclusive with the concentration of power in fewer hands. But, then, to tell a ravaged war-torn nation to stand up ethically above the ghastliest form of crime and horror, above fascism, advise it to fight against the advancing menace of the maniacal Fuhrer with the weapon of non-violence, is to take a very simplistic view of life and of life's million forces working in different occult ways. It is also not to recognise that our active co-operation with Good and Right does not become complete without the active and forceful opposition and rejection of Evil and Wrong. It looks as though God is too good to be a gentleman,—because freedom is his mantra. With it we have to discover the true governing law of life.

In spirituality we must seek for the directing light and the harmonising law, and in religion only in proportion as it identifies itself with this spirituality. It will give freedom to philosophy and science. freedom even to deny the spirit. It will give the same freedom to man's seeking for political and social perfection and

to all his other powers and aspirations.<sup>7</sup>

Sri Aurobindo's ideal is vivid and daring, clear and far-reaching in seeing that the possibilities of the mental being are not limited and that the truncated and analytical Cartesian *I think, therefore I am* is not applicable in the domain of the spirit when the spiritual experience tells us that thoughts themselves come from outside. Even in his early writings he held for us the emerging spiritualised society as an unenviable goal. In the very second volume of his philosophical monthly *Arya*, dated 15 August 1915, he wrote.

Unity for the human race by an inner oneness and not only by an external association of interests, the resurgence of man out of the merely animal and economic life or the merely intellectual and aesthetic into the glories of the spiritual existence, the pouring of the power of the spirit into the physical mould and mental instrument so that man may develop his manhood into that true super-manhood which shall exceed our present state as much as this exceeds the animal state from which science tells us that we have issued. These three are one; for man's unity and man's self-transcendence can come only by living in the Spirit.<sup>8</sup>

What he had put forward as an ideal at that early date, it is that which he set for himself to accomplish in his thirty-five years of long and untiring spiritual sadhana, his Yogic labour, a God's labour indeed, a labour undertaken for the sake of the Divine in Man.

R. Y. DESHPANDE

<sup>7</sup> *Social and Political Thought* SABCL Vol 15 pp 169-170

<sup>8</sup> *Arya* Vol 2 p 9

## THE MOTHER AWAKES

It is midnight, the world is asleep in silence,  
The Earth is asleep in the lap of darkness;  
Asleep are heavens, breathless the wrathful winds,  
The stars twinkle not in the dense blackness of the clouds  
The birds wrap their eyes with their wings  
And rest self-absorbed in their nests,  
Animals wander not, nor are footsteps heard  
Then the Mother awakes,  
The Mother awakes with a terrible cry.  
The Mother awakes, opens Her frightful eyes,  
A pair of suns as though

The Mother awakes, not a leaf moves;  
The still flame of the lamp is dying in the room.  
In the lonely paths of the city, in the fields and the woodlands and the hills  
Plunges in sleep all life  
The surges of the sea-waters  
Break not in laughter upon the shores.  
Utterly still, unmoving, the ocean is voiceless.  
Why then awakes the Mother?  
Who can tell, what has She heard and is awake?  
In the night whose is the silent prayer that has awakened the Mother  
To rise with a terrible cry?

When the Mother fell asleep, who ever hoped  
That even in the midst of blind darkness She would awake?  
Sunk in the night, void of hope, the heart broken for good in sorrow  
Even in sleep is startled to hear the fall of a leaf.  
The royal Fortune of the mighty Asura,  
Proud and cunning and overpowering,  
Has besieged the earth  
Suddenly a terrible cry is heard, the cry of the Mother,  
Suddenly like the roar of hundreds of oceans is heard the voice of the Mother;  
To awaken Her sons called aloud the Mother  
Like a thunder-clap

With a grieving heaving heart was there none awake  
In the darkest of night for the sake of the Mother?  
A few only with saffron robes covering their bodies  
Sat in the temple with the bare sword in hand,



Then shall we know the Mother  
The Mother, when She dances bathing in the stream of flowing blood  
Then surely we know, it is the Mother awakened at last

SRI AUROBINDO

(Translated from the original Bengali by Nolini Kanta Gupta)

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## ROPE TRICK

I AM where all have sometimes been  
at the foot of the mounting rope Mind knows  
rope-tricks and other sorceries  
and yet in the universal shows  
it often slides down, falls in the pit  
of infinite incongruity  
and inverted hypotheses  
become a manifest parody  
of everything I once admitted as  
the true sense of communion,  
but standing at the foot of the rope  
I see nothing but an immensity of fun

RANAJIT SARKAR



## A MOMENT

EACH moment is a revealing beat of light  
Gazing at newer marvels of force and peace  
Jewelled with an intensity of pure release—  
A great unburdened hour of the infinite  
Where calmness leans with slow unerring feet,  
Where joy is a boon of inwardnesses that tease  
The groping soul to wake to eternities  
Within the burning splendour of Thy sun's retreat.

All transcending timelessness is a throb of blaze  
Packed within that second matchless and immense  
Making the body a glowing frankincense,  
Making ignorance die, death efface,  
And breaking the coral-walls of the Gods and sense  
We meet the vastness of Thy solar face

10-10-1958

ROMEN

(From the unpublished diaries of the late poet)

## WHO IS WHOSE?

“Who is whose?”  
I enquired,  
The finding report,  
“Nothing, nobody”

I was upset,  
I was scared,  
Scared of loneliness  
Scared of no support,  
Scared of boundless regret

How to pass through  
The dense forest  
In no-moon night?  
How to sail across  
The turbid sea  
In rough weather?

How to walk and walk  
In hot desert,  
Away from oases,  
With faltering steps?

But there is a whisper  
“I am with you always,  
Never leaving you in byways,  
Rather preparing smooth highways  
For your confident steps  
And pleasant walks  
But in exchange of  
Your trustful self-giving,  
Joyous and pious,  
Nothing more, nothing less even  
Embark! enjoy now, ‘who is whose?’”

ASHALATA DASH

## THE BELL RINGS

THE little temple bell rings  
In the swinging hand  
Of the lone priest  
Who has just finished chanting the mantras  
For Kali the Goddess of Strength

The resonant lyrical sound  
Of the little bell,  
Airborne,  
Reverberates towards the faraway horizon  
Where the Fireball Sun  
Is hopping up  
From the depth of the abyss,  
Of the Eastern Frontier

Every day is an advent,  
Crafted with a difference—  
Every blade of grass  
Is resplendent, with foliage  
Of numerous proportions  
Every ordained awakening  
Of forests, meadows,  
And waterpools  
Sends a different note

But the little bell rings  
At every dawning hour,  
With the same lyrical sounds;  
And the priest has been  
Swinging his hand with the bell  
In front of the deity  
For a thousand years

PRONAB KUMAR MAJUMDER

## UTOPIA

AN island on which everything becomes clear

One is able to stand here on the ground of proofs

There is only one road to reach it

The low bushes are loaded with answers

The Tree of Right Hypothesis grows here

Dazzling in its simplicity, the Tree of Knowledge  
beside the river called "Ah, That's How It Is".

The farther we penetrate into the wood  
the wider opens the Valley of Obviousness

Doubts, if any, will be blown away by the wind

No one has spoken, yet the Echo calls out  
and eagerly explains the mysteries of the worlds

In the cave on the right we find the Lake of Deep Conviction  
Truth detaches itself from the bottom and floats lightly on the surface

Above the Valley, the Mount of Unshakeable Certainty  
From its peak spreads out the Essence of Being

In spite of its charms, this island is uninhabited  
Faint traces of footprints on the shores  
all, without exception, point towards the sea.

As if one left here only to vanish  
irrecoverably in the quagmire—

a life that passes all understanding

W SZYMBORSKA

(Translated from the Polish by Marta Guha)

## HEALING VISUALISATIONS BASED ON SAVITRI

To heal with her feet the aching throb of life

(*Savitri*, p 314)

SRI AUROBINDO's epic poem *Savitri* has a power of healing through its metric rhythm (*Savitri*'s "feet") as well as by its lines serving as springboards to inner experience. As the poem itself says,

And what the soul imagines is made a world

(*Ibid*, p 456)

So, in this article, we want to take a look at the latter approach of using our power of imagination as inspired by *Savitri*-lines to "recreate ourselves and all around"

The approach is simple. It is based on the fact that Thought has power: to paraphrase the Mother. You can do more to help a person who is ill by staying in your own room and sending him good thoughts than by going to nurse him. So the conclusion is simple. We must learn how to think the right type of thoughts. And here is where *Savitri* can train our thinking process by re-directing it to higher planes and wider vistas of consciousness. The average person, as the Mother has pointed out, does not even do what can be called "thinking" but is only inundated by the most mundane preoccupations that just pass for what can be called thought. *Savitri* can train our mind quickly and easily, I believe, if we can just jump into its myriad images and combine them with our aspiration to experience a totally New World within, a world which will eventually manifest outwardly upon this earth.

For example, agitation of mind is one of the chief causes of psychosomatic disorders. *Savitri* offers us the following image in its very first canto

Across the path of the divine Event  
The huge foreboding mind of Night, alone  
In her unlit temple of Eternity,  
Lay stretched immobile upon Silence' marge

(*Ibid*, p 1, ll 2-5)

Now what is this "foreboding mind of Night"? Could it not be a description of our own state of mind whenever we get caught in negative thinking, gloom, depression, etc? It is a mind that sees only the dark side of things and forecasts the worst outcomes. Sri Aurobindo has positioned this "foreboding mind" on the edge of Silence, so why not really go into that image and let that difficult mental condition be assuaged by a proximity to Silence, rather than demanding at first a full yogic poise of making your mind completely silent. Try it for yourself right now and see the effect!

IMAGINE YOURSELF ALONE ON THE EDGE OF SILENCE

Voilà, a change of consciousness! You have come out of a limited and troubled state of mind and entered a quiet, trouble-free one in a matter of seconds. This is a sample of the kind of transformative experience *Savitri* can give us in every passage throughout the entirety of its miraculous body of nearly 24,000 lines of mantric verse.

The Mother has indicated that illness has its roots in our psychology and that we must cure the psychological causes if we want to be free of the physical manifestations of the disorder. Also She has indicated the practical course of "reading something interesting" when you are sick. So *Savitri* quickly and easily combines these two recommendations by taking our minds off the difficulty as well as putting a kind of "divine salve" on the wounds of our psychology, giving us a sweet release from "whatever ails us".

Does this mean that I am claiming an instant cure for any disease just by reading a few lines from *Savitri*? Not necessarily, although anything may happen by the Divine Grace. If the trouble is deeply rooted in the subconscious, it may not be so easily dislodged, also if one's concentration is not deep and intense enough, one may not notice immediate results, but at least one has taken the required "first baby steps" on the road to the transformation of Consciousness, it is a promise for the future. I feel justified in making this big claim for the epic because the Mother has said that "Truth cures"<sup>1</sup> and that *Savitri* is the Truth that Sri Aurobindo has brought down upon the earth.<sup>2</sup> So whatever one's state of consciousness when one reads, the Truth is there behind, working for the ultimate triumph over darkness, falsehood, suffering and eventually even Death itself. Now with these few indications would you like to launch yourself into a spiritual adventure with a few selected lines from the first Canto of *Savitri*?<sup>3</sup>

Here we go, from the beginning

1 It was the hour before the Gods awake (p 1, l 1)

IMAGINE THE GODS THE DIVINE POWERS, AWAKENING IN YOURSELF AND ALL THE WORLD

2. Across the path of the divine Event  
The huge foreboding mind of Night, alone  
In her unlit temple of eternity,  
Lay stretched immobile upon Silence' marge (p 1, ll 2-5)

IMAGINE YOURSELF ALONE ON THE EDGE OF SILENCE

3 Almost one felt, opaque, impenetrable,  
In the sombre symbol of her eyeless muse

1 *Collected Works of The Mother* Vol 15 p 172 (Message to JIPMER)

2 *Sweet Mother: Harmonies of Light* by Mona Sarkar p 32

3 All *Savitri*-quotations are from the Fourth Revised Editions, 1993

The abysm of the unbodied Infinite,  
A fathomless zero occupied the world. (p 1, ll 6-9)

VISUALISE YOURSELF AS A ZERO THAT CONTAINS INFINITY DRAW AN EGG-SHAPE  
OR CIRCLE AND FILL IT WITH A SYMBOLIC VISION OF WHAT YOU SEE

4. A power of fallen boundless self awake  
Between the first and the last Nothingness,  
Recalling the tenebrous womb from which it came,  
Turned from the insoluble mystery of birth  
And the tardy process of mortality  
And longed to reach its end in vacant Nought (p 1, ll 10-15)

CONTEMPLATE AND VISUALISE THE MYSTERY OF BIRTH AND THEN SEE YOURSELF  
AND OTHERS BEING REBORN INTO BOUNDLESS SELF

- 5 As in a dark beginning of all things,  
A mute featureless semblance of the Unknown  
Repeating for ever the unconscious act,  
Prolonging for ever the unseeing will,  
Cradled the cosmic drowse of ignorant Force  
Whose moved creative slumber kindles the suns  
And carries our lives in its somnambulist whirl (p 1, ll 16-22)

VISUALISE WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE REPEATED AND PROLONGED FOREVER  
AND THEN FEEL YOURSELF CRADLED IN THAT

- 6 Athwart the vain enormous trance of Space,  
Its formless stupor without mind or life,  
A shadow spinning through a soulless Void,  
Thrown back once more into unthinking dreams,  
Earth wheeled abandoned in the hollow gulfs  
Forgetful of her spirit and her fate (p 1, ll 23-28)

VISUALISE THE EARTH SPINNING IN SPACE AND THEN IDENTIFY YOURSELF WITH IT  
BUT SEE YOURSELF AS CONSCIOUS OF YOUR SPIRIT AND YOUR FATE AND SEE HOW  
IT AFFECTS THE WHOLE WORLD

- 7 The impassive skies were neutral, empty, still (p 1, l 29)

SEE YOURSELF WITHIN AND WITHOUT AS NEUTRAL, EMPTY AND STILL

- 8 Then something in the inscrutable darkness stirred;  
 A nameless movement, an unthought Idea (p 1, ll 30-31)  
 Insistent, dissatisfied, without an aim,  
 Something that wished but knew not how to be,  
 Teased the Inconscient to wake Ignorance. (p 2, ll 1-3)

EXPERIENCE A MOVEMENT AND AN "UNTHOUGHT IDEA" AWAKENING IN YOU  
 FROM THE INCONSCIENT

9. A throe that came and left a quivering trace,  
 Gave room for an old tired want unfilled,  
 At peace in its subconscious moonless cave  
 To raise its head and look for absent light,  
 Straining closed eyes of vanished memory,  
 Like one who searches for a bygone self  
 And only meets the corpse of his desire (p 2, ll 4-10)

ALLOW ANY UNFULFILLED DESIRES IN YOUR SUBCONSCIENT TO RISE UP  
 AND THEN SIMPLY LOOK AT THEM AND OFFER THEM TO THE DIVINE

- 10 It was as though even in this Nought's profound,  
 Even in this ultimate dissolution's core  
 There lurked an unremembering entity,  
 Survivor of a slain and buried past  
 Condemned to resume the effort and the pang,  
 Reviving in another frustrate world. (p 2, ll 11-16)

GAZE INTO THE MOST INCONSCIENT AND RESOLUTE PART OF YOUR NATURE AND THEN SEE  
 THERE WHAT STILL WANTS TO MAKE AN EFFORT ENCOURAGE THAT ELEMENT TO COME UP  
 AND EXPRESS ITSELF WITHOUT FRUSTRATION LET IT CALL IN THE DIVINE'S HELP

11. An unshaped consciousness desired light  
 And a blank prescience yearned towards distant change. (p 2, ll 17-18)

VISUALISE THE UNSHAPED CONSCIOUSNESS IN YOURSELF AND EXPERIENCE ITS DESIRE  
 FOR LIGHT AND CHANGE EXPERIENCE ITS ASPIRATION BEING FULFILLED  
 VIEW ITS TRANSFORMATION TAKING PLACE

- 12 As if a childlike finger laid on a cheek  
 Reminded of the endless need in things  
 The heedless Mother of the universe,  
 An infant longing clutched the sombre Vast. (p 2, ll 19-22)

VISUALISE YOURSELF AS THE CHILD WHO IS CLUTCHING THE MOTHER OF THE UNIVERSE  
FEEL HER EMBRACE AND LOVE AND TURN ALL YOUR LONGINGS TO HER

13. Insensibly somewhere a breach began.  
A long, lone line of hesitating hue  
Like a vague smile tempting a desert heart  
Troubled the far rim of life's obscure sleep (p 2, ll 23-26)

VISUALISE A SMILE THAT CAN WAKE UP THE OBSCURITY IN LIFE AND THEN LET YOURSELF  
SMILE THAT WAY AT MEN AND THINGS

- 14 Arrived from the other side of boundlessness  
An eye of deity peered through the dumb deeps,  
A scout in a reconnaissance from the sun,  
It seemed amid a heavy cosmic rest,  
The torpor of a sick and weary world,  
To seek for a spirit sole and desolate  
Too fallen to recollect forgotten bliss (p 2, ll 27-33)

VISUALISE THE EYE OF DEITY THAT IS PEERING THROUGH THE DUMB DEEPS IDENTIFY  
WITH IT AND THEN SEEK AND FIND THE FALLEN SPIRIT

SAMPATTI



## TWO POEMS ON TRANCE BY SRI AUROBINDO

THERE are two poems by Sri Aurobindo on Trance in the collection under the heading *Poems in New Metres*. One is titled *Trance of Waiting* and the other *Trance* (*Collected Poems*, SABCL, Vol 5, p 558 and p 571). A few observations of Sri Aurobindo are essential for our understanding of the poems. "Trance in English is usually used only for the deeper kinds of Samadhi, but, as there is no other word, we have to use it for all kinds" (*Letters on Yoga*, SABCL, Vol 23, p 742).

There are three or more kinds of Trance: 1) Trance in the waking state (*jāgrat-samādhi*), 2) *svapna-samādhi* is dream trance, and 3) trance in deep sleep state (*susupti-samādhi*).

The poem *Trance* is given here.

A naked and silver-pointed star  
Floating near the halo of the moon;  
A storm-rack, the pale sky's fringe and bar,  
Over waters stilling into swoon

My mind is awake in stirless trance,  
Hushed my heart, a burden of delight,  
Dispelled is the senses' flicker-dance,  
Mute the body aureate with light

O star of creation pure and free,  
Halo-moon of ecstasy unknown,  
Storm-breath of the soul-change yet to be,  
Ocean-self enraptured and alone!

This poem has its origin in a dream trance. The first stanza describes the entry into a dream trance. The star, the moon, the sky, and the waters below are images suggesting something dreamy. Stilling into swoon corresponds to the experience one has in the dream trance. Sri Aurobindo writes with clarity and vision about this experience. "As for the impression of swooning, it is simply because you were not in sleep, as you imagined, but in a first condition of what is usually called *svapna-samādhi*, dream trance. What you felt like swooning was only the tendency to go deeper in, into a more profound *svapna samādhi* or else into a *susupti* trance—the latter being what the word trance usually means in English, but it can be extended to the *svapna* kind also. To the outer mind this deep loss of the outer consciousness seems like a swoon, though it is really nothing of the kind—hence the impression" (*SABCL*, Vol. 23, p 883).

The second stanza tells what happens to the members of the body. The mind is awake and stirless. The heart is hushed and endures a burden of delight. The flicker-

dance of the senses is done away with. The body is mute, gilded with light.

The third stanza is a beautiful and pregnant variation of the first stanza. The naked star becomes the star of creation pure and free. The halo-moon stands for ecstasy unknown. The storm-rack in the first stanza, which is a semi-Shakespearian phrase, becomes storm-breath of the soul-change yet to be Ocean-self enraptured and alone, which throws the reader back to the waters stilling into swoon in the first stanza, suggests "The subliminal, with the subconscious as an annexe of itself,—for the subconscious is also part of the behind-the-veil entity,—is the seer of inner things and of supraphysical experiences It is for this reason that the Upanishad describes the subliminal being as the Dream Self .." (*SABCL*, Vol 18, pp. 426-27)

The poem *Trance of Waiting* is as follows.

Lone on my summits of calm I have brooded with voices around me,  
 Murmurs of silence that steep mind in a luminous sleep,  
 Whispers from things beyond thought in the Secrecy flame-white for ever,  
 Unscanned heights that reply seek from the inconscient deep.  
 Distant below me the ocean of life with its passionate surges  
 Pales like a pool that is stirred by the wings of a shadowy bird  
 Thought has flown back from its wheelings and stoopings, the nerve-beat of living  
 Stills, my spirit at peace bathes in a mighty release  
 Wisdom supernal looks down on me, Knowledge mind cannot measure,  
 Light that no vision can render garments the silence with splendour  
 Filled with a rapturous Presence the crowded spaces of being  
 Tremble with the Fire that knows, thrill with the might of repose  
 Earth is now girdled with trance and Heaven is put round her for vesture  
 Wings that are brilliant with fate sleep at Eternity's gate  
 Time waits, vacant, the lightning that kindles, the Word that transfigures  
 Space is a stillness of God building his earthly abode  
 All waits hushed for the fiat to come and the tread of the Eternal;  
 Passion of a bliss yet to be sweeps from Infinity's sea

This poem clearly speaks of the superconscient trance. The words beginning with the capital letters indicate the supernature. The new metre employed compels us to enjoy the slow, measured rhythm and leads us to a condition of waiting in the beginning, the middle and the end. Time waits. All waits hushed for the fiat to come and the tread of the Eternal. A certain amount of familiarity with the poetry and sadhana of Sri Aurobindo is necessary for the appreciation: ". . . we can plunge into trance, get within ourselves and be conscious there we can go beyond even this inner awareness and lose ourselves in . . . superconscience ." Then only the unscanned heights seek reply from the inconscient deep "There is also a pervading equal consciousness into which we can enter and see all ourselves with one enveloping glance ." Then only we can see Earth girdled with trance, and Heaven put round her for vesture " in the

light of the larger reason and logic of the Infinite or by admission of the greater illimitable powers of the Self, the Spirit in us is of one essence with the Infinite.” (SABCL, Vol. 18, p 346) The Upanishad calls this superconscious being the Sleep Self

“The Trance of Waiting” is for the Supramental Consciousness to descend, take over the earthly nature and transform it to its supernature. The waiting is at the threshold of the Superconscious

C SUBBIAN

## SRI AUROBINDO—THE SOUL OF INDIA

*(Continued from the issue of July 1998)*

SRI AUROBINDO, in the earliest part of his career, was deeply engrossed in the political life of India. His political thoughts and activities were not narrow like the lifeless and imitative political life during the revolutionary period of India. He never compromised with the moderate thoughts of other older members of the National Party in that revolutionary period. His political activities were inspired by lofty idealism. Because of that lofty idealism he was able to infuse a new spirit and awaken a new idealism in nationalism. He imbibed the inspiration from the soul of India which had been eclipsed for century after century. Though it was clouded for a long time, it was not extinguished. It revived by the writings and speeches of Sri Aurobindo. Through his writings Sri Aurobindo awakened the Shakti of India and attempted to rejuvenate the decayed life of the Indian nation.

Basically Sri Aurobindo's work was in the political sphere. But it was not confined to that particular sphere of the political life, he infused lofty ideals of nationalism into all spheres of Indian social life. He focused his attention on the total reconstruction of Indian society. He himself stated: "No national awakening is really vital and enduring which confines itself to a single field. It is when the soul awakens that a nation is really alive, and the life will then manifest itself in all the manifold forms of activity in which man seeks to express the strength and the delight of the expansive spirit within."<sup>1</sup>

Besides his plan for national building, he had the perception that the national building activities were to be spread out in the various spheres of Indian life. We can collect from his writings and speeches his views about the illuminating future of India. These writings were published subsequently in two series of articles in the *Arya* under the title "The Renaissance in India" and "A Defence of Indian Culture".

Sri Aurobindo's main occupation was rebuilding not only the Indian nation, but also the whole of humanity. This was clearly stated on 19 June 1909 and it explains the aim of his Nationalist ideal: "Our aim will be to help in building up India for the sake of humanity—this is the spirit of the Nationalism which we profess and follow. We say to humanity: 'The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life towards which humanity moves. The problems which have troubled mankind can only be solved by conquering the kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature. For that work the resurgence of Asia is necessary, therefore Asia rises. For that work the freedom and greatness of India are essential, therefore she claims her destined freedom and greatness, and it is to the interest of all humanity, not excluding England, that she should wholly establish her claim.'"<sup>2</sup> The freedom, unity and greatness of

India have now become necessary to the world

Looking at the early societies all over the world, Sri Aurobindo throws fresh light on the factors that motivate the development of human societies. He wrote a series of articles on the above issue which appeared in the *Arya* (August 1916-July 1918) under the title, ‘‘The Psychology of Social Development’’ *The Psychology of Social Development*, published in book form in 1949, was given a new title, *The Human Cycle*. *The Human Cycle* deals with the projection of his theory of social evolution, from the ‘Symbolic’ to the ‘Psychological’ stage.

Sri Aurobindo examines the growth of societies and sees how far the truth of evolution of consciousness applies to the collectivity. He points out how these men were aware of elements and powers in Nature that exercised a profound influence on their daily lives. They felt and sensed some presences in the environment and they looked up to them with awe, worshipped them and developed relations with them through their own rituals and prayers. This is the Symbolic Age in which everything in external life is looked upon as a symbol for deeper and unseen—but concretely felt—truths and powers. A religious and intuitive mentality characterizes these societies.

Gradually, the external forms tend to become more important than their motivating truths, leading to the Conventional and Typical Age. Since things become more and more artificial, the tyranny of social law and custom tries to stifle the individual spirit. This leads to the revolt of the individual in the Age of Individualism and Reason to assert his freedom to function and grow as he chooses. The unchecked career of the individual at the cost of society leads to search for the key to human progress and, in the Age of Subjectivism, there is a shift from surface probings of reason to deeper questionings. Having passed these stages, we are on the verge of a Spiritual Age. The problem of man is being seen in a different perspective and the higher human mind is coming to recognize that it is only at the level of the soul, the Self, that all disharmonies can be resolved, conflicts eliminated and Peace and Unity achieved. Sri Aurobindo writes:

Therefore the individuals who will most help the future of humanity in the new age will be those who will recognise a spiritual evolution as the destiny and therefore the great need of the human being. Even as the animal man has been largely converted into a mentalised and at the top a highly mentalised humanity, so too now or in the future an evolution or conversion—it does not greatly matter which figure we use or what theory we adopt to support it—of the present type of humanity into a spiritualised humanity is the need of the race and surely the intention of Nature, that evolution or conversion will be their ideal and endeavour. They will be comparatively indifferent to particular belief and form and leave men to resort to the beliefs and forms to which they are naturally drawn. They will only hold as essential the faith in this spiritual conversion, the attempt to live it out and whatever knowledge—the form of opinion into which it is thrown does not so

much matter—can be converted into this living. They will especially not make the mistake of thinking that this change can be effected by machinery and outward institutions; they will know and never forget that it has to be lived out by each man inwardly or it can never be made a reality for the kind. They will adopt in its heart of meaning the inward view of the East which bids man seek the secret of his destiny and salvation within, but also they will accept, though with a different turn given to it, the importance which the West rightly attaches to life and to the making the best we know and can attain the general rule of all life. They will not make society a shadowy background to a few luminous spiritual figures or a rigidly fenced and earth-bound root for the growth of a comparatively rare and sterile flower of ascetic spirituality. They will not accept the theory that the many must necessarily remain forever on the lower ranges of life and only a few climb into the free air and the light, but will start from the standpoint of the great spirits who have striven to regenerate the life of the earth and held that faith in spite of all previous failures. Failures must be originally numerous in everything great and difficult, but the time comes when the experience of past failures can be profitably used and the gate that so long resisted opens.<sup>3</sup>

*(To be continued)*

NILIMA DAS

#### *References*

- 1 *Karmavogin*, SABCL, Vol 2 p 36
- 2 *Ibid*, pp 19-20
- 3 *Social and Political Thought*, SABCL, Vol 15, pp 250-51

## MY BOSOM FRIEND

I HAVE a friend—a very near and dear one She is regal, refined, she is understanding and fully devoted She has made a place for herself very near to my heart, displacing all others. But none grudges the seat allotted to her as she is always silent and unimposing. She is so surrendered to my feelings that if I hug her to my bosom in front of one and all, she would neither protest nor feel shy nor show any sign of resistance With all her emotions closed up, she would lie quietly, feeling the warmth of my heart. She is a darling

She is quiet, so very quiet that, in all these years of our friendship, I have never heard her utter a word! So quiet and calm is she! You may be wondering then how she could be a friend Well, our friendship is in silence and the friendship comes closer and closer as the silence grows deeper and deeper

She has that rare quality of being very understanding which comes from wisdom and indeed she is wise. If for some reason or other I am disturbed and annoyed and for days I don't even look at her, she is there quietly waiting—no murmur or protest of any kind at my negligence. Waiting patiently till I come back to her and open up. Lo! there she is, giving me the exact words which soothe my revolting spirit and pull me out of turmoil Isn't she a devoted and loving friend?

She is a poet. So often when I am with her, she opens a window to the beauty and grandeur of the world—to starry nights and dew-drops on lotus leaves, to “the wind-stirred grass-lands winking in the sun” and points out to me how “pale waters ran like glimmering threads of pearl” and when I am solitary how “The moments came with ecstasy on their wings” and with their magic spell make me feel

The blue sea's chant, the rivulet's wandering voice  
Are murmurs falling from the Eternal's harp

She is my guide too Although I think I am her boss because I can do whatever I like with her—take up other friends and pack her off—but in my heart I know it is she who has a tight and right hold on me She will never call me back but I will, willingly or not, go back surely to her, rely on her and depend on her guidance through the turbulent times, her words echoing in my mind even if she is miles away from me She has a telepathic insight of my being and has an invisible and invincible hold on me Isn't she a reliable and loyal guide?

She is a philosopher Giving me the clue to the origin of creation

The first writhings of the cosmic serpent Force  
Uncoiled from the mystic ring of Matter's trance,  
It raised its head in the warm air of life

She tells me

All that transpires on earth and all beyond  
 Are parts of an illimitable plan  
 The One keeps in his heart and knows alone

And when I find the happenings all turbulent, confusing and misleading, my philosopher-friend tells me that even in the seeming aimlessness there is a purpose and a divine plan

She is a Guru, a Yogī, a Rīshī and a visionāry all blended together. Nothing can disturb her in this world She has the knowledge of man's inner being and of the universal forces How with care, slowly but steadily she moves me towards the goal she has set for me (I thinking I am her superior because I can pack her off or shut her up at my own sweet will) Not hurrying as I may revolt Never, never abandoning me if I am slow and not up to her expectation She waits patiently and sadly, I am sure (though as a Yogī nothing can disturb her, my heart says it hurts her) she laughs at my stupidity So much she has guided, been a constant companion and given herself and yet I am hesitant, doubtful or lethargic She waits and when I wake up to my stupidity and blame myself for hurting so close a friend and am penitent and look up to her, there she is waiting and, not saying a single word, she shows me the path to follow And when she finds me all ready and eager to follow her will she nearly picks me up and pushes on ahead perhaps to catch up with the time lost Isn't she an all-compassionate forgiving and vigilant Guru?

That is my friend, my guide, my guru in life You may be tempted to snatch her away from me and make her yours Impossible She would not leave me nor will I let her go But she can be a universal friend A friend and a guide to every human being. Fully, totally giving herself to each one as she has given herself to me, guiding according to each individual's needs and capacity The One Supreme dividing into many, for she herself is universal, eternal and infinite

She is The Lord's supreme creation, perfect SAVITRI

KRISHNA CHAKRAVARTI



# LOGIC, LANGUAGE AND SRI AUROBINDO

## Introduction

SRI AUROBINDO, apart from his well-known and rich spiritual legacy, has been recognized as a leading literary figure who has penned monumental works in prose, poetry and drama. In this article we do not deal with his literary genius. The scope of this article is purely philosophical, i.e., we deal with Sri Aurobindo's language analysis in his works, his views on logic and language. Since this study is a systematic presentation based on Western formal logic, some preliminary observations of the same are in order before we deal with Sri Aurobindo's treatment of the subject. Logic has remained fundamentally the same since Aristotle introduced it with the laws of reasoning, syllogisms and fallacies. Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and Wilhelm Gottfried Leibnitz (1646-1716) introduced inductive reasoning and the calculus, respectively. The purpose of Bacon's inductive method was to enable man to find arguments to gain mastery over nature and exploit it to his benefit. Accordingly, we must gather particular facts about the world and discover the general principle that governs it; this will help in harnessing nature and put it to use.<sup>1</sup> Leibnitz discovered symbols which formalized language, he devised symbols for various concepts for individuals, classes and their relations, thus providing a "universal calculus". This makes him the father of modern symbolic logic. However, the subject got a thorough overhaul with the incisive examination of language by Gottlob Frege (1848-1925), Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore, A. J. Ayer and, above all, Ludwig Wittgenstein at the beginning of the 20th century. Logic, language and mathematics got on the same platform that seemed to have spelled the success story of contemporary science and technology. Let us discuss succinctly this new science of Logic in the words of Ludwig Wittgenstein:

Thought is surrounded by a halo —Its essence, logic, presents an order, in fact the *a priori* order of the world. that is, the order of possibilities, which must be common to both world and thought. We are under the illusion that what is peculiar, profound, essential, in our investigation, resides in its trying to grasp the incomprehensible essence of language. That is, the order existing between the concepts of proposition, word, proof, truth, experience, and so on. This order is super-order between—so to speak—super-concepts. Whereas, of course, if the words "language", "experience", "world", have a use, it must be as humble a one as that of the words, "table", "lamp", "door".<sup>2</sup>

Logic is, quite simply, an examination of language itself. Why one utterance, for instance, makes sense and another does not. What constitutes meaning in an utterance or a sentence? Terms or words in a sentence or an utterance, respectively, arranged in a

1 For further reading, see *The New Organon and Related Writings* F. H. Anderson ed. New York 1960

2 L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Basil Blackwell 2nd ed. 1958) No. 97

certain manner (syntax) give a definite (semantic) meaning. Sentences or utterances arranged in a certain series give a cohesive (or if incorrect non-cohesive) meaning as in a description, story-telling, instruction, or command. There is a whole structural material required such as 'sense', 'meaning', 'relation', 'identity', etc., in building language blocks. What constitutes these? What system is required to build the linguistic edifice? Logic

Logic is the science of inference or correct argument. It makes our utterances and written sentences cogent. From a number of cogent utterances or sentences we build a reasonable argument—inference, syllogism. We formulate laws to form a system that will help us in our inferential activity, these are also known as the laws of reason. They are simple to comprehend, for their truth is self-evident: A thing is identical with itself, e.g.,  $A = A$ . Second, it cannot be " $A = B$ " and " $A = \text{not } B$ " at the same instant. Third, it is either " $A = B$ " or " $A = \text{not } B$ ". There is also a law—the law of sufficient reason—which helps scientific investigations, by stating that nothing happens without a cause. These laws are applied to reasoning that is of deductive nature, drawing conclusions from a general principle. However, as the modern age dawned, it was necessary to examine particular instances to formulate general laws of science. Thus, the system of logic has two main strands of reasoning—deductive and inductive; while the first depends on general principles for their validity the latter on particular instances, the first is dependable since it is already based on an accepted general law while the second is merely probable since a single instance in the future could disprove its hypothesis.

The 20th-century re-discovery of logic was a big surprise. It was discovered that logic is not as airy and abstract as it was thought to be; it is to be found alive and kicking in the ordinary day-to-day use of language, whether spoken, written or symbolically communicated. We have got to speak logically if we are to make any sense, and we do make much sense when we speak. Indeed, without ever studying it, we all speak logically—for otherwise we would not understand each other. It is only when we examine how and why we speak in a particular manner that we are surprised by the intricate rules and insurmountable details we pack into our mundane utterances and sentences. When we analyse these and recast them into propositions, we assign them values, we build an edifice of truth-tables, allotting possibilities to our utterances if 'true' or 'false'. Thus, we are able to build a correct and precise "logical construct" out of our ordinary language which we may put to use in several ways of human communication, information and scientific knowledge.

Whereas in the past philosophers strained their abilities struggling against numerous theorems in logic, the modern day logicians have to examine an utterance as mundane "I promise that ..." and thereby detect the "picture" of a scene, "rule" of a "language-game" in various "forms of life" in the given "contexts", as well as find their "sense", "reference", or "meaning" and thus determine the "use" of language.<sup>1</sup>

1 The words within the quotation marks are the key themes of Wittgenstein.

Philosophical logic, therefore, consists of the examination of the use of language in a given situation. There are no general situations, all are individual contexts.

There was a time when philosophy dealt with the indiscernibles, such as matters of intuitive knowledge, metaphysical structures of substance, essence of being, etc. But the philosophy of language concerns itself with discernibles, such as chairs, tables, trees, mountains and all that the world around us presents to us as facts. We put them all in a particular order, set them in language and thus relate them to ourselves and to others.

There was a time when, according to the well-set syllogisms of formal logic, given the premises a decidable conclusion was inevitable. "All men are mortal; Socrates is a man, therefore, Socrates is mortal." The road to certain knowledge, the only aim of philosophy, was through correct deductive reasoning. But the philosophy of language makes such clear and distinct thinking difficult. One cannot say for sure that something is the case without making room for exceptions. For instance, observing a person with his hand on the cheek around his jaw one cannot say for certain that "he has toothache", although one may often see people with a hand in such a position when they have a tooth problem. But such occurrences may be found in other instances such as when one is bored or play-acting, trying to hide what is in his mouth, etc. We cannot set criteria on linguistic observations, these are undecidables. Our utterances present a myriad possibilities of meanings and uses. We should learn how to use language by using it carefully, being conscious of the numerous distinctions it creates as it goes along. If we do this, we will cure philosophy of its old malady of establishing absolute truth.

Language is an instrument of communication of thoughts between human beings, its parts are made of symbols. The symbols are phonetic (spoken), also made through sign language in the case of the deaf and dumb, or graphic, through written scripts, or pictorial, images transmitted through visual pictures, figures, icons, images whether through books, maps, charts or information technology media (film images, TV, computer, Internet, etc.). If the use of our language is correct then our philosophy is correct—we must do philosophy by using language meaningfully.

*(To be continued)*

DANIEL ALBUQUERQUE

## SWINBURNE'S COHERENCE

It is hardly to be seriously questioned that a poet who is to stand among the greatest must encompass harmoniously and with an equal development the three poetical aspects or elements—meaning, image and music. That is, he must have, and well-coordinated together, an eye, an ear, and a mind. He must in fact also have something deeper, that strange thing a soul perhaps, that does the co-ordinating and gives the depth of rhythm and the finishing inspired touch, but this or no, he must exhibit the more or less analyzable three factors—an irreducible meaning that can be paraphrased, that is, a significant grasp or thought-order, the coherence of a serious mind, a sight, a seeing, of powerful, expressive or creative figures, images or pictures, and a hearing, a power and beauty of rhythm and meter, of word-sound and harmony of lines. In the greatest poets these factors and elements are fused, they are hardly really to be distinguished. Sufficient examples of this supreme poetic achievement are Homer on the physical plane, Shakespeare on the vital, Dante on the mental, and, on the spiritual, Sri Aurobindo.

But it is possible for a quite respectable and valuable if relatively lesser poet to have an unequal development of the three factors, to lean to a combination of two, or even to only one of them. All three must to some extent be present in some proportion, because language is what it is, but still it is possible among poets to discern the predominance of some factors and the subordination of others. For that poetry that is concerned primarily with meaning, we may distinguish the thin baldness of some of Wordsworth and Matthew Arnold, and the later Yeats. For pictorial quality, we may take much of Morris and D. G. Rossetti—who, incidentally, owed a great deal to this aspect of the work of Keats, without getting far toward his depth of meaning and the fullness of his music. As for predominantly musical verse, it would be hard to find a better and more thoroughgoing example than Swinburne.

Such poetry of course is not of an equal delight to every reader. Some will prefer the inclusive harmony of the greatest, and some will be directed more toward imagery or meaning, and not enjoy very keenly the music of words. Among those who do not much enjoy such music, we may place T. S. Eliot. Whatever it may have been that he did entertain some feeling for, it is not what may be called “mere sound.” Here I shall notice him for his reputation and his influence, rather than his acuteness. In his own “poetry” there is neither meaning, image, nor music in any significant development; there is no evidence of a really poetical consciousness that can foster the three essentials and fuse them to a burning utterance. Eliot was at least consistent enough to carry his incapacity over into his criticism, which includes an essay on Swinburne’s poetry.

Having taken unto himself without any effective opposition the status of spokesman for his age Eliot, with the eager acceptance and collaboration of those many who strained to be at least fixtures in the forefront, if they could be nothing more, proceeded to make a radical incapacity the standard and the latest word. Here

successfully flourishing, he told the "age", with what would have been insupportable effrontery among capable and really cultured people, just what it, rather they, should read and think and suppose, support and look for, what poets they should find "useful" and how, just how they should act and react altogether, to be genuinely Modern. Almost all the great things of course were found by this wonderful critic to be not useful here. And of course it may be that the sun is an enemy to the confirmed troglodyte. When he comes to Swinburne Eliot, with a clever show of tentativeness well calculated to make his followers feel themselves under the auspices of a sober judgment, decides that there is very little that need be read, implying that one who should really *enjoy* Swinburne, and wish to read a lot of him, would not be up-to-date and in the real "mainstream".

His objections to Swinburne are that he is diffuse, and "wordy", and not "pure", either musically or otherwise. The allegation of impurity he does not elucidate; he only quotes two lines from *Campion*, which the reader is invited to consider, in some Modernly acceptable way, to be immaculate and without adulteration. He does reveal that Swinburne's verse is not musical as a musician understands the term, and that it is not such verse as lends itself well to a musical setting. But of course, and what of it? Poetry has its own kind of music, the music of words themselves in expressive relationships, and with perhaps a few exceptions, the poems that lend themselves best to a musical accompaniment are such as have little independent value as poetry, either this, or the alien music commits a kind of outrage upon them, this being another way of saying that they are not really suitable for the operation. Here in Eliot's shuffling pronouncements, "music" has had its meaning confused and "pure" has lost meaning entirely—a quite authentically Modern development and step of progress. And what is "wordiness" to Eliot? He says that with Swinburne we are wont to find the word only, and not the "object". He maintains that "healthy" language presents the "object" with the word so close to it that the two cannot be distinguished. He does not give us an example of this hardly intelligible phenomenon, or attempt to explain what it is and how it is possible. "Object" can be a convenient word; and Eliot's discourse itself can give us a good example of how words can get in the way,—or be put there. Eliot goes on to tell every good Modern that the only language that should be important to him is that which is concerned with *new* objects and things, trying to "digest" and "express" them, the kind of language that Eliot uses, no doubt, struggling with indigestion and a kind of would-be pressure that yields nothing. Everything in a genuine poem is a *new* thing, and we may say that when Swinburne is called "diffuse" by Eliot, it means little more than that he says things that Eliot does not want to listen to, and is concerned with things or "objects" that do not interest him.

He wonders how so little "material" could release so many words as we find in *The Triumph of Time*, one of Swinburne's best, most characteristic and most beautiful productions. He does notice that the language has a life of its own, but he does not approve. Why, we may well ask, for does he not want the word and the "object" to be indistinguishable? If he thinks it illegitimate for a word itself to be an "object", he

should explain more fully. But he is perhaps not well enough acquainted with the material. In any case, one who can enjoy such poetry is not likely to care what a man like Eliot means. He will not find it (the poetry) diffuse, and he will not even find any possibility of diffuseness or meaning in the word, so long as the words of the poem are well arranged, metrically, rhythmically, melodically. He will not be perplexed like Eliot by the fact that the deletion of a stanza would be an injury to the poem, even though the sober externalistic mind cannot figure out just what the necessity or value of any particular stanza may be. If he has a sufficiently well-developed ear and healthy pulses, he will enjoy the poetry for its sound and its rhythm, whatever it may lack of other poetical possibilities; and he will not feel that he has to restrict his reading and his enjoyment of this kind of poetry, just because he lives in the twentieth century.

Further illustrating his limitations, Eliot quotes the beginning of the second of the justly famous choruses of *Atalanta in Calydon*

Before the beginning of years  
 There came to the making of man  
 Time, with a gift of tears,  
 Grief, with a glass that ran

He says that this may seem at first to have an immense meaning, with the portentousness that we find in dreams, but that when we awaken, we find that the glass is more appropriate to time than to grief, and that the gift of tears is suitable alike to either. He does not see that we have here a subtler world than the one to be Modernly approved, and is left gaping by the swiftness of the poetical process. He does not see that time and grief are identified here—and that giving the tears to time, and the running glass to grief, intensifies the identity, and achieves the “carrying over” of the best metaphor. It is grief, to be subject to time that is inexorably running out. Eliot also seems not to have noticed that to give, in this context, the tears to grief and the glass to time would not only be obvious and banal, but would lessen the rhythmical power. But perhaps he does not consider this to be so important as nevertheless it is. The fact that, in quoting these lines, he leaves out the commas, may give some further indication of his lack of sensitivity, that is, his incompetence in this critical endeavour.

One may not like best a poet like Swinburne, but it may be said that one who does not have a sufficiently developed ear as to be able to enjoy language for its own sake without requiring some ulterior “object”, cannot really appreciate any kind of poetry. This fits the Moderns well: they have never appreciated Swinburne’s metrical achievements and given them due respect, because they have shunted aside everything of really vital poetical concern, and denied all the salient and essential factors, to hide behind a screen of verbiage that is meaningful, if that is the word, only to those denatured enough to accept it.

## K. D. SETHNA: THE PROSE WRITER

### THE RESEARCHER AS A CREATIVE WRITER (2)

(Continued from the issue of August 1998)

THE last paragraph of Sethna's FOREWORD to *Classical and Romantic* is the first lesson for our Ph.D students who seldom know that the *Preface* to a book should be brief and clear and expressive

An expanded version of this attempt constitutes the present book. As Sri Aurobindo is not only a scholar in many languages, a penetrating literary critic, a far-reaching philosophical thinker and a profound poet but also a master of spiritual illumination, a guide to the all-round inner development which he terms the Integral Yoga, it has been felt that concentration on an approach to the subject of "Classical" and "Romantic" through him is most likely to yield what is new as well as true.

The attentive reader of Sri Aurobindo's literary criticism will remember that he has never used the title, *Classical and Romantic*, for any of his essays in *The Future Poetry*. The words appear here and there in the book and in the letters along with Sri Aurobindo's passing thoughts on them. While reading him deeply, Sethna has tried to understand what Sri Aurobindo would have meant by the words, Classical and Romantic, and in this effort at interpretation Sethna's own thinking mind and vision have operated to put on the discussion an authentic Sethna-stamp, which means Sethna's own voice, the voice of the creative writer as critic. Notice the modification of Sri Aurobindo's style and the effort at clarity.

According to Sri Aurobindo, the subconscious or the unconscious is not all that lies beyond our waking condition. He refers to the subliminal being, a hidden domain much greater, with powers like those of our own wakeful state but intenser, wider, finer, more varied, and with rarer ones too that are either absent from that state or present there only in embryo. Poetry, like all art, draws considerably on the subliminal and discloses that domain's surprising realities in diverse patterns of image and sound.

(*Classical and Romantic*, p. 6)

Sethna points out here in very clear terms where Sri Aurobindo departs from Freud.

Later within the texture of the same argument Sethna goes on to clarify, once again in his own style, the point of the mixed inspiration of which Sri Aurobindo has spoken on various occasions. Sethna does not copy or just alter a passage like our modern Ph.D students. Instead he thinks it out again, lives with the idea received from his Master, and finds out his own voice.

But it is seldom that the whole word leaps direct from that source, that cavern of natal light ready-shaped and with the pure stamp of its divine origin,—ordinarily it goes through some secondary process in the brain-mind itself, gets its impulse and unformed substance perhaps from above, but subjects it to an intellectual or other earthly change, there is in that change always indeed some superior power born of the excitement of the higher possession, but also some alloy of our mortality.

(*Ibid* , p 8)

Not that Sethna is writing about this mixed inspiration for the first time. He had done this in his preface to *Overhead Poetry* and elsewhere in his early writings. But there was that rhythmic Aurobindonian efflux everywhere, a touch of the classic Victorian which had once come out through the pen of Newman, a style which reached its culmination in Sri Aurobindo. Gone are those days for Sethna, who is now extremely careful about building his own style. The new Sethna knows how to curb his inspired efflux, how to combine revelation and argument, how to 'subdue' as much as possible the Master's voice even when he is out to explain the Master's grand themes. \* Listen to this controlled voice of Sethna.

There is emotion in the classical poets too. Indeed, without a moved language no poetry can exist, just as no poetry can exist without the wings of the imagination in the word. Both may be controlled, both may be let loose—but they must be present. In the Greeks and Romans, in Dante and Milton, Corneille and Racine, they are controlled, though often very intense—and the controlling actually adds at times to the effect of the intensity. In the Elizabethan Romantics they are mostly let loose, though even in the letting loose there is the Shakespearian way and there is the Chapmanian.

(*Ibid* , p 83)

Such is our K. D. Sethna, who manipulates the language masterfully, switching on there, switching off here, flaring up when he needs poetry and cooling off when clarity is of prime necessity.

GOUTAM GHOSAL

\* What is meant is that K. D. S. is not slavish, but has an independent voice in the Aurobindonian ethos.—R. Y. D.



## SOME ILLOGICAL MYTHS

ILLITERATE Indian villagers are ready to believe any myth. A student of science, however, would not like to be so credulous. Let us examine some myths.

Many Indians believe that

(a) Iron weapons like swords were common during the Rama-Ravana War, as well as the Mahabharata War,

(b) Tailed-Monkeys fought and talked and behaved like human beings during the Rama-Ravana War,

(c) Not less than a million warriors fought during the Mahabharata War and that the Pandavas remained unhurt though they had passed eighteen days in a rain of arrows,

(d) After the Mahabharata War, the Pandavas conquered every part of the country,

(e) The arrows were long, strong, and iron-pointed, and everybody was wounded many times by them,

(f) In Ayodhya and Gokul-Mathura there were as many agriculture fields as in modern times and they yielded varied grains,

(g) Ayodhya was a very big city.

It seems the Rama-period was the Stone Age. The city of Ayodhya was small, having a population of a few thousand people. The names of a king (Dasharatha), three queens, four princes, one rishi (Vashishtha), one minister (Sumantra), one woman-servant (Manthara) are available. There might be a few merchants, soldiers, artists, peasants, we suppose, but their names are not available. Metal instruments or tailored clothes might not be there. There was no idea of or provision for jail, so banishment to the jungle, *vanavās*, was common. Vegetarian Hindus think Rama and Sita were vegetarians. Valmiki clearly writes they were eating the meat of deer as well as of birds. To think that Rama and Sita, during their jungle-stay for more than a decade, were daily eating rice or chapati with vegetables or milk, or daily eating good edible fruits and that they never touched non-vegetarian items does not stand to reason.

Indians think most of the ancient heroes as well as villains had very long spans of life, e.g., that Duryodhana or Duhshashana or Ravana lived more than seventy-five years. They were lusty, powerful people and did not believe in celibacy. They had sons, but no grandsons. We can hence infer that they died at about forty, or maximum fifty. At seventeen normally they became fathers, to die without a grandson means death before fifty.

During fourteen years of jungle travels, or stay out of Ayodhya, Rama and Sita never passed through grain-fields, it is a picture very different from Modern India. That is why we can say it was the Stone Age. During the Vrindavan-period, boy Krishna also never went to a cultivated field. In Rama's time hunting was the main source of food, in

Krishna's time it was animal husbandry That can be easily inferred.

Long iron arrows were passing through human bodies, still the latter survived: to believe this is too much for commonsense. If arrows are light, small, made of bamboo or wood-stick and stone-pointed, they can survive, this is possible

They say grandsire Bhishma was lying on points of standing arrows By commonsense we can think there were many broken arrows spread on the earth, wounded, Bhishma fell on them, and survived for a long time.

A caveman can be given the name of Bear, a man living in a tree or a tree-hut can be given the name of Monkey Such tribes were there in North America also. An army walking with a flag bearing a monkey-symbol can be named Monkey-Army, or Vanara-Sena This way the Army of Sugriva-Hanuman-Jambuvan may be named an Army of Monkeys and Bears

In the Java-Ramayana it is written that Ravana's Island, Lanka, was attacked by Rama's Navy, which consisted of seven fleets, it arrived at seven ports, under seven commanders, Rama, Laxmana, Sugriva, Hanuman, Angada, Nala and Neela There was, in Laxmana's way, an arms-producing factory of Indrajit, which he soon destroyed The Javans believe that Hanuman was a strong man with many wives

In the Mahabharata War many war programmes consisted only of duels When a big warrior *e.g.* Bhima charged shouting, everybody heard him. The crowd cannot be lakhs or millions Gadā (Mace) may be a stick—*lathi*—with a small and not big head, to produce a gadā with a big head is difficult even today, it could not have been produced in those days Archeologists never found a sample.

In the Mahabharata War weapons were not made of metal, but of wood and stone. There were many duels which the Pandavas could win, because of their strength and unity and mainly due to guidance from Krishna The Pandavas were wounded, but not fatally wounded; that in spite of scratches and minor wounds they survived could be accepted.

It is thought that Kumbhakarna, or Ghatotkacha, or Bakasura were ten or twenty metres tall and that they could swallow a monkey or a goat or an ox. These are exaggerations, which a child or an illiterate villager likes to hear and believe.

Yet there could have been men like Bakasura eating human beings as their ordinary food This happened all over the world At many places it was done with a religious ceremony. Among the Red Indians and Hawaiians it was common. In India also there was Naramedha—Human-sacrificial fire-ceremony. Sita passed a fire-test But now we are in different times.

VAIDYA HIMMATJI

### A COMMENT

Myths of the past appear to be puzzling to the modern mind. We tend to dismiss them as creations of a primitive and undeveloped mentality But, surely, the authors of those

myths meant many more things than are apparent to our immediate gross physical perceptions. The poets of the classical Indian epics were also Rishis and Yogis who used to move in different worlds and see the things of this world with another vision. Their descriptions have many strands and many are the occult shades in their presentations. The characters of their stories are not always human characters, although they may look such. It is necessary to understand and appreciate these several nuances before we can brand them as credulous people. The occult-spiritual dimensions of their work must be fully cognised before we can pass any judgement on them.

R Y DESHPANDE

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## WHITHER INDIA? AN AUROBINDONIAN VIEW

INDIA IS a land of pessimists. And each one of these is a doomsday predictor for our country, there is never an extricating of India from its myriad socio-economic and political troubles. Our land is bound to sink deeper and deeper into the mire of its difficulties. The aim here is to get away with as much graft and corruption as one can muster and in the process, unwittingly, push the nation still further downhill. In short, the general view is that there is no hope and future for India. But is it true?

It cannot be denied that there is tremendous confusion and flux in the Indian scene today and the famous saying of the ex-US ambassador to India and a renowned economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, is somewhat apt, "India is a functioning anarchy". Even the doomsday predictors are not really to blame—after all, the general decay and degeneration in every walk of life are glaring. But we have also to look in another direction. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have declared in no uncertain terms—India is to be the spiritual leader of the world. And in the Aurobindonian Yoga, a spiritual guide can be only one who is firmly rooted in his outer material aspect and not a spiritual aspirant with a weak material base. Concomitantly, not only is India's future role as the spiritual guru of humanity assured, also its socio-economic and political well-being certain.

ANONYMOUS

# LIFE IS STRANGER THAN FICTION

## A True Short Story

ANIMALS certainly are much more developed and possess much more insight, capabilities and flashes of intelligence and emotions than what we humans with our Science, researches and knowledge have granted them. We even make statements like, “God has created animals only with so much limited development.”

When the human eye perceives, sees or witnesses a case of some animal expressing love, appreciation or gratitude, we immediately call it a miracle, a freak incident. That is because of our conditioning, our believing, our reaching a conclusion that animals can only do so much, and not more than that, period.

Take this happening, for example, where the local population was stunned. Some 25 to 30 eye-witnesses reported this happening.

There was a tiny village bordering the mighty and deep Chandarpore Jungles in South-east Orissa, where, during harvest times, there were incidents of groups of elephants invading and ransacking the godowns and destroying the harvest crop.

So during one such phase, a villager-farmer made four pits or traps *en route* to his stock of the harvest crop, and in those pits he put sharp and strong wood-spikes, in the expectation that, if the rampaging elephant approached his stock of harvest, it would be wounded, as the spikes would pierce and lodge into its feet, as thorns prick ours.

One day, at about four in the afternoon, a lone elephant fell into the trap and a long sharp spike deeply pierced his left front foot. A mother and her daughter, returning from the jungle after collecting firewood, came upon this elephant trumpeting in agony. Deciding to take a break in their walk home, they sat under a tree, a safe distance away from the elephant, and watched. The older woman began to pray for the elephant.

The injured elephant kept trumpeting in varying notes and modulations and within about an hour other elephants gathered, eight in all. They surrounded their wounded mate and with waves of sympathy were trying to pacify him, soothe him, help him, but in vain, and as dusk was approaching and it would be dark soon, all the other elephants began to turn back and return to their homes in the jungle.

The injured elephant, accepting the fact that he was alone and had to survive, gathered strength and limped along ahead into the village. He headed straight to the village barber's courtyard and lay there, still and whimpering.

The very presence of an elephant created panic in the village, and all the villagers gathered together, about 25 to 30 of them, and decided to flee to the bordering jungle and seek shelter there until the elephant left, lest it should trample and crush them to death within their houses, they thought.

The village barber had gone out to cut firewood and as he returned home from the back gate of the house and opened the front door—out there in his courtyard lay the

elephant with its left foot with the protruding splinter extended out towards the barber, whimpering softly like a child

The barber, too stunned to react in any other way, did not hesitate and stepped forward towards the extended foot and clasped the protruding splinter dripping with blood with both his hands and calling out loud the Lord's name heaved and pulled and removed the splinter. The elephant lay as still as he could, eyes closed, whimpering and shivering

The barber searched around and collected a pile of his clothes, set them on fire, burned them, and collecting the ash stuffed it with his hands into the gaping wound, the gaping hole in the elephant's foot, after first washing it with water.

The elephant lay still, whimpering but much less than before. He did not show any indication of leaving and settled down there in the barber's courtyard for the night. The barber quietly withdrew from his courtyard and sat along with all the other villagers, some distance away, for the rest of the night.

The next morning, the villagers gathered together beating and banging on their drums, trying to scare the elephant back to the jungle. The elephant finally got up, looked around taking his own time and advanced towards the house of the farmer who had laid the traps. He went headlong and began destroying the house and the harvest crop stocks. This went on for about half an hour, with both the adjoining huts also partially damaged due to the elephant's sense of imprecision while on his frenzied destroying spree. He then lifted, with his trunk, sacks of the harvested crop from this destroyed site, turned around and proceeded to the barber's house and placed the sacks in his courtyard, trumpeted once majestically and proceeded into the jungle.

Now, this whole scene became a much-talked-about issue among the people all over that area, even the press carried news of it in their dailies. People still narrate this incident which took place in the early seventies, and one eye-witness, who was then present in his village, a forty-year-old man who is employed with us, told this whole episode to me.

Isn't just one such factual observation sufficient for us humans to comprehend and accept that animals are far more advanced and developed than we have classified them to be?

Is it a kind of subtle superiority complex that we have, that makes us say we, human beings, are the only animals that can feel, that are intelligent or that have a mind? Isn't it true that animals, plants and we share a common God, the Creator, the Omnipotent? So, it is very much a possibility that every living thing, every species has its own freedom of choice, expansion, progress with eternity as the limit in reaching towards the divine way, divine path, divine being.

## BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

**Notes on Prayers and Meditations**, by *Goutam Ghosal*. Sri Mira Trust, Pondicherry 605002. pp 84 + XVI Rs 40

THE text of the book consists of Goutam Ghosal's notes on the Mother's *Prayers and Meditations* published over a period in the monthly journal *Sri Aurobindo's Action* to which the author has added a valuable introduction with the subtitle *Poetic Autobiography*

The introduction states

A casual reader might well think of it as just one more collection of prayers. The deeper look reveals the difference. For these are prayers and love poetry rolled into one. . Even if we reject the high spirituality latent in the prayers, we cannot escape the best of the smokeless fire burning in the pages, the fire of love, the love hidden in all of us, the love that is a slow steady flame, a burning brazier, a noiseless incense, a beautiful rose, a feeling that flows through our blood secretly. Something great is happening in those pages, a vibration which survives even in translations from the original French

Yes, "something great" is there in the *Prayers* And that "something great" is multifaceted. The multi-variety of aspects covered by the Mother's *Prayers and Meditations* can be glimpsed from the different texts of the fourteen chapters in the book Existentialism, World War I, The Child, Blake and the Mother; Artist and Surrender; Untitled Dreams, The Glorious Past; Man and the New Species.

Goutam Ghosal has often referred to philosophers, mystics and poets There is the inevitable reference to Meera's *maine chaakar raakhojee* in the context of the Mother's sentence. "To be only Thy servant is all I ask."

Speaking of the Past and Future, the author affirms:

The backward look is discouraged both by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Their philosophy excludes the nostalgia of Coleridge, Wordsworth and Keats. They refuse to stop their journey to enjoy the coloured slides of bygone days . The Mother is never tired of telling herself in the Prayers about the glory of the new things, the unforeseen, the unexpected, the unseen

And the author quotes her

Every moment all the unforeseen, the unexpected, the unknown is before us, every moment the universe is created anew in its entirety and in every one of its parts

Further.

Thou hast willed that for me the future should be uncertain and that I go forward  
with confidence without even knowing where the road would lead  
This means that my road must be virgin even to my thought

Ghosal says that the Mother's *Prayers* is inspired poetry which is, in Sri  
Aurobindo's words, 'a rhythmic voyage of self-discovery'  
One other instance of this voyage

Thy Peace is in me, and in that Peace I see Thee alone present in everything, with  
the calm of Eternity

This prayer is one of those quoted by the author in the Appendix to the book as  
'Selected Prayers' which he has chosen, as stated in the subtitle, for classes XI-XII.

This is a commendable attempt of Goutam Ghosal to introduce the Mother's  
*Prayers and Meditations* with observations of insight to the world of school-students.

The notes have been written with an intellectual approach and have to be evaluated  
as notes without the coherence of essays and there are remarks which may not be  
acceptable to certain readers. Yet the notes should be useful for readers in general as  
well

SHYAM SUNDER JHUNJHUNWALA

**The Bhagavata Purana, Book X Volume I** Transcreated from Sanskrit by *Nandini  
Nopany* and *P Lal*. Writers Workshop, 162/92, Lake Gardens, Calcutta 700045 1997.  
viii + 563 pages Limited Collector's Edition. Rs 5000

Sri Aurobindo feels that the finest triumph of the Indian genius is in positing the image  
of Krishna as the Delight of Existence since the heart and life cannot live with  
abstractions.

Therefore when the heart and life turn towards the Highest and the Infinite, they  
arrive not at an abstract existence or non-existence, a Sat or else a Nirvana, but at  
an existent, a Sat Purusha, not merely at a consciousness, but at a conscious  
Being, a Chaitanya Purusha, not merely at a purely impersonal delight of the Is,  
but at an infinite I Am of bliss, an Anandamaya Purusha, nor can they immerse  
and lose his consciousness and bliss in featureless existence, but must insist on all  
three in one, for delight of existence is their highest power and without  
consciousness delight cannot be possessed. That is the sense of the supreme figure  
of the intensest Indian religion of love, Sri Krishna, the All-blissful and All-  
beautiful.

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*. SABCL. Vol 21, pp 554-55)

But how did the image take shape? Where lie the origins of this ideal Purushotama who is the very life-breath of Indian culture and who now spans continents through the International Society of Krishna Consciousness?

Apparently, there was a historical Krishna of the Yadava clan. Perhaps a Krishna-Vasudeva belonging to a royal line of Mathura as well. The Veda speaks of "Krishna, the slayer of Kesi". And the Chhandogya Upanishad has a communication from Ghora to "Krishna, the son of Devaki".

In the final hour one should take refuge in these three thoughts: 'You are the Indestructible, You are the Unchanging, You are the very Essence of life.'

Scholars down the centuries have tried to probe in vain the antecedents of the Krishna as we know him. But he proves to be quite elusive, as always. Since there are also Jain versions of the Krishna myth, the exercise can be immensely confounding. For instance, the ancient Tamil epic *Choolamani* is about Tivittan whose life closely resembles that of Krishna. It is based on the life of the eleventh Tirthankara, Sreyamsa Swami, which forms part of the Manipravala classic, *Sripuranam*. Here Tivittan (Vasudevan) performs miraculous deeds, marries sixteen thousand princesses and carries the discus Sudarsanam, the mace Kowmodi, the lance Amogham, the sword Sownandanam, the bow Sarangam, the jewel Kowsthubham and the conch, Panchajanyam. Krishna's holding up the Govardhana Hill is paralleled by Tivittan's raising up the Kotimasilai Hill.

Through all this one fact is clear: the Gitacharya is the Eternal Teacher for all philosophers and aspirants of the spiritual ways of life in India and the Flute-Player of Brindavan pours the everlasting Delight of Existence into whatever we say, think or do. He also comes as Kali (which indicates that he belongs to a period when Tantra had not moved away from Vedanta) and there are moments in India's spiritual history when the Krishna-Kali image gets indissolubly fused as in the meditational verse of Bilwamangal's *Krishna Karunamritam* ('*Kothandamaikshavam akhandamishuncha pushpam* ') that envisions the Supreme as a Madanagopalasundari.

Sri Aurobindo himself has indicated this twofold image in the sonnet *The Cosmic Dance* which speaks of the Supreme using two measures. Only, we seem to hear always "the tread of Kali's feet / Measuring in rhythms of pain and grief and chance / Life's game of hazard terrible and sweet." The poet plaintively asks:

But when shall Krishna's dance through Nature move,  
His mask of sweetness, laughter, rapture, love?

But though seemingly absent, Krishna holds us in thrall and we cannot do without him. We are all eternal gopikas, like Sarojini Naidu who called out helplessly in *The Flute-Player of Brindaban*.



Why didst thou play thy matchless flute  
 'Neath the Kadamba tree,  
 And wound my idly dreaming heart  
 With poignant melody.  
 So where thou goest I must go,  
 My flute-player, with thee?

It was the Tamil hymnodist Perialwar who first sang of Krishna as a child and as a prankster. Between his inspiration and the *Vishnu Puranam*, the Krishna legends took a near-final shape. When we come to *Srimad Bhagavata*, among the incarnations, Krishna has grown closest to our hearts. The whole of the sumptuous Dasama Skanda of the *Bhagavata* is about Krishna. For the last one thousand years and more, the *Bhagavata* has been the staple diet for aspirants who choose the path of devotion. It has been translated and transcreated into innumerable languages and the Tenth Book has proved to be an all-time favourite. The latest English version by Nandini Nopany and P Lal is also most welcome. For, can anyone have a surfeit of this Delight of Existence, this *aparyāpta amrita*, the insatiable nectar?

The present volume has the first forty-five cantos of the Tenth Book. Recalling the childhood and boyhood of Krishna is always a joy and the pleasure grows wings because Nandini and Prof. Lal make us savour every word, forcing us to halt and take in the visuals and relate them to the poetic experience. The luxurious border for the pages gives a golden glow to one's reading of the deeds of the Charmer of Brindavan, thanks to Srimati Lal.

One comes back at intervals to the miniature ivory painting presented as a frontispiece by Nandini (who is this gopi with Krishna? Radha? Anamika?) and the paintings by anonymous folk-artists of Puri's Jagannath Temple that flag off each canto. Krishna destroying demons like Baka and Agha, Krishna blessing the Brahmin wives, Krishna entering Mathura—all these scenes etched deep in the racial memory are brought up again with the brush-strokes of strong colours that glow in the Indian sun. And there is the English text.

How does one overcome the linguistic and cultural divide when translating a Sanskrit scripture into modern English? Sri Aurobindo preferred the sublime accents of Miltonic blank verse or the liquid cadences of Tennyson. Nandini and Prof. Lal prefer unadorned prose, though there are cantos when the prose is split up in print to look like poetry. But whatever the cosmetic adventures with the printed word, as long as the translators do not come between the original and the reader, we have nought to complain about. Such is the imbedded power in India's sacred texts that they can stand any number of retellings and yet not lose their beauty, sublimity and poetic voice.

Experienced translators both, Ms Nandini and Prof. Lal have come out with a sincere, literal translation. Śuka takes command of the situation and all is well. After indicating the mystery of the Lord's incarnations—"Lord, there is no reason for you taking birth except your own miraculous pleasure"—Śuka proceeds to describe the

birth of Krishna Already the definite turn away from the Tantric sources is clear. The *Vishnu Purana* has a powerful hymn to Devaki who carries Krishna in her womb (*Amśa* 5, Canto 11).

You are the Sukshma Prakriti who in ancient days held the Mahat tattva in your womb. You are the Word of the Pranava-imagined Purusha who holds within himself all the Vedas You are creation that contains all manifestations, the Veda that contains all Yajnas, the worship that contains the result, the *Arami* that contains Agni, the Aditi, who carries the Devas in the womb, the Diti that contains the Asuras . You are Swaha, Swadha, Vidya, Sudha You are indeed the brilliant Aditi in the skies. You have manifested on earth to guard the worlds

The *Harivamśa* which is also an ancient text has the famous hymn to Arya by Vishnu The *Bhagavata*, instead, inserts prayers to Krishna by Devaki and Vasudeva as soon as he is born. Devaki is seen only as an instrument for the Supreme's manifestation and she is herself full of humility for having been chosen for the task.

You are the ultimate Supreme Being  
When the universe dissolves  
You contain it within yourself,  
Like a person containing his body.  
Now you are born from my womb—  
What is this if not a miracle?

*Bibharti soyam mama garbhagobhuta?* The narrative in the hands of Ms Nandini and Prof Lal glides with ease, the familiar story re-written in easily assimilable English There is the hypocritical speech of Kamsa:

Aho sister, aho brother-in-law, I am a sinful man I have murdered all your male children I am so wicked that I have no mercy in me. I have abandoned all my friends, all my kith and kin, I do not even know what hell will be mine when I die, because I am like one who has murdered a Brahmin I live but I am like one dead

His depredations continue. Presently we enter the evergreen, incorruptible Gokula to rejoice with the cowherd clan Krishna survives the "child-eclipsing-and-devouring Putana", the anti-god Trinavarta, the horrendous Baka and the reptile Agha Brahma is taught a lesson about illusion and Reality and we learn that in the presence of the Supreme the Creator himself can get locked up in self-delusion

Like mist on a dark night  
Like a glow-worm in daylight  
The smaller is lost in the greater

Similarly, when the trivial  
Tries to overcome the grand,  
It loses its own power in the process

After the magnificent prayer of Brahma, we are halted in our tracks by the title, ‘‘The Killing of Kaliya by Krishna’’ A Homeric nod from Ms Nandini and Prof Lal, of course. The English narrative, however, is faithful to the original Kaliya is not killed but sent away in safety to the island of Ramanaka after a thorough ‘‘step-dance’’ by Krishna which quite mauls the reptile. Krishna continues to be the guardian of the clan, prankster, son, darling of his mother

Now come the soul-ravishing episodes of the Bansidhara It is not only the cowherds and cowherdresses (the use of ‘cowgirls’ by the translators is quite painful to one’s aesthetic sensibilities!) who are charmed by the notes of Krishna’s flute

Listening to the music  
Of the divine flute of Krishna,  
The glad peacocks dance,  
The cattle on mountain slopes  
And the other animals  
relax and are serene

The Katyayani rite calls for an early morning bath by the gopikas and the thief of hearts steals their clothes as well. Was it right of Krishna to do so? No one has really found an answer, though there has been a good deal of scholarly explication of the event to prove the symbolic undertones of the episode At the same time, Krishna’s profound words uttered now and then lift up our hearts skyward Here is Krishna watching a grove of trees:

Look!  
Stotakrishna  
Amshu  
Sridama  
Subala  
Arjuna  
Vishala  
Rishabha  
Tejasvin  
Devaprastha  
Varuthapa—  
Look!  
Such fortune-favoured trees!  
Their sole reason to exist

Is to be of help to others  
 Wind, rain, heat, snow—  
 All these afflict them—  
 Yet they protect others

Certainly a printer's contribution to image the high-rising trees in the forest!

The twenty-fourth canto opens with a neither-Sanskrit, nor-English word *Pitaji*! It is Krishna wishing to know about the Indra-yajna. Somewhat funny in the context, but the force of the *Bhagavata* stream will not allow us to halt and do any cluck-clucking. Once again we suspend our disbelief as Krishna lifts up the Govardhan Hill with the little finger of his left hand (the pat-painting is absolutely charming in its unsophisticated sublimity) and is anointed by Indra himself as Govinda. There is also the Rasa dance which is in vogue even today at Brindavan, for this dance is an exteriorised image of the Delight in the interior spaces of our heart that comes of soul-togetherness since only one season abides there in the presence of Krishna

Autumnal moon  
 Bright white light  
 Darkness dispelled  
 By silvery beams  
 A place of pure enchantment  
 The watery hands  
 Of the Yamuna river  
 Scattering shimmering sand  
 On the banks of the Kalindi

As for the Gopijanavallabha, the rest of the present volume is but aftercourses. Krishna gives short shrift to some more anti-gods, goes to Mathura with Akrura, destroys the killer-elephant and the murderous wrestlers. Like "Pitaji" earlier, "Hai" intrudes in the scene of Kamsa's end:

Krishna dragged Kamsa on the ground  
 Like a lion dragging a dead elephant  
 Amidst cries of "Hai! Hai!"  
 Exclaimed by all the spectators

Ugrasena is King again, the time for play is over. Krishna and Balarama move to Sandipani's ashrama for an integral schooling in all arts and sciences. Oh yes, even in painting, embroidery, colouring teeth and making a bed! Yes, in cuisine too! Ah! Puppet-making and puppetry, writing didactic fiction, gambling, gem-cutting!

Having been a *Bhagavata* fan for years and years, all this intrigued me. Has Śuka made the list? or Chevvai Chooduvar in his Tamil *Bhagavatam*? Have I missed the

sixty-four items somewhere? *Sarvam naravarasreshthau sarvavidyappravartakau*, says Śuka But Ms Nandini and Prof Lal will not let a golden opportunity slip by. This is an excellent time to list “the sixty-four civilised arts” and educate the reader

But I do not think the Darling of Humanity needed special instruction in ‘legerdemain’ (look at what he did when Brahma spirited away the cows and the cowherd boys), “beautifying oneself with flower ornaments” (he excelled in making use of just a peacock feather and a handful of wild blossoms to appear as the Bhuvana Sundara), singing, playing musical instruments, dancing. Certainly Sandipani could not teach any new technique of deception to Krishna, the arch-deceiver, the Bhuvana Mohana, the Gopi-manasa Chora!

The Preface to this version of the *Bhagavata Purana* says, “the lyrical beauty (of the melodic lines) should emerge from the heard not the read word.” Quite true. This volume when read out in the quiet hours of the night or in the holy hush of the Puja room has a transformatory effect on the listener. Almost every one of the cantos deals with a disaster, a killing or a terror, yet the effect is one of Ananda. That is the magical effect of Krishna’s presence which transforms all our vain, mundane, ugly todays into a sheer Delight of Existence. A presence that invests even a drab, mercantile language with the touch of the spiritual, especially when Ms Nandini and Prof Lal dextrously wield the kennings to visualise an eternal scene

When the Wisher-of-Welfare  
And the Soother-of-Sorrows  
Plays on his flute  
Herds of bullock and deer  
And the cows of Vraja  
Stand trance-enchanted  
At a distance,  
Ears erect, chomping grass  
Like creatures asleep  
Or painted in a picture

This is why the *Bhagavata* is able to achieve, according to Sri Aurobindo “a mystic capture of the Divine through the heart and the senses” leading to a “religion of the joy of God’s love, delight and beauty” While the present volume will certainly be a favourite for the *Bhagavata*-lover to handle (despite the price), we shall await eagerly the companion volume. For such productions usher into our households Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati.

**Stephen Hawking's Universe, Beyond the Black Hole**, by *John Boslough Fontana/Collins*, 1985

Written by an award-winning journalist, this is a brief book about the legend of astrophysics Stephen Hawking, whose best-selling book *A Brief History of Time* first gave to the world at large a picture of a cosmos through the eyes of a man in the same mould as Einstein, is a victim of a motor neurone disease called Lou Gehrig's disease which gradually disintegrates the nerve cells of the spinal cord and brain, that control all voluntary action. The disease is fatal—only the time taken varies. Once it is diagnosed people survive between two years to ten years at the most—according to allopathic medical experts. Hawking had a two-year period of severe depression. When he realised that his condition was getting stable he began his studies, got married in '65, began as a research associate at Cambridge and got inducted in '79. For the rest of his life, Hawking has been confined to a motorised wheelchair. His speech is a monotone so difficult to understand that his wife and his secretary have a tough time. He has a prodigious memory. He is the living epitome of what is called the complete cerebral man. His disorder on the physical level has kept intact his profound thinking and raised it to extraordinary heights. He can reel off from memory and dictate 40 pages of equations. He remembers the page number of a book in which there is a tiny error, the book having been read years ago. Honours and accolades have come to him from all over the world. And yet he remains, smiling, a bit impish and unfazed by all these honours. He often says, "You shouldn't believe everything you read about me". His main field of interest is cosmology. He is especially interested in how the Universe began, and has worked mathematically on the Big Bang and other theories of the causation of the present universe.

The author takes the reader through various theories and personalities connected with cosmology. From Galileo to Einstein and to the Russian mathematician Friedman and thence to Hubble and his law named after him about the expanding universe. We go on to the role of quantum mechanics and relativity. We get a nodding glimpse of what is called the 'uncertainty principle' of Werner Heisenberg and thence we are led on to the pet project of Hawking, 'The Black Holes'. These black holes are collapsed stars of such unimaginable gravity that no radiation or light or heat can escape from them. Thus, by definition, a black hole is invisible to the most powerful telescope and Hawking feels there are a thousand million black holes in our galaxy alone. In '74, at a lecture in the Rutherford-Appleton Centre at Cambridge, he first propounded that the black holes were actually exploding, a statement dismissed as rubbish by fellow scientists at first. Hawking also was the first to postulate the existence of mini-black holes, each black hole the size of the nucleus of an atom. According to him, these mini-black holes came into existence in the first 10-20 seconds of the Big Bang. Hawking calculates about 100 million mini-black holes per cubic light year throughout the universe.

The author then gives us a brief review of various esoteric names—quarks, quasars.

neutrinos, leptons and also what are called Z and W particles. He goes on to discuss the four basic forces in the physical universe which hold sway. These are: i) Gravity which controls the big objects of the universe, stars, planets and human beings; the other three operate at sub-atomic levels, ii) a strong nuclear force that holds the nucleus of an atom together and is a trillion times more powerful than gravitation; iii) a weak nuclear force that causes radioactive decay in certain atoms like uranium; and iv) the electromagnetism that keeps electrons in place around the nucleus. Einstein tried to find a single law that could explain and unite these four forces. So far none has been able to do so. Yet a unification theory is a religious, almost Zen-like vision for some scientists where all matter and all force come from one source. All four forces have had a time of dominance in the history of the universe. How close to us are they as compared to the four powers and personalities of the Divine Mother? Certainly the Yogic eye of seers and mystics can visualize and see even the Big Bang. But how can the theoretical physicists even with their latest mathematical constructions ever go far back in time when all forces and laws of the universe were united and sprang from one single source which the yogis call the Divine Aditi or Mother and whom people like Hawking deny? Einstein who was almost a mystic at the end of his life remarked: "God does not play dice with the universe." To which Hawking replied: "God not only plays dice but sometimes he throws them where they cannot be seen." Hawking uniformly maintains that "most scientists prefer to shy away from the religious side of the Universe." Recently, some scientists like David Bohm have observed in Taoism, Hinduism and Buddhism the idea of the observer-dependence of the universe—a view of the quantum physicists and the simultaneous view of the mystic visioning Shiva or Mahadeva in his cosmic dance of creation and dissolution. Yet Hawking, uncharacteristically criticizing people like Capra, Bohm and others, remarks, "The universe of Eastern mysticism is an illusion. A physicist who links it with his own work has abandoned physics." To which I would remark with due apologies to the supergenius of Hawking and his tribe that their universe of mathematical cosmology and deductions is a worse if not an equal illusion and they themselves equally an element in the illusion of this world. The point is that physicists like Hawking are scared to cross the border and enter into a state of "No mind"—something which all realized masters of East or West have done. "If," as Sri Aurobindo has remarked somewhere, "the power of thought is great, infinitely greater is the power of no thought." Minds like Hawking's are brilliant and in the starry firmament of the mental world they are like comets and novas, even supernovas to us ordinary human beings. The book on Hawking is a delight to read. The author has skilfully described Hawking's life and achievements, urging us to enter into cosmological aspects, he keeps an ordinary reader glued to the book, which, though briefly, gives adequately a superb idea of perhaps the greatest living mathematician-physicist in the latter half of this century.

ANONYMOUS