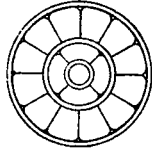


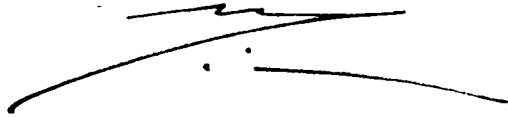
# MOTHER INDIA

AUGUST 15: SRI AUROBINDO'S BIRTHDAY

Price : Re. 1.



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



# MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. IX

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*"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"*

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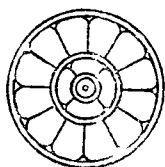
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## SRI AUROBINDO

MAYA could never bind him, for he came  
Armed with a white omnipotence of soul.  
What crown could dazzle, when he wore the flame  
Of God's eternity as aureole ?

Unvisioned Master of miraculous  
Impenetrable light beyond decay,  
He bodied forth his rapture luminous  
To rouse the dead divinity of clay.

Nought shall oppose his fire, the golden heat  
Of his transmuting mercy—grace sublime  
That from each heart at his heroic feet  
Burns with a benison the murk of time.



Si on regarde les formes extérieures, non plus en elles-mêmes, pour elles-mêmes, dans leur apparence seulement, mais comme l'expression d'une réalité plus profonde et plus durable, alors toutes—comme aussi toutes les circonstances et tous les événements—deviennent symboliques de la Force qui est derrière et qui se sert d'elles pour s'exprimer.

Pour un certain état de conscience, il n'y a pas une circonstance, pas une forme, pas une action, pas un mouvement qui ne soit expressif d'une réalité plus profonde ou plus haute, plus durable, plus essentielle, plus vraie.



If you look at the outer forms, no longer in themselves, for themselves, in their appearance only, but as the expression of a reality more deep and durable, then all of them—as also all circumstances and all events—become symbolic of the Force that is behind and that uses them to express itself.

For a certain state of consciousness, there is not one circumstance, not one form, not one action, not one movement that is not expressive of a reality deeper or higher, more durable, more essential, more true.

THE MOTHER

## SPIRITUAL FORCE AND ITS WORKINGS

(An Unpublished Letter of Sri Aurobindo)

As to Force let me point out a few elementary notions which you ignore.

(1) The Force is a divine Force, so obviously it can apply itself in any direction; it can inspire a poet, set in motion the soldier, doctor, scientist, everybody.

(2) The Force is not a mental Force—it is not bound to go out from the Communicator with every detail mentally arranged, precise in its place, and communicate it mentally to the Recipient. It can go out as a global Force containing in itself the thing to be done, but working out the details in the Recipient and the action as the action progresses. It is not necessary for the Communicant to accompany mentally the Force, plant himself mentally in the mind of the Recipient and work out mentally there the details. He can send the Force or put on the Force, leave it to do its work and attend himself to other matters. In the world most things are worked out by such a global Force containing the results in itself, but involved, concealed, and working them out in a subsequent operation. The seed contains the whole potentiality of the tree, the gene contains the potentiality of the living form that it initiates, etc. etc., but if you examine the seed and gene *ad infinitum*, still you will not find there either the tree or the living being. All the same the Force has put all these potentialities there in a certain evolution which works itself out automatically.

(3) In the case of a man acting as an instrument of the Force the action is more complicated, because consciously or unconsciously the man must receive, also he must be able to work out what the Force puts through him. He is a living complex instrument, not a simple machine. So if he has responsiveness, capacity etc. he can work out the Force perfectly, if not he does it imperfectly or frustrates it. That is why we speak of and insist on the perfecting of the instrument. Otherwise there would be no need of sadhana or anything else—any fellow would do for any blessed work and one would simply have to ram things into him and see them coming out into action.

(4) The Communicant need not be an all-round many-sided Encyclopaedia in order to communicate the Force for various purposes. If we want to help a lawyer to succeed in a case, we need not be perfect lawyers ourselves

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knowing all the law, Roman, English or Indian and supply him with all his arguments, questions etc., doing consciously and mentally through him his whole examinations, cross-examinations and pleading. Such a process would be absurdly cumbrous, incompetent and wasteful. The prearrangement of the eventual result and the capacity for making him work his instruments in the right way and for arranging events also so as to aid towards the result are put into the Force when it goes to him, they are therefore inherent in its action and the rest is a question of his own receptivity, experience etc. Naturally the best instrument even is imperfect (unless he is a perfected Adhar) and mistakes may be committed, other suggestions accepted etc. etc., but if the instrument is sufficiently open, the Force can set the thing to rights and the result still comes. In some or many cases the Force has to be renewed from time to time or supported by fresh Force. In some directions particular details have to be consciously attended to by the Communicant. All that depends on circumstances too multitudinous and variable to be reduced to rule. There are general lines, in these matters, but no rules, the working of non-mental Force has necessarily to be plastic, not rigid and tied to formulas. If you want to reduce things to patterns and formulas, you will necessarily fail to understand the workings of a spiritual (non-mental) Force.

(5) All that I say here refers to spiritual Force. I am not speaking of the Supramental.

(6) Also please note that this is all about the working of Force on or through people: it has nothing to do with intuition which is quite another matter. Also it does not preclude always and altogether a plenary and detailed inspiration from a Communicant to a Recipient—such things happen, but it is not necessary to proceed in that way, nor below the Supermind or supramentalised Overmind can it be the ordinary process.

## SOME NOTES ON SRI AUROBINDO'S POEMS

### 4

*ILION* in hexameters, as it originally appeared in *Collected Poems and Plays* side by side with shorter pieces in other metres to illustrate what Sri Aurobindo called "true English Quantity", consisted of some opening passages, recast by Sri Aurobindo, of a poem left unfinished. Eight Books, at various stages of revision, together with fragments of a ninth, exist of it, running into several thousands of lines. They develop in an original way part of the story of Troy as continued by ancient poets from the point where Homer ends—particularly Quintus of Smyrna who lived in the fourth century after Christ and wrote an epic in Greek beginning with the arrival of the Amazon Queen Penthesilea to Priam's help after the death of Hector at the hands of Achilles. Some authorities even claim that the continuation is directly warranted by Homer himself: they take the last line of the *Iliad* to run: "Such were the funeral rites of Hector. And now there came an Amazon..". *Iliion* presupposes Penthesilea's arrival and deals with events on the last day of the Trojan War.

*Ahana*, also in hexameters, is a recast of an early poem. It is rhymed, but the hexameter is normally rhymeless. An English critic who was shown this piece in "true English Quantity" made some comments on it: Sri Aurobindo's examination of these comments in answer to a disciple's query is of great interest:

"Milford accepts the rule that two consonants after a short vowel make the short vowel long, even if they are outside the word and come in another word following it. To my mind that is an absurdity. I shall go on pronouncing the *y* of *frosty* as short whether it has two consonants after it or only one or none; it remains *frosty* whether it is a *frosty scalp* or *frosty top* or a frosty anything. In no case have I pronounced it or could I consent to pronounce it as *frostee*. My hexameters are intended to be read naturally as one would read any English sentence. But if you admit a short syllable to be long whenever there are two consonants after it, then Bridges' scansion is perfectly justified. Milford does not accept that conclusion; he says Bridges' scansion is an absurdity. But he bases this on his idea that quantitative length does not count in English verse. It is intonation that makes the metre, he says, high tones or low tones—not longs and shorts, and stress is there of the greatest

### 5



importance. On that ground he refuses to discuss my idea of weight or dwelling of the voice or admit quantity or anything else but tone as determinative of the metre and declares that there is no such thing as metrical length. Perhaps also that is the reason why he counts *frosty* as a spondee before *scalp*, he thinks that it causes it to be intoned in a different way. I don't see how it does that; for my part, I intone it just the same before *top* as before *scalp*. The ordinary theory is, I believe, that the *sc* of *scalp* acts as a sort of stile (because of the two consonants) which you take time to cross, so that *ty* must be considered as long because of this delay of the voice, while the *t* of *top* is merely a line across the path which gives no trouble. I don't see it like that; at most, *scalp* is a slightly longer word than *top* and that affects perhaps the rhythm of the line but not the metre; it cannot lengthen the preceding syllable so as to turn a trochee into a spondee. Sanskrit quantitation is irrelevant here (it is the same as Latin or Greek in this respect), for both Milford and I agree that the classical quantitative conventions are not reproducible in English—we both spew out Bridges' eccentric rhythms.

"This answers also your question as to what Milford means by 'fundamental confusion' regarding *aridity*. He refuses to accept the idea of metrical length. But I am concerned with metrical as well as natural vowel quantities. My theory is that natural length in English depends, or can depend, on the dwelling of the voice giving metrical value or weight to the syllable, in quantitative verse one has to take account of all such dwelling or weight of the voice, both weight by ictus (stress) and weight by prolongation of the voice (ordinary syllabic length); the two are different, but for metrical purposes in a quantitative verse can rank as of equal value. I do not say that stress turns a short vowel into a long one

"Milford does not take the trouble to understand my theory—he ignores the importance I give to modulations and treats cretics and antibacchi and molossi as if they were dactyls, he ignores my objection to stressing short insignificant words like *and*, *with*, *but*, *the*—and thinks that I do that everywhere, which would be to ignore my theory. In fact I have scrupulously applied my theory in every detail of my practice. Take, for instance, (*Ahana*, p. 141):

Art thou not heaven-bound even as I with the earth? Hast thou  
ended...

Here *art* is long by natural quantity though unstressed, which disproves Milford's criticism that in practice I never put an unstressed long as the first syllable of a dactylic foot or spondee, as I should do by my theory. I don't

do it often because normally in English rhythm stress bears the foot—a fact to which I have given full emphasis in my theory. That is the reason why I condemn the Bridgean disregard of stress in the rhythm,—still I do it occasionally whenever it can come in quite naturally.<sup>1</sup> My quantitative system, as I have shown at great length, is based on the natural movement of the English tongue, the same in prose and poetry, not on any artificial theory.”

24-12-1942

---

An example of the general scansion as well as of the disposition of the caesura may be given from *Ilion* :

Īdā | rōse wĭth hēr | gōd-hāunted | pēaks || ĩnto | dīāmond | lūstres, |  
 Īdā, | fĭrst of thē | hĭlls || wĭth thē | rāngēs | sĭlēt bēyōnd hēr |  
 Wāatching thē | dāwn ĩn thēr | gĭant | cōmpānĭes, || ās sĭnce thē | āgēs |  
 Fĭrst bēlgān thēy hād | wāatched hēr, || up|bēaring | Tĭme on thēr | sūmmĭts. |

---

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Opening tribrachs are very frequent in my hexameter Cf. *Ahana*, p. 142 \*

Is he the first? was there none then before him? shall none come after?

But Milford thinks I have stressed the first short syllable to make them into dactyls—a thing I abhor  
 Cf. also *Ahana*, p. 153 (initial anapaest)

~~~~~  
 In the hard *t* reckoning made by the grey-robed accountant at even,

or p. 154 (two anapaests)

~~~~~  
 Yet survives *l* bliss in the rhythm of our heart-beats, yet is there *l* wonder,

or again p. 157

~~~~~  
 And we go *l* stumbling, maddened and thrilled to his dreadful embraces,

or in my poem *Ilion*, p. 377

~~~~~  
 And the first *l* Argive fell slain as he leaped on the Phrygian beaches.

There are even opening amphibrachs here and there. Cf. *Ahana*, p. 149:

~~~~~  
 Illuminations, trance-seeds of silence, flowers of musing.

\* The page numbers refer to *Collected Poems and Plays*. (Editor)

## MOTHER INDIA

By the side of the elaborate simile, in Book I of *Iliad*, apropos Deiphobus, already slain by the Gods in their minds, though yet “clanging in arms” in the Trojan streets—

Even as a star long extinguished whose light still travels the spaces,  
Seen in its form by men, but itself goes phantom-like fleeting  
Void and null and dark through the uncaring infinite vastness,  
So now he seemed to the sight that sees all things from the Real—

we may set Francis Thompson's lines in *Sister Songs* :

As down the years the splendour voyages  
Of some long-ruined and night-submerged star.

Thompson aims to suggest the poet being survived by his poetry. A moving and original use, this, of a majestic astronomical figure in very fine verse, but Sri Aurobindo conveys a profounder meaning in his great passage than Art's effective continuity in men's, remembrance and in their lives after the artist's personal disappearance from life : some deathless Artist Power which has fashioned the whole universe is conjured up in all Its immense and omniscient supremacy.

---

In the speeches of both Penthesilea and Laocoon Ajax is spoken of as having been slain by Penthesilea. In some other passages there is a living Ajax. This discrepancy is explained by the fact that in the Trojan War there were two Ajaxes, the Great and the Small. The Great was the most famous fighter of the Greeks next to Achilles. According to Greek legend and, unlike as in *Iliad*, he died by his own hand when after Achilles's death he lost to Odysseus in the attempt to gain possession of the armour of Achilles. The Small, son of Oileus and called the Locrian, boastful in character and reputed to be the fastest of the Greeks next to Achilles, figures as alive in *Iliad*.

---

Gades, mentioned in Antenor's speech, is the old name for Cadiz on the south-west coast of Spain and marked for the ancients the farthest point beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, on either side of which were the Mounts Calpe

and Abyla called the Pillars of Hercules. It was also known as Gadeira. Pindar, for instance, priding himself on his own unmatched poetry, figures it as Gadeira and says : "Beyond Gadeira no man can pass into the gloom of the West."

---

In the meeting between Paris and Polyxena, when Polyxena says to Paris, who is on his way to fight Achilles and his hosts, that he is going

Armed with the strength of Fate to strike at my heart in the battle,  
she means that she is in love with Achilles who, as we learn from an earlier passage, has sent a proposal for her hand in marriage.

---

In the *Book of the Chieftains*, Odysseus is made in the passage beginning

Rather far would I sail in my ships past southern Cythera  
to anticipate the wanderings through which he went for twenty years after the fall of Troy before returning home to Ithaca. The passage has a very dramatic effect as of prophecy, for all who remember the subject of Homer's *Odyssey*.

---

The line, put into the mouth of Briseis, in *The Book of the Woman*, apropos the other world to which she would follow Achilles if he should die,

Stronger there by love as thou than I here, O Achilles,  
sounds a little strange in construction until we realise what it means : "Just as here you are physically stronger than I, so there I shall be by virtue of my love stronger than you".

---

In the passage about the gathering of the Gods before Zeus, in *The Book of the Gods*, Enceladus is mentioned as an inhabitant of the subtle worlds

behind the physical, drawing "strength from his anguish under a living Aetna", because he was killed by Zeus and buried under Mount Aetna in the course of the war between the Gods and the hundred-armed giants of whom Enceladus was one.

In the same passage the lines,

There our sun cannot shine and our moon has no place for her lustres,  
There our lightnings flash not nor fire of these spaces is suffered,

are a rendering of some famous phrases in the Mundaka Upanishad. The stanza, where these phrases occur, is translated thus by Yeats in collaboration with Purohit Swami : "Neither sun, moon, star, neither fire nor lightning lights Him. When He shines, everything begins to shine." Sri Aurobindo, less faithful to the letter but more loyal to the spirit, catches the large breath of the inspired Upanishadic Sanskrit in his own prose translation of the Mundaka : "There the sun shines not and the moon has no splendour and the stars are blind. There these lightnings flash not or any earthly fire. For all that is bright is but the shadow of His brightness and by His shining all this shineth."

\*

\*

Sri Aurobindo himself has provided various technical notes to many of his short compositions in quantitative metre—*Trance*, *Shiva the Inconscient Creator*, *The Life Heavens*, *Jivanmukta*, etc. They have been published together with these poems, and some general indications by him of the themes and their treatment have also been supplied by him in the same place. What we may do here is to collect the remarks made by him elsewhere on a few of these compositions. Thus, apropos a translation of the *Alcaics* of *Jivanmukta* into Bengali, he writes in a letter :

"The lines :

Revealed it wakens, when God's stillness  
Heavens the ocean of moveless Nature

express an exact spiritual experience with a visible symbol which is not a mere ornamental metaphor but corresponds to exact and concrete spiritual experience, an immense oceanic expanse of Nature-consciousness in oneself covered with the heaven of the Divine Stillness and itself rendered calm and motionless by that over-vaulting influence. Nothing of that appears in the translation; it is a vague mental statement with an ornamental metaphor.

"I do not stress all that to find fault, but because it points to a difficulty which seems to me insuperable. This *Jivanmukta* is not merely a poem, but a transcript of a spiritual condition, one of the highest in the inner Overmind experience. To express it at all is not easy. If one writes only ideas about what it is or should be, there is failure. There must be something concrete, the form, the essential spiritual emotion of the state. The words chosen must be the right words in their proper place and each part of the statement in its place in an inevitable whole. Verbiage, flourishes there must be none. But how can all that be turned over into another language without upsetting the apple-cart? I don't see how it can be easily avoided. For instance in the fourth stanza, 'Possesses', 'sealing', 'grasp' are words of great importance for the sense. The feeling of possession by the Ananda rapture, the pressure of the ecstatic force sealing the love so that there can never again be division between the lover and the All-Beloved, the sense of the grasp of the All-Beautiful are things more than physically concrete to the experience ('grasp' is especially used because it is a violent, abrupt, physical word—it cannot be replaced by 'in the hands' or 'in the hold') and all that must have an adequate equivalent in the translation. But reading X's Bengali line I no longer know where I am, unless perhaps in a world of Vedantic abstractions where I never intended to go. So again what has X's translation of my line to do with the tremendous and beautiful experience of being ravished, thoughtless and wordless, into the breast of the Eternal who is the All-Beautiful, All-Beloved?"

\*

\*

On *Thought the Paraclete* Sri Aurobindo has written :

"As thought rises in the scale, it ceases to be intellectual, becomes illumined, then intuitive, then overmental and finally disappears seeking the last Beyond. The poem does not express any philosophical thought, however; it is simply a perception of a certain movement, that is all.

" 'Pale blue' is the colour of the higher ranges of mind up to the intuition. Above it, it begins to become golden with the supramental Light."

"Thought is not the giver of Knowledge but the 'mediator' between the Inconscient and the Superconscient. It compels the world born from the Inconscient to reach for a Knowledge other than the instinctive vital or merely empirical, for the Knowledge that itself exceeds thought; it calls for that superconscient Knowledge and prepares the consciousness here to receive it. It rises itself into the higher realms and even in disappearing into the supramental and Ananda levels is transformed into something that will bring down their powers into the silent self which its cessation leaves behind it.

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“Gold-red is the colour of the Supramental in the physical—the poem describes Thought in the stage when it is undergoing transformation and is about to ascend into the Infinite above and disappear into it. The ‘flame-word rune’ is the Word of the higher Inspiration, Intuition, Revelation which is the highest attainment of Thought.”

\*

\*

*Journey's End*, which is in quantitative metre,

The day ends lost in a stretch of even,  
A long road trod—and the little farther.  
Now the waste-land, now the silence;  
A blank dark wall, and behind it heaven—

may be compared with another small piece of Sri Aurobindo's in traditional metre :

### ONE DAY

*The Little More*

One day, and all the half-dead is done,  
One day, and all the unborn begun :  
A little path and the great goal,  
A touch that brings the divine whole.

Hill after hill was climbed and now,  
Behold, the last tremendous brow  
And the great rock that none has trod :  
A step, and all is sky and God.

*One Day* was among the lines of poetry the Mother read out on the last day of 1954 when she gave the Message for 1955, the year which was said to be a crucial one bristling with difficulties. The Mother went on to say : “Now, as we have talked of difficulties, I wish to read two things, not two poems but some lines, one whole short poem and just one stanza of a poem, which are a very magnificent illustration of our message for the next year and which will give you a little sketch of what the true consciousness is, that which is free from all difficulties, that which is above all conflicts.” The one stanza was the end of the piece called *Life*:

Even in rags I am a god,  
 Fallen, I am divine;  
 High I triumph when down-trod,  
 Long I live when slain.

When, the Mother was asked "Will you explain the two passages?" she replied: "Explain? There is no explanation. They speak for themselves very clearly. Poetry is not to be explained. It is to be felt and not reasoned about. The poetic inspiration is above reason. It must not be made to sink into the domain of the reason, because it will get spoiled....It is to be understood by an internal contact much more than by the words."

\*

\*

*The Bird of Fire* was originally attempted in quantitative metre but the poem did not progress. Then another form was tried and the result was successful—"a kind of compromise between the stress system and the foot measure." About the symbolism Sri Aurobindo wrote: "The Bird of Fire is the living vehicle of the gold fire of the Divine light and the white fire of the Divine Tapas and the crimson fire of Divine Love—and everything else of the Divine Consciousness."

Here we may quote some lines from *Savitri*, Book I, Canto 2, together with Sri Aurobindo's remarks in reference to them:

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

The question asked was: "In the mystical region, is the dragon bird any relation of your Bird of Fire with 'gold-white wings' or your Hippogriff with 'face lusted, pale-blue lined'? And why do you write: 'What to say about him? One can only see?'" Sri Aurobindo replied: "All birds of that region are relatives. But this is the bird of eternal Ananda, while the Hippogriff is the divinised Thought and the Bird of Fire is the Agni-bird, psychic and tapas. All that however is to mentalise too much and mentalising always takes most of the life out of spiritual things. That is why I say it can be seen but nothing said about it."

\*

\*



*In Horis Aeternum* · “This poem on its technical side aims at finding a halfway house between free verse and regular metrical poetry. It is an attempt to avoid the chaotic amorphousness of free verse and keep to a regular form based on the fixed number of stresses in each line and part of a line while yet there shall be a great plasticity and variety in all the other elements of poetic rhythm, the number of syllables, the management of the feet, if any, the distribution of the stress-beats, the changing modulation of the rhythm. *In Horis Aeternum* was meant as a first essay in this kind, a very simple and elementary model. The line here is cast into three parts, the first containing two stresses, the second and third each admitting three, four such lines rhymed constituting the stanza ”

“In this scansion as I conceive it, the lines may be analysed into feet, as . . all good rhythm can, but in that case the foot measures must be regarded as a quite subsidiary element without any fixed regularity—just as the (true) quantitative element is treated in ordinary verse. The whole indispensable structure of the lines depends upon stress and they must be read on a different principle from the current view—full value must be given to the true stresses and no fictitious stresses, no weight laid on naturally unstressed syllables should be allowed—that is the most important point.”

“A far sail | on the unchangeable monotone | of a slow slumbering sea. |

.. The beats are distributed at pleasure . sometimes they are close together, sometimes they stand separated by far intervals amid a crowd of short unstressed syllables. Sometimes there is a closely packed movement loosening itself at the end,—

Over its head | like a gold ball, the sun | tossed by the gods in their play. |

Sometimes a loose run gathers itself up in its close into a compact movement:

Here or elsewhere, | poised on the unreachable abrupt | snow-solitary ascent. |

Or any other movement can be chosen which is best suited to the idea or the feeling of the individual line.”

★

★

*Musa Spiritus* and *Bride of the Fire* breathe a common aspiration towards the eternal Light and its expression in time—the one by a grand movement in which the intense is carried in the immense, the other by a poignant turn which

bears the immense in the intense. The former has several lines beginning with a single-syllabled truncated foot (7,11,26,29), and the last line of the final stanza—

Weave from my life His poem of days,  
 His calm pure dawns and his noons of force.  
 My acts for the grooves of His chariot-race,  
 My thoughts for the tramp of His great steeds' course !—

is particularly notable for the heavy thudding "horse-power" in its three closing consecutively stressed monosyllables with their massed "hoof-beat" consonants.

★

★

The fragment in Alexandrines, beginning

I walked beside the waters of a world of light,

is Sri Aurobindo's only attempt in the metre which is the staple one of great French poetry. He has some interesting things to say on this metre : "The difficulty, I suppose, is its normal tendency to fall into two monotonously equal halves while the possible variations on that monotony seem to stumble often into awkward inequalities. The Alexandrine is an admirable instrument in French verse because of the more plastic character of the movement, not bound to its stresses but only to an equality of metric syllables capable of a sufficient variety in the rhythm. In English it does not work so well; a single Alexandrine or an occasional Alexandrine couplet can have a great dignity and amplitude of sweep in English, but a succession fails or has most often failed to impose itself on the ear. All this, however, may be simply because the secret of the right handling has not been found · it is at least my impression that a very good rhythmist with the Alexandrine movement secretly born somewhere in him and waiting to be brought out could succeed in rehabilitating the metre."

His own fragment was offered to a disciple as "a map of possibilities (not quite complete of course) without the use of any but an occasional anapaest." He further wrote about the lines · "Some of these can be differently divided, not the way I have done; it depends much on how one wants to read it. But the main thing is that there can be a variation of even or uneven divisions (of the syllables), the even ones have three varieties, 4-8, 6-6, 8-4, the uneven ones may be 5-7, 7-5, 9-3, or even 3-9. The division may be made by the caesura of a foot, a pause in the sentence or a pause of the voice. If there is

## MOTHER INDIA

a succession of similar lines (4-8, 6-6, 8-4 are always tending to come), then great care must be taken to bring in minor variations so that there may be no sheer monotone.

"This, by the way, is my own theory of the Alexandrine evolved at need. I don't know if it agrees with any current prosody. Perhaps there is not a fixed prosodic theory as the Alexandrine has been left very much in the cold, not having been adopted by any of the great writers."

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*The Dwarf Napoleon*, the poem contrasting Hitler's neurotic demonism to Napoleon's dynamic greatness, is remarkable for not only its incisive psychological analysis but also for the note of prophecy at the end in which is hinted a possibility which at that date, when there was no question of Hitler and Stalin falling out, nobody could envisage—Nazism combated by the greater totalitarian machine and monster of Communism. It is notable too that Sri Aurobindo mentions at the same time "thunderstroke of God", the decisive act of the Divine Power which he saw operating behind the Western democracies in spite of all their defects. One thus may picture Hitler met on two fronts by roughly two forces of an opposite character, either of them stronger in the end than the one of which he was, to the occultist's eye, a channel.

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*The Children of Wotan* catches vividly the perversely religious vision and exultation that was one of the most effective elements in the cult of Nordic race and blood and steely Titanism which Hitler let loose in Germany and swept outward on the war-path.

K. D. SETHNA

## MYSTIC SINGER

I AM a mystic singer  
Moved by a secret will ;  
Beyond the horizon trails  
My song's star-pointed thrill.

A lonely runaway  
From the world's monotone,  
I wait for the Word to rise  
From the heart of the Alone

And shape a new world of song ;  
But often I wait in vain,  
For the music of the soul  
Comes only through flashes of pain.

And yet I know my striving  
For the Unattainable  
Harmony a small seed,  
A promise of thy Will

To make my life a magic  
Expression of its rhyme,  
An imperishable beauty  
Timeless on the edge of Time.

NIROD

## NEW ROADS

### THE CONVOCATION OF THE GODS

#### AGNI

I Agni, Lord of the Eternal Fire,  
Speak from the heart of that undying Flame  
Which burns on the Sunlit Brow of the Supreme  
Golden with Flame-Force I descend the worlds  
Unto the deepest stirrings of the earth—  
I rise from the womb of Matter, shining, free  
In rock and mountain, flame-flower, plant and tree;  
In bird and beast, in woman and in man  
My force is yearnings, longings, hopes, desires—  
Till rising from darkness into the light of Day  
My Will aspires to that immortal state  
Flame-Pure and puissant on the Peaks of God.

I have forged my flaming passions out of Truth  
And fashioned seven tongues of Power and Might,  
And plunged my Flame-Force into Matter's Deep  
To take the Will of God to earth and Man.  
I have blazed a Trail from earth to the Supreme  
For gods to walk on and for man to know  
The Roads which lead to that immortal Bliss  
Through labour, knowledge, love and sacrifice—  
On that high journey of illumined soul  
Where Mitra and Varuna greet the Dawn  
And there unyoke the horses of the Sun  
That man may travel the same Road of Truth  
By which all Powers and the gods draw near  
The Golden Highway of Felicity—  
Where Will and Knowledge seize the soul anew  
To tread the Roads of Immortality.

## NEW ROADS

High and vast I stood in front of the worlds;  
Issuing out of the darkness I came with the Light,  
Across the new-born vistas of the Mind  
Into the Birth of manifested Day.  
I am the Fire-Soul fed with the Sacrifice,  
I am the Priest of the Call—the Pilgrim Rite.  
I am the Energy that built the worlds;  
I am the flame-born lightnings of the skies.  
I am the Fire which burns in the heart of man,  
The first desire made known to living things,  
The first idea born in the thinking mind,  
The intuition of the aspiring soul  
Striving to manifest the ways of Light.  
I am the flame-pure Messenger of the gods;  
I am Agni—Guardian of the immaculate Word;  
I am the Fire—Flame-Will of the Divine.

All life aspires through my upsurging Flame,  
All earthly longing is my secret Rite—  
All yearning for the Bliss that once I knew  
Is Nature's growing to the Light above.  
My flame-born energies first made the worlds  
Of molten matter that devoured the Night.  
My Joy was flung into the boundless Vast  
And Bliss was born into a universe.  
A solar mist was fashioned from a Word,  
A myriad stars formed clouds of growing light  
And light and love aspired to the peaks of God.  
By sheer exuberant will of impassioned Bliss  
I held the inward Smile of the Supreme  
To urge the multitude of fated stars  
Expand beyond the barriers of Time  
To form the Rhythm of Eternity.  
In the Night of all born things I was awake;  
In the depths of darkness did I see the Light;  
In the first beginnings I was the primeval Fire  
Which came to quicken Matter into life  
And shape from naught a human consciousness.  
I am That which binds man to himself and God,  
The flame-uniting power of matter and soul,  
The vinculum between the earth and heaven,

## MOTHER INDIA

The forgotten Birthright of the divine descent  
Preserving in his heart the sacred fane;  
Untouched by death or mortal circumstance,  
I burn in his temple of eternity.  
This I have kept inviolate for the gods  
When earth should be a jar for Heaven's Bliss—  
A vessel to contain the Sacred Wine  
In beings born to Truth and Beauty's Hour.  
That hour has come; my Fire goes missioned down  
Into the depths of the unconscious Night,  
There to awake the sleeping Powers of earth  
To front the flame-vasts of the awakening Dawn.

O gods ! look down upon this spinning globe.  
Set now your gaze upon the growing man  
And see the upsurgings in the nether seas  
Of consciousness. Mark well the hour to Dawn.  
The birds have gathered on the Towers of Thoth.  
The wise men sit around the council fires  
As once they did when old Atlantis died,  
To invoke the gods of some far future dawn.  
Now once again the cycle is complete;  
Awake the golden Eye of the Alone—  
And once again the Touch of the Supreme  
Is traced upon the brow of the Unknown.  
Thrilled to that touch dead craters of the past  
Erupt a plethora of forgotten ills  
As a purge of petty passions and desires  
Surging from depths of the unconscious night—  
A Cain-catharsis of the eternal sin,  
But to those who seek to purify the depths  
Of their own being, a march, on the sacred Roads  
Of Life divine and Immortality.  
Here in the few, humanity's élite,  
At last is recognised a common goal,  
The burning sense of an unaccomplished aim  
Driving them on to an effort unsurpassed  
Of human thought and energy supreme....  
The flames of thought and spirit rise beyond  
The conflagration which destroys a world  
To found a new creation of the Dawn."

## NEW ROADS

He ceased, then from the earth a cry was heard,  
An echoed prayer from all humanity  
Rang out across the battlefields of Time.  
“O Thou great godhead, turn Thy heart to grace  
And let Thy Flame-Force purify the Night  
Of our long yearnings—show Thy golden Face  
That we may find ourselves part of Thy Light.”

NORMAN C. DOWSETT



## BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

**Sri Aurobindo Circle** : Journal of Sri Aurobindo Study Society, Bombay, Thirteenth Number, 1957. Pages 152, price Rs. 7/-

This Journal, delayed in publication this year, appears annually on the 24th of April, the day of the Mother's final arrival in Pondicherry, the day which has now an added high significance because of the Mother's announcement on it last year that the Supramental Manifestation had become a reality, a terrestrial fact, and that a new world had been born. The Master's and the Mother's life-long work—the creation of a new race with Supermind instead of Mind as the dominating consciousness—having acquired a firm foundation, we may now watch out for unique historical developments.

At a time when the writings of Sri Aurobindo have almost all been published, this number of the *Sri Aurobindo Circle* has its special importance inasmuch as we have still in it some of the Master's unpublished letters, elucidating the subtle philosophical points of his Yoga. In addition, there is solid intellectual material in the form of original papers on Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and its relation to other philosophies, as well as articles dealing with poetry, sociology, history, science, mathematics, religion and spirituality.

The present number starts with Sri Aurobindo's letters, answering some questions raised by passages in his *Lights on Yoga*, a book of his letters on practical conduct of the Yoga of Integral Transformation.

Here we find Sri Aurobindo resolving the so-common quarrel between the Personal and the Impersonal Divine. He says that these differences belong to the Overmind creation and become acute "in the more ignorant and more limited and divided Mind", but they are "not contrasted and incompatible" in the supreme Reality.

In another letter, he explains that his statement about "the multiple Divine as an eternal reality" is not "pure Dwaitavada", as the questioner suggests, but "on the contrary a complete Adwaitavada, more complete than Shankara's who splits Brahman into two incompatible principles, the Brahman and a universe of Maya which is not Brahman and yet somehow exists....The Para Shakti and the Maya are also Brahman. Unity and Multiplicity are aspects of the Brahman, just as Personality and Imperonality, Nirguna and Saguna."

Later, the Master explains the status of the Jivatman and the psychic being, and the phenomenon of the vital egoism mixing itself with the realisation of the Jivatman. Further, he speaks of the fate of the ego after death, the nature of the true vital being, and the result of "the taking away of the Force of destruction" in a supramental creation.

Two of the most important articles in this issue are by Kishor Gandhi and Jugal Kishore Mukherji—namely, "The New Humanity" and "Physics, Philosophy and the New Manifestation". They have a direct bearing on the birth of the new world as a result of the Supramental Manifestation, to which we have referred above.

The first article speaks of the "New Humanity" which, said Sri Aurobindo, would be, in the process of evolution, an intermediary race between the present ignorant man and the fully Truth-conscious supramental being. This race, he wrote, would emerge by the creative action of the "Mind of Light", a manifesting product and representative agent of the Supermind, the Truth-Consciousness. This new state of Mind, which Sri Aurobindo mentioned explicitly for the first time in 1950, a few months before his passing away, stands as "the last of a series of descending planes of consciousness in which the Supermind veils itself by a self-chosen limitation or modification of its self-manifesting activities, but its essential character remains the same : there is in it an action of light, of truth, of knowledge in which inconscience, ignorance and error claim no place. All is still a gnostic power and principle. There has been a descent from full Supermind into Mind,... but Mind has still not broken its inherent connection with the supramental principle".

The author, referring to the novel emergence or evolution, says : "To understand the process of this evolutionary change in mind it is necessary to fix the location of the Mind of Light in the order of the planes which the supermind has built up in its involutionary descent into inconscience prior to the evolutionary ascent out of that inconscience by a succession of stages. For, actually, the Mind of Light is a grade in this involutionary descent as well as a stage in this evolutionary ascent ; in both cases its position is intermediary between the supermind and the mind of ignorance." He further writes that, in the descending order which "begins with Overmind and proceeds downward to the planes which have been named by Sri Aurobindo as Intuition, Illumined Mind and Higher Mind", the Mind of light is the "culminating" or final plane, below which "the link with the supermind is cut off and its gnostic character lost."

One wonders whether, in the hierarchy of planes downward to the mind, the Mind of Light is a last *pre-existent* plane, always there between the

Higher Mind and the mentality proper. If it is pre-existent like the rest of the hierarchy, how is it that Sri Aurobindo never listed it up to 1950, and how is it that he speaks of it as being the result of the Supermind's descent upon earth ? Just as the other planes could manifest by their own descent, this too would manifest if it were like them, but actually it is only after the supramental descent upon earth as an event crowning the descent of the other planes that the Mind of Light becomes possible. There is also the fact that the planes between Mind and Supermind have been said by Sri Aurobindo to have descended long ago, but neither he nor the Mother has included the Mind of Light among the old descended powers. Moreover, Sri Aurobindo describes it as manifesting in man the Truth-Consciousness in essential purity though in a limited and progressively growing form. No above-mind principle, short of the Supermind, can by manifestation in the human mentality keep utterly free of any invasion of ignorance and possess in essential purity, however self-limitedly, the Truth-Consciousness. Hence, though the Mind of Light, when manifested in man, seems to stand between the ignorant mentality and the Higher Mind as if it were the last of the above-mind levels, it must be different in quality from them and potentially superior to them by being a direct and not, like them, an indirect aspect of the Supermind. Otherwise how are we to understand the Mother's statement of 1951 apropos the realisation of the Mind of Light as the immediate result of Sri Aurobindo's sacrifice in 1950: "...The physical mind receiving the supramental light Sri Aurobindo called the Mind of Light" ?

These questions may be considered legitimate especially as Sri Aurobindo's series of articles on the Mind of Light was not completed and he was speaking of this state of consciousness as a development in several stages in a future humanity and not as a stage in the Integral Yoga realised after the Overmind had already descended into the physical mentality and after the Supermind itself had descended into the mind proper and the vital proper. But we may grant that if the extant articles by Sri Aurobindo are taken by themselves and in isolation from pointers found elsewhere or from a few which are not very prominent in these very articles, the general impression of the status and power of the Mind of Light is well-nigh the one which the author in the present compilation has lucidly and systematically offered us.

The writer of the second article considers the fact of the New (Supramental) Manifestation a challenge to science which seems to produce the "illusion that a truly scientific attitude is synonymous with the materialistic conception of Reality—a challenge because this manifestation is not only an occult fact but a terrestrial reality which has added a new element and a new principle in the universal creation. Says the Mother in one of her *Talks*, "Crea-

tion is the result not only of combinations on the surface but also of combinations in the depths of this surface... Each time a new element is introduced into the sum-total of possible combinations, it is as it were a tearing of its limits; the introduction of something that effaces the past limits, brings in new possibilities into play, multiplies indefinitely the old possibilities....It is evident that the modern scientific perception is much nearer to something that corresponds to the universal Reality than the perception, say, of the Stone Age;... but even this will be completely transcended, surpassed and probably upset by the intrusion of something which was not in the universe and has not been studied so far. This change, this sudden mutation in the universal elements will very certainly bring a kind of chaos in our perceptions, but out of it a new knowledge will arise. This, in a most general way, will be the result of the New Manifestation."

In Mukherji's view it is no real characteristic of science to remain tied down to experimental procedure, rather it has to become highly speculative in order to be truly experimental. He says that the scientist has "to build up, step by step, a colossal theoretical structure with concepts and nomenclatures which are his 'free creations' with no guarantee of their correspondence to physical existence *an sich* (in itself)". Science and Philosophy are not contradictions. Rather the scientist can truly fulfil his object only "by philosophizing outside his laboratory", so that his quest can have a free approach and penetration to the yet unknown principles, laws and domains of reality.

A fascinating, vivid and almost poetic piece, written as if in a mood of sheer inspiration and ecstasy, is a translation by K. D. Sethna of the original French article on the Ashram of Pondicherry by the well-known *littérateur* Maurice Magre, published in a book as early as 1936.

K. D. Sethna's penetratingly illustrative essay on Mallarmé, continued from the last issue of the Journal, takes one, as if by hand, into the French poet's small-wide world of subtle and enigmatic figures and symbols, makes one glimpse the "wizardry of his mystic art" and shows him as one of the early fore-runners of what Sri Aurobindo calls "the future poetry".

Sreekrishna Prasad seems to have a special knack to explain poetry. In a suggestive *exposé* of some of G. M. Hopkins' famous poems, the writer brings home to the reader the new kind of soul-element introduced by the poet into modern poetry and made effective among contemporary trends by a special device of alliteration, inner rhymes, unusual metre and by the use of seemingly "unpoetic" common homely words, expressions and images.

We have also a few fine poems by Ashram poets, Romen, Har Krishan Singh and Norman Dowsett.

Then there are philosophical articles—"Sri Aurobindo and the Theory

of Emergent Evolution” by K. C. Pati, “Spiritual Evolution” by Arindam Basu, and “Kierkegaard” by E.F.F. Hill.

In what is really the first instalment of his article, Pati excellently explains the theory of emergent evolution, a new modern concept in the philosophy of evolution, whose most important exponents are Lloyd Morgan and Dr. S. Alexander in the West and Sri Aurobindo in the East. This more comprehensive idea of the evolution holds that evolution is emergent and creative and not merely repetitive and calculated as held in the Teleological Theory or mechanical as according to the Biological Theory or else the Cosmological Theory of Herbert Spencer. In the theory of Emergent Evolution, the emergent is not a new-combination or a regrouping of physico-chemical events but a novel and unique principle, bringing out qualities and faculties of a quite different order.

Arindam Basu’s learned essay explains, in general, Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy of Spiritual Evolution, as if completing the unconcluded above-mentioned article.

The piece on Kierkegaard is a high intellectual exercise and a feast. It puts the Danish philosopher’s vast metaphysics in a nut-shell. Of all the modern philosophers, Kierkegaard is the greatest single influence on Western Philosophy and, because of his original contributions, he has become a revolutionary force in the philosophic world.

Another interesting article, by Gabriel German, links up the old Greek *hesychasm* movement of mystic spirituality to the Indian Yogic movement. The writer traces some similarities between this mysticism and Sri Aurobindo’s Yoga.

The concluding part of the Journal consists of a translation of four French addresses delivered at the Sri Aurobindo Memorial Convention at the Sorbonne, Paris, on 5th December 1955, by four eminent personalities, Prof. Challaye, Governor Baron, Prof H. W. Schneider and M. J. Rueff, describing Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy and giving their impressions of their personal contact with Sri Aurobindo and the Mother during their visits to the Pondicherry Ashram.

There are two frontispiece photographic pictures, one a lovely colour-print of the Mother and the other a black-and-white reproduction of the symbol of the Journal made in flower-design before Sri Aurobindo’s Photograph in the Ashram Playground.

H. K. S.

**Slokas of Guru Teg Bahadur.** By *Har Krishan Singh*. Published by Sri Aurobindo Yog-Mandir, UNA (Punjab). Price 35 nP.

The rise of Sikhism in the darkest days of India's decline proves the immortal spirit of India's culture and civilisation. It is a miracle how India preserved her soul under the tremendous impact of Islam. Guru Teg Bahadur's life and teachings show how this miracle was actually accomplished. India's decline was not only political subjection, there was a great fading of religion which was the very basis of her life and culture. People had lost the soul of religion and were hugging the dead forms and conventional observances as the true *dharma*. From such a degraded condition they could be easily converted by an aggressive religion like Islam, especially when it was backed by absolute political power represented by the Muslim rulers of India. The need was to bring out the essential spiritual truths of Hinduism and put them in such a form as might easily appeal to the masses. This was done by the medieval saints of India, among whom Nanak and his successors played a prominent part.

The Slokas of Teg Bahadur, translated into English quatrains in this small brochure, show how wonderfully the deep truths of the Upanishads, Puranas and the Gita as well as the spiritual philosophies of Sankara and Ramanuja can be expressed in simple couplets each complete in itself. One need not be a philosopher or a learned man—the Slokas directly touch the soul and bring illumination to the mind and the heart. Indeed Sikhism is not a religion in the ordinary sense, it does not consist of elaborate dogmas, rites or ceremonies. These things to which men are attached in the name of religion actually keep them away from God, the true goal of human life. It is through sincere devotion and love that one can have the realisation of God and all men should practise this without wasting time in superficial distracting things:

Thy mind with vanity unchaste,  
All fasting, alms and pilgrimaging  
Are vain, says Nanak, as engaging  
Of elephants in bath goes waste.

Elephants roll in mud and dust after taking a bath, so all their bathing is useless; in the same manner all the religious rites of the Hindus as well as of the Muslims go in vain; one should move straight towards God-realisation through surrender, devotion and love. This is a teaching which is needed very much at the present moment, as humanity can be saved only by its getting out of the current religions and entering into true spirituality. Sikhism did not succeed in leading mankind to the spiritual age, as the time was not yet ready for that and the greatest spiritual truths were yet to be discovered; but

the attempt came in right time to save Hinduism from being swept away by Islam. For that, however, spiritual teachings alone were not sufficient, martyrdom was needed and the Sikhs were the foremost in giving that price, as we find it illustrated in the life of Teg Bahadur himself. We learn from the short introduction that Kashmiri Pundits approached Teg Bahadur to devise means for saving Hinduism from the onslaught of the Mohamedans. When he was absorbed in thought on this matter, his eight-year old son Govind came in enquiring about his father's sad mood. The Guru spoke of the gravity of the situation and told him that God demanded the sacrifice of a saint-soul to end the Muslim Rulers' tyranny and that he was worrying as to who could be such a chaste and spotless soul and where to find him. But immediate was the reply of Govind : "Who is purer and more spotless than yourself, Father ? Could there be any greater realised person than your own self ?" This reply solved the two problems which were engaging the mind of Teg Bahadur. Though he was a great saint, he had not the egoism to think that he was saintly enough to be the martyr. Confirmation from Govind solved this problem. The other preoccupation was : who would take up the reins of Guruship and lead the people at that critical juncture ? Govind's bold reply confirmed Teg Bahadur's own expectations from a son of his. So when he set out for Delhi on Aurangzeb's summons to explain certain false charges levelled against him, he went fully prepared for martyrdom so that Hinduism might be saved.

The original Panjabi couplets form the concluding part of Guru Granth Sahib, so that readers can form an idea of the holy book of the Sikhs and we are glad to learn from the preface that the author has planned to translate the whole of the Guru Granth Sahib into English rhymed verse ; he is no doubt a fit person to do it. We may give a few instances of his fitness :

O mind, thou sangst not Gobind's praise,  
All life goes vain thus, Nanak says ;  
Hymn Hari,—let thy love be such  
As fishes' love for water's touch...

Strength comes, bonds break down, all avails  
When God bursts forth through million veils ;  
Says Nanak, lies all in Thy Hands,  
Alone Thy self true helper stands...

The Name is lodged all deep in me,  
Nothing is there to equal It ;  
Remembering Ram all troubles flit.  
O let me have a glimpse of Thee.

A.B.

## IS OUR CHRONOLOGY FOR ANCIENT INDIA CORRECT?

### *Some Criticisms and Suggestions*

14

THE way seems wide open now for considering the suggestion caught from the Puranas that we should look for Xandrames and Sandrocottus in the period following the end of the Andhra Satavahana dynasty. And the question meeting us at the very outset is whether an equivalent is discoverable in the Puranas for the name "Xandrames".

We have noted already the opinion of scholars that Xandrames answers to some such name as Chandramas. Now we have several kings in Indian history who bear the name Chandra, but none of them is known to have specifically been called also Chandramas. The two forms are ultimately synonyms, yet the fact remains that only the shorter form has been used for these kings. And there is the additional fact that even if the subtle distinction between the two forms makes no real difference none of the kings named Chandra can serve as a candidate for identification with Xandrames.

At least no scholar after the early years of research into Sandrocottus has maintained, while identifying Sandrocottus with Chandragupta Maurya, the thesis that Xandrames and Sandrocottus were one and the same king and that therefore Xandrames can be equated with the Maurya Chandragupta. The Chandragupta who belonged to the Panduvamsi dynasty of Mahakosala has never even figured in the Sandrocottus-controversy. The last of the Andhras, Chandrasri Satakarni, according to any Puranic chronology, antedates the time of Alexander: even the *Kaliyugarājavṛttānta*, the doubtful composition by which many opponents of the current chronology set store, places him in 337-334 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Chandragupta I of the Gupta dynasty is claimed by most of these opponents, notably by Mankad,<sup>2</sup> as the original of Xandrames. Some points are there to raise a presumption that this identification, which Puranic chronology would not distinctly taboo, may work, and Mankad has made as splendid a use of them as possible, but the source from which most of his

<sup>1</sup> Sastri, *The Kings of Magadha*, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> *Puranic Chronology*, pp. 259-267.



advantage derives brings also a serious disadvantage. Much of his argumentation depends on identifying this Chandragupta with the character named Chandasena in the play *Kamudīmahotsava* where Chandasena is of a low caste and yet the “adopted son” of the “old” king Sundaravarman of Magadha, and makes an alliance with a Lichchhavi princess and conquers Pataliputra with the aid of her people. Mankad rightly emphasises that in the whole history of Magadha we know of no other king than the founder of the Gupta dynasty to have attained supreme power with the help of the Lichchhavis : it is impossible not to identify the hero Chandasena with that monarch. Unfortunately, an equally important event goes against the identification. As Mookerji<sup>1</sup> has remarked, the family of Chandasena is said in the play to have been completely exterminated (*Vatasāmubandah nihata Chandasena-hatakah*) at his deposition by Kalyanavarman, the son of Sundaravarman : a glorious line of Guptas, on the contrary, followed their founder on the Magadhan throne. Nor could the Guptas have been considered as low as Chandasena is in the play, totally unfit to be a king (*kāraskarah sa khalu samprati pārthivānām* and *kutredrasavarnasyāsyā rājāśrīh*) : they may have been, as Mookerji concedes, of Kāraskara caste, but as Chandragupta’s father and grandfather were already rajas on a small scale his coming to the throne of Magadha cannot be seen as unimaginable and shocking. If Chandasena has a background of history, as he certainly seems to have, he does not point wholly to Chandragupta : he is Chandragupta only in part. Besides, Xandrames had a barber father who could scarcely stave off hunger and made his living at last by getting employed by a king to ply his profession in the royal household. Chandragupta’s father who ruled as an accredited raja over a territory, even if most probably on a feudatory basis, can hardly be visualised in the role of a starving barber saved from misery by a king. The equation Xandrames=Chandragupta=Chandasena is not quite convincing.

Of course, if we can hit upon no better theory about Xandrames on the strength of the Puranic chronology, Mankad’s alternative to the current belief that Xandrames can be equated with Dhana Nanda, the predecessor of Chandragupta Maurya, is the least untenable. It is, however, possible to find a more fitting candidate than Mankad’s, a candidate through whom, more than through Chandra of the Guptas, the description given of Chandasena seems applicable in several respects to Xandrames and who, unlike the founder of the Guptas, is directly mentioned in the older Puranic literature against which the criticisms levelled at the *Kahyugarājavṛttānta* cannot be hurled.

The greatest initial recommendation here is that this candidate whose

<sup>1</sup> *The Gupta Empire*, p. 14.

historicity is not doubted by modern scholars bears a name which is the only one in the entire history of India to approximate to Chandramas. And the next recommendation, equally momentous, is that he occurs exactly in the period put by the Puranas between the Andhras and Chandragupta I of the Gupta dynasty. Pargiter<sup>1</sup> gives us, in a list of Naga kings in the Vayu Purana, the phrase :

*Sadāchandras tu Chandrāmśa dvitīyo Nakhavāms tathā.*

In the third word we have surely a name sounding very much like "Xandrames". The complete phrase is rendered by Pargiter<sup>2</sup> : "Sadāchandra and Chandrāmśa who will be a second Nakhavant". He cites<sup>3</sup> in a footnote a variant from another copy of the Vayu Purana for the qualifying words: the variant runs, "Nakhapāna-jah", meaning for Pargiter "Nakhapana's offspring".<sup>4</sup> He sees in "Nakhavān" or "Nakhapāna" the Puranic version of "Nahapāna", the name of the Saka ruler belonging to the Kshaharata family whom Gautamiputra Satakarni destroyed. Modern scholars concur with him here, but not with his distinction between Sadāchandra and Chandrāmśa. They rightly see in "tu" a sign of identity : if "cha" had been used the names would have applied to different persons. So they<sup>5</sup> speak of "Sadāchandra, surnamed Chandrāmśa, who is described as a second Nakhavat". But, never having questioned Sir William Jones's hypothesis about Sandrocottus, they have never connected Chandrāmśa with Xandrames.

The qualifying phrase about Chandrāmśa can itself be a very important prop to the identification with Xandrames if we reject Pargiter's gloss and disconnect the words from Nahapana the Saka king. First we must get the central term right : the Puranic term is really not "Nakhavant" or "Nakhavat", it is "Nakhavān" and Pargiter<sup>6</sup> himself in the introductory note to the passage uses this very form. Now, it is extremely suggestive that a phrase about one whose name and Puranic chronological position lead us to identify him with Xandrames whose father was a barber should have the term "Nakha" in it.<sup>7</sup> "Nakha" means "nail" and in India a barber has to deal with nail-cutting no less than with hair-cutting and actually one of the terms for "barber" is "Nakha-

<sup>1</sup> *The Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. 49

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49, footnote II.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, footnote 24

<sup>5</sup> *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 169.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 48

<sup>7</sup> I owe this observation to Dr. M. Venkataraman of Madras University.

kutta”<sup>1</sup> (“nail-cutter”). In Nakhavān, therefore, we are invited, as it were, to read the barber-idea. But it is apparently fused with another notion. The word signifies “one who has nails” and with “Nakhakutta” in our mind we may interpret “having” in a double sense so that the name would imply “one who at the same time possesses nails to cut with and has nails in his possession by cutting them”—that is to say, a nail-cutter who wounds and tears his customer; or, if we wish to reflect in brief the pun which appears to be in the Sanskrit *vān* in this context, we may say “a barbed barber”. Such a *slesha* or *double entendre* is just what would be appropriate in the case of Chandrāmśa if he were Xandrames, the son of the barber who, as Diodorus and Curtius tell us, killed his royal patron and that patron’s children. If, further, we think of Chandrāmśa as the “second Nakhavān”, we get precisely the suggestion of sonhood.

In the variant “Nakhapāna-jah” which Pargiter renders by “Nakhapāna’s offspring” we have the same suggestion; and the barber-idea is even more evident, for, one of the meanings of “pāna”<sup>2</sup> is “protection” and “Nakhapāna” would connote “Nail-protection”. But to get the full appositeness out of this word we must glance at the grammatical side of it. “Pāna” has the neuter gender : as it is, we cannot apply it to a man. It is a word like “shāsana”, meaning mastery or subdual, which also being neuter cannot go into a personal name unless there is “ḥ” after it, as in the well-known name of Indra, “Pākashāsanah”, which that god carries as the subduer of or master over the demon Pāka. So the one whose offspring is Chandrāmśa must bear the name “Nakhapānah”. Our text does not contradict such an assumption, since the only instance in which his name appears is the word “Nakhapāna-jah” and, when there is already “ḥ” at the end of a word, Sanskrit grammar will not allow another in the midst of the expression. The absence of “ḥ” after “pāna” is just what we should expect if the original name were “Nakhapānah” to personify “nail-protection”. The purpose of employing this term instead of “Nakhakutta” would seem to be the demarcating of the barber in question from others of his profession : here was a barber who rose to a special post in the household where he worked and thus deserved a distinguishing appellation. And this compound appellation too may be taken in an ironic double sense to yield the idea of protecting nails by means of nails. The aptness of the double sense will at once be seen if we remember Curtius. The father of Xandrames was really the nailed protector of nails, for he clove his way through everything to the supreme authority while doing his barber’s job.

<sup>1</sup> Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 524, Apte, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 605.

<sup>2</sup> Monier-Williams, *Op. cit.*, p. 613.

Chandrāmśa's geographical position too is in keeping with the rest of the evidence. The Puranas, listing the Nāgas among the dynasties mentioned after the list of the Andhra Satavahanas, make them flourish at Vidisa, Kanti-pura, Mathura and Padmavati.<sup>1</sup> The prevalence of Naga rule over considerable portions of northern India in the post-Andhra and pre-Gupta period to which the Puranas refer is also attested by epigraphic and numismatic finds.<sup>2</sup> It also seems that the Nagas specified in the Puranas as rulers of one or another centre were really master over more than one centre and that the object of mentioning this or that centre was to denote the home or the principal city of each Naga. Thus, "some coins bearing the name of *Maharāja Gaṇendra* or *Gaṇapa* have been discovered at Padmāvati and also at Vidisa and Mathurā",<sup>3</sup> which shows that this king of Padmavati may have extended his influence over the rest of the Naga centres. Again, the Vakataka records which mention Maharaja Bhavanaga describe him as belonging to the family of the Bharasivas "who were besprinkled on the forehead with the pure water of the Bhāgirathī that had been obtained by their valour". the implication is "that their home was away from the Bhāgirathī (Gaṅgā) but that they extended their power as far as the valley of that river."<sup>4</sup> Another king, Virasena, who has left numismatic and epigraphic traces, is believed to have been a Naga with his capital at Mathura and with sovereignty over also Bulandshahr, Etah and Farrukhabad Districts as well as parts of the Punjab.<sup>5</sup> The Nagas, whether centred at Vidisa, Kanti-pura, Mathura or Padmavati, can very well be considered rulers of the Gangaridae—the people along the course of the Ganges—and Chandrāmśa the Naga may be equated on geographical grounds with Xandrames who was definitely king of the Gangaridae though in face of Alexander's threat he may have also been the chief leader of their neighbours and allies, the Prasii, and consequently got reported as also their King to the Greeks.

In the Gangetic valley west of Magadha the Nagas are known to have been the immediate predecessors of the Guptas. Two of the Aryavarta kings whom Samudragupta claims to have "extirpated" were Nagas : Ganpati-naga and Nagasena who appear to have been a couple out of the nine Naga kings said by the Puranas to have ruled at Padmavati.<sup>6</sup> Even during the reign of the Gupta dynasty the Nagas continued in the province over which Xandrames ruled. Samudragupta's son, Changragupta II, married Kuberanaga who was

<sup>1</sup> *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 169.

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

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

a Naga princess. "A Nāga chief named Śarvanāga was appointed a *vishaya-pati* (provincial governor) and was ruling the Antarvedī district (between the Gangā and the Yamunā and between Prayāga and Hardwār) under Skandagupta..."<sup>1</sup>

Everything favours our giving to the extraordinarily close correspondence between "Chandrāmśa" and "Xandrames" the utmost value it deserves on its own merits. We have even an Indian account indirectly connecting Chandrāmśa with such circumstances as the Greeks record in regard to the love-intrigue by the father of Xandrames and to the relation between Xandrames and the king whose throne he occupied as well as between him and the people he ruled over. It is the play *Kaumudīmahotsava*. This play strikes us as making in its villain a curious mixture of Chandrāmśa and Chandragupta of the Guptas. The very first component—Chanda—of the villain's name is a common factor. It has served as a fusing centre of information about both these personages. The second component of the name is allied to some appellations taken by history to be of Naga kings : Nāgasena and Vīrasena, whom we have already mentioned. Even the names Sundaravarman and Kalyānavarman of the kings who were the father and son between whom Chandasena wedged himself are not foreign altogether to Naga families : the successor of Chandrāmśa in the Puranas is Dhanadharman known also as Dharmavarmā.<sup>2</sup> Even the first component of Dhanadharman is akin to that of Kalyanavarman, both referring to wealth and prosperity. Now, if Chandrāmśa is Chandasena, on one side of the latter's composite figure, the former gets immediately into a complex of events reminiscent of the circumstances to which we have referred.

The story of Chandasena's being the adopted son of Sundaravarman who, as Mankad<sup>3</sup> reminds us, took him into the family fold in a moment of weakness, not knowing his own mind (*svavabhāvāviditayā*), and who is positively called "old" agrees with the fact related by Diodorus that Xandrames was the illegitimate son of the "old king's" wife and with the fact related by Curtius that Xandrames's barber father, after winning the affection of the queen, "was by her influence advanced to too near a place in the confidence of the reigning monarch" whose mind he evidently could then sway. Also matching the information conveyed by both Diodorus and Curtius that Xandrames, though king, was "held in no respect" as he was "a man of the very meanest condition"—an information supported by Plutarch who speaks of "the meanness of his

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> Pargiter, *Op. cit.*, p. 419, footnote 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Puranic Chronology*, pp. 263, 261.

origin”—we have, as again Mankad<sup>1</sup> tells us, the phrases about Chandasena on pages 29-30 in the *Kaumudīmahotsava* : “*kāraskarah sa khalu samprati pārthivānām*” and “*kutredṛsavarnasyāśya rājaśriḥ*”, which mean that Chandasena was of the very low caste Kāraskara, a *varṇa* considered quite unworthy of royalty. Even in the mention of an alliance with a Lichchhavi princess by Chandasena to seize the throne of Magadha and slay the king we have not merely a straight reference to Chandra of the Guptas who acquired great power by a matrimonial alliance with a Lichchhavi princess but also an oblique one to Xandrames whose father killed his king after seizing power by a liaison with a lady of the royal household who in addition to being the king’s wife might well have been a princess of the Lichchhavis. Further, the word “treacherously”, used by Diodorus and Curtius about the slaughter of the king by the barber, finds, according to Mankad,<sup>2</sup> a general echo in the play’s expression “*svayam magadhakulam vyapadiśannapi magadhakulvairbhīr lichchhaviḥ saha sambandham kṛtyā labdhāvasarah*”, suggesting that Chandasena’s siege of Pataliputra was regarded as treacherous. Finally, the feelings and wishes of the people over whom the usurper Xandrames ruled, as expressed in Plutarch’s making Sandrocottus declare that “Alexander could easily have taken possession of the whole country since the king was hated and despised by his subjects”, are reflected in the drama’s condemnation of Chandasena as a usurper whom the citizens of Magadha could not tolerate and drove to an exile’s death and whose family was totally exterminated.<sup>3</sup> Of course, the drama has, in the midst of its similarities, some details at variance with what we have inferred from the Greeks about Xandrames, king of the Gangaridae—particularly the milieu of Magadha and the stage set at Pataliputra—but the general impression we get of the part identity of the two figures is overwhelming. And Magadha and Pataliputra can easily be explained on our remembering that Chandasena is in part a representation of Chandra the first Gupta and that Xandrames himself seems to have ruled over a section of the Prasii.

Thus the equation of Chandrāmśa with Xandrames is, in all essentials, as complete as can be desired for historical purposes.

(To be continued)

K. D. SETHNA

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261.

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

<sup>3</sup> Mookerji, *The Gupta Empire*, pp. 13-14.

# Students' Section

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## COLLECTIVE Gnostic LIFE

(An Answer-Paper from the Philosophy Class of the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre)

*Q. "Umty, mutuality and harmony must...be the inescapable law of a common or collective gnostic life. What forms it might take would depend upon the will of evolutionary manifestation of the Supernature, but this would be its general character and principle."*

*Explain and bring out the implications of the law of common or collective gnostic life.*

The implications involved in the above statement are revolutionary in the extreme to our present consciousness and mode of life as finite beings. The very concept of gnostic life, whether individual or collective, is difficult of understanding by our ordinary mentality. And yet a certain delineation can be made which would make us more receptive to its realisation when that may take place. Drawing upon Sri Aurobindo's own exposition, we shall briefly compare the two entirely different orders of things that are constituted by the conditions of gnostic life and by those of our present human existence.

The fundamental law of a common or collective gnostic life must obviously constitute itself on the same principle as the life of the gnostic individual, just as the present-day civilisation is an outcome and a product of the consciousness of man as he is today. There is always a necessary and inevitable correspondence between the two. The accord and concord of the whole being with itself and with the being of others, which is natural to the gnostic individual, would translate itself spontaneously into a life of unity, mutuality and harmony for the gnostic collectivity. And all this would evidently flow from the innate character of the gnostic consciousness which is the basis for both.

We may, therefore, first enquire into the nature and action of this consciousness, which, to judge from the results that follow from it, is so different—almost the very antithesis—of our normal mental consciousness.

This gnostic consciousness is fundamentally a Truth-consciousness which has a direct and inherent awareness of the truth of being and the truth of things. It is two-fold in character. It is a consciousness of inherent self-knowledge and, by identity with self and world, of intimate world-knowledge, but this is not a purely ideative knowledge, it is not a consciousness observing, forming ideas, it is a light of consciousness that is self-effectuating. This is the one all-important attribute of the gnostic consciousness. There is here no disparity, no conflict between Knowledge and Will which is so baneful an appendage of the ordinary rational consciousness. On the other hand, the gnostic consciousness possesses inherently an identity of Knowledge and Will acting as a single power in perfect unison with the total truth of things. There is here a wholeness of sight and action, a unity of knowledge with knowledge, a reconciliation of all that seems contrary in our mental seeing and knowing. Such a consciousness must necessarily assure a symphonic movement, a movement of unity, mutuality and harmony for it is aware of the oneness of all beings, aware of its concordant totality and the meaning and meeting-point of its diversities. For oneness here does not imply a mechanical sameness such as the mind would be prone to construct, but really implies the living perception of the one Infinite in all, as the common self of all, behind and supporting the diversities of manifestation.

This symphonic movement is a natural corollary of the gnostic consciousness, for here each finds his complete self and all find their own truth and the harmony of their different motions in that which exceeds them and of which they are the expression. In our separative consciousness of the present, we live in a world full of conflict, a conflict in ourselves and a conflict of the individual with the world around him. But in the gnostic consciousness there will be an entire accord between the different members of the being of the individual, the mind, heart, life and body. All would be one unified consciousness acting as a whole in a spontaneous perception of unity and totality. What seems contradictory in our mental experience, is there naturally fitted and rightly accommodated, for each has its self-truth and its truth of relation with others and that is self-existent to the gnostic consciousness. This direct truth-contact and perceptive truth-sense will be the mainspring of action both in the gnostic individual and the gnostic collectivity.

We may further enquire how this gnostic consciousness and its symphonic movement would work itself out in the life, nature and action of the gnostic individual and the gnostic collectivity.



The gnostic individual living in the consciousness of the Infinite will create his own self-manifestation as an individual, but he will do so as a centre of a larger universality and yet at the same time a centre of the transcendence. He would thus combine in himself all the three aspects of the Spirit. As a universal individual, all his action would be in harmony with the cosmic action, but, owing to his transcendence, it would not be limited by a temporary formulation. His universality would embrace even the Ignorance round him in his larger self, but, while intimately aware of it, he would not be affected by it and would express his gnostic truth in his own way of being and action. His life would be a free harmonic expression of the self and since his highest self would be one with the Supreme, his knowledge, life and action would be of the nature of a large and unbound but perfect order. His individual nature would be nothing separate : it would be an outflowing of the supreme Nature. In him Knowledge and Will would be one and could not be in conflict as is so pitifully the case in the mental consciousness of today. Truth of spirit and life become one and cannot be at variance. In the self-effectuation of his being there can be no strife or disparity between the spirit and the members. It is a self-determining knowledge freely and spontaneously obedient to self-truth and the total truth of Being that would be the law of his existence. Freedom and order will not be for the gnostic individual two contrary or incompatible principles, for they are to him inseparable aspects of the inner spiritual truth. Thus there will be in his life an entire accord between the free self-expression of his individual being and his automatic obedience to the law of the supreme and universal Truth of things. These will be to him interconnected sides of the one Truth which he seeks to fulfil and in which lies his own highest fulfilment also. According to his place in the collectivity, he will know how to lead or rule and also to subordinate himself and both will be to him an equal source of delight.

The gnostic individual will not act by mental idea or in subjection to any inferior impulse : each of his steps will be dictated by an innate spiritual vision, a comprehensive and exact penetration into the truth of all and the truth of each thing. He acts according to inherent reality, for everywhere he sees a divine working and his action is the sum of what goes out from him of the inner Light, Will, Force that works in him and in all. This movement thus ensures a total and integral unity, mutuality and harmony in his action and relations with the rest of reality. Because he enjoys in his life a consciousness of the self of others, a consciousness of their mind, life and physical being which he feels as if they were his own, and sees the total scheme of things, his action would not be separative, limited and disparate. He would not act out of a surface sentiment of love or sympathy or in obedience to an imposed law of conduct,

for he has transcended the lower measure of mental standards and can act in the all-wise freedom and truth-creation of the Spirit.

To sum up we may say that to the gnostic individual all life would have the sense of the Conscious Being. His own life and all its thoughts, feelings, acts would be filled for him with that significance and built upon that foundation of its reality. He would feel the presence of the Divine in every centre of his consciousness, in every vibration of his life-force, in every cell of his body. He would live and act in an entire transcendent freedom, a complete joy of the spirit, an entire identity with the cosmic self and a spontaneous sympathy with all in the universe. Everything would be included in his own universality. Being universal, he would be free in the universe; being an individual, he would still not be limited by a separative individuality. His perceptions would not admit of any confusions or clash for his own life and the world-life would be to him a perfect work of art.

And yet the different gnostic individuals would not be cast according to a single type of individuality; each would be different from the other, a unique formation of the Being, although one with all the rest in a manner dynamic and effective. Just as the gnostic individual would be an individual soul-power of the Truth-consciousness, so also will a gnostic collectivity be a collective soul-power of the Truth-consciousness. The inherent status of consciousness is identical in the two. There would be the same integration of life and action in unison, the same realised and conscious unity of being, the one and mutual truth-vision and truth-sense of self and each other, the same truth-action in the relation of each with each and all with all. There are a few fundamental distinctions which are implied in the very nature of a gnostic collectivity as contrasted with the present order of collective life, which may be specially made.

In our present human existence we have a physical collectivity which is held together by the common physical life-fact and all that naturally arises from it, a community of interests, a common civilisation and culture, a common social law, an economic association with the ideals of a collective ego and certain individual ties woven in between. Or, where there is a difference in these things, we have opposition and conflict or else a difficult and precarious temporary accommodation. This would not be the gnostic way of life. For there what would hold all together would be a common consciousness consolidating a common life. All will be united by the evolution of the Truth-Consciousness in them. In this fact is founded the fundamental and spontaneous law of unity, mutuality and harmony which would later translate itself into all the details of the life and action of the gnostic collectivity.

Freedom and order would not be incompatible and mutually exclusive

principles as they are today. Unity would not be born of a mentally constructed and laboriously upheld idea of sameness. Harmony would not spring from an increasing standardisation, would not be a pouring into the common mould. These are the ways and doubtful achievements of the mental man. In the gnostic collectivity, there would be no reason for the existence of these limitations, these partial perceptions, these perverted representations. Freedom and order would be closely linked principles of the action of the one Truth. Unity would be spontaneous and self-aware, a unity that provides for a considerable free diversity between different gnostic communities and in the self-expression of the individuals of a single community. But here this free diversity would not be synonymous with chaos or discord, for a diversity of one Truth of knowledge and one Truth of life would be a correlation and not an opposition. Harmony would be the spontaneous expression of this unity in multiplicity, of a various manifestation of oneness. This spontaneous expression presupposes a mutuality of consciousness aware of other consciousness by a direct inner contact and interchange.

A great harmonised variation would thus be a necessary element of a common or collective gnostic life. But how would a gnostic collectivity deal with the mind of ignorance still around it in the world ? It would relate in the light of the integral Reality its own truth of being and the truth of being that is behind the Ignorance and, founding all relations upon the common spiritual unity, would accept and harmonise the manifested difference. The gnostic influence would affirm always a symphonic effectuation and impose progressively its own law of unity and harmony on the lower existence.

We have seen how the gnostic consciousness, on account of the spiritual unity inherent in its nature, will bring inevitably its life-result of unity, mutuality and harmony. A collectivity embodying that consciousness will naturally manifest the same attributes in its life and action. We have already observed that the play of a free diversity in unity is the characteristic feature of the gnostic consciousness. Thus a particular common or collective gnostic life may take whatever outward form is determined for it by the Supernature in its evolutionary unfoldment, but its general character and principle would all the time be a necessary expression of the fundamental law of unity, mutuality and harmony inherent in its very consciousness.

ASTER

## THE SRI AUROBINDO CENTRES IN INDIA

### A REPORT WITH SOME REFLECTIONS

(Continued from the July issue)

It has been a privileged experience to visit scores of Sri Aurobindo centres, in city, town and village throughout India. One comes away with the warm and grateful feeling that this is indeed "the beloved community."

The common bond in this *satsanga* (fellowship), the golden thread that runs through the centres everywhere, is devotion to the Divine in the Master and the Mother. True, most centres have started as Sri Aurobindo Study Societies, but they have studied to some purpose ! They have found that they cannot long ponder *The Life Divine* without coming to terms with the divine life. Those in whom the flame of devotion has been kindled pass from study to sadhana, after which the study has heights and depths of meaning not sensed before.

On visiting the centre in Panna, M.P., a place famous for its diamond-mining, one feels, "This small ashram is in truth a jewel in the Mother's crown". Its integral life and its spiritual and material vigour are notable.

The leader of the ashram is a retired Superintendent of Police, still full of energy and pouring it into the Divine's work. In no other centre have I found so rich yet simple a ritual for worship, both daily and occasional, with skilful blending of choice passages from the Mother's writings, and with flower offerings. Although this expression of devotion is of a ritual nature, it is both created locally with originality, and flexible to suit various occasions.

Rising early, we gave the compound and ashram buildings a vigorous cleaning. Then came prayers of re-dedication, followed by a brisk session of what they call "P.T." (physical training) modeled after the gymnastic marching which the leader of that department had observed at Pondicherry. Then followed "Concentration", "The Divine Worker's Prayer", and Contemplation. After breakfast there was an hour for study and gardening. During the day sadhaks and sadhikas attended to their personal jobs and occupations in ashram and town. This type of ashram is readily self-supporting from its members' income, supplemented by offerings for special needs. The evening programme included library and other ashram work and a substantial period for individual meditation.

It interested me that both the former S.P. and the former Rajah of the old native state of Panna seem to be truly humble and devoted sadhak-workers of the Divine Mother.

Allahabad is typical of the cities of medium size which present vast opportunities for this work. An alert and devoted secretary always makes a difference in a centre, and through our gurubhai in Allahabad came stimulating contacts with one of India's great Hindi poets, who made helpful suggestions about radio possibilities during our tours, with a scholar who is a rare combination of Muslim and Hindu cultures and shows great interest in Sri Aurobindo; and with the Philosophical Society of the University. (One finds students in several universities doing Ph.D. theses on Sri Aurobindo.) After my address in a public gathering on "A Great New Hope for India and the World" the President of the meeting, an editor of an all-India daily, made a fervent plea for a sustained effort to translate the message of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother into the language of the common people. While one realises that this idea might easily be overdone, one can appreciate the editor's feeling about the timeliness and urgency of this way and this Message.

Despite the opportunities presented by such cities, one can sympathise with the sentiment of another editor-friend who wrote recently from another metropolis, "The awareness of the futility spread out all around in a city that has no Augustinian halo<sup>1</sup> brings on occasion a deep sadness".

The Sri Aurobindo Pathmandir in Calcutta always gives an impression of large and growing strength and beauty of service, its influence radiating to the many other centres in greater Calcutta, and beyond. It has several hundred members, and its secretary (called "Librarian") serves with grace and ability. The Pathmandir is open from 2:0 to 8:0 daily. Besides attending regular meetings, members and visitors drop in constantly for meditation, worship, reading, or just for fellowship or information. On the last tour, at the Pathmandir, a lively interest was shown by a goodly gathering of gurubhais and visitors in our talk on "The Mother's Work in this New Age". We told of the work of the centres and there was eagerness for more light on the Mother's statement about the important distinction between "work for the Divine and the Divine's work." Through the Pathmandir there came a particularly esteemed opportunity of addressing and showing the film on the Pondicherry Ashram to several hundred members from a group of teacher-training institutions near Calcutta.

Another distinctive type of work has been carried on for some years past in Bombay, where an able sadhak has devoted himself to conducting several

<sup>1</sup> i.e., it is not a "City of God" —J. S.

classes weekly, in different parts of the metropolis and in his home, in the Teachings and Way of Sri Aurobindo.

Another sort of centre in Bombay is the Sri Aurobindo Book Distribution Agency (SABDA) which has its headquarters in Pondicherry and which, with the Ashram Book Service and the Ashram Press, helps to meet the growing demand for the writings of the Master, the Mother and their disciples.

It is always a blessed experience to spend some days while visiting Bombay in "the Mother's apartment" at Church Gate, which offers not only congenial hospitality in an atmosphere of dedication but also a centre for meditation for those who drop in at noon or evening, and regular meetings for study and for the celebration of Darshan and other special days.

My mind jumps, by way of contrast, from the metropolis of western India to some of the towns visited in the eastern "hinterland". Whereas those who live in large cities must choose between a multitude of competing cultural attractions, residents of remoter places like Jaypore (106 miles by bus from the railway), Koraput and Rairangpur, all in Orissa, show a vivid appreciation of the opportunity offered by a visit from a sadhak from Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

But one was not quite prepared for the welcoming arches that greeted our arrival in Dhenkanal, Orissa ! Perhaps the fashion of the election campaign then being waged had been contagious ! Yet when the District Magistrate drove eighty miles, and back, to preside over our two public meetings (with presidential remarks of a spiritual depth one does not expect to find in public officials in many parts of the world) and when one found students eagerly copying quotations from the Ashram photos which were most elaborately displayed by local arrangement, and other signs of extraordinary interest, one was grateful not only for a vigorous and resourceful Secretary of the local Sri Aurobindo Society but also for those in "out-of-the-way places" who are disposed to make the most of divinely given opportunities.

A rural ashram near a West Bengal village, the Sri Aurobindo Sadhanpith at Mala is indeed a divine garland whose fragrance has spread far. So potent is the spiritual Force at work in this tiny ashram that through the years it has contributed some thirty-six members to the parent Ashram in Pondicherry, and from the neighbourhood of Mala some two hundred have visited the Pondicherry Ashram nearly 1200 miles distant !

This centre nestles unpretentiously among the tanks and groves of the Bengal countryside, and no visitor can escape the spell of its dynamic peace, or fail to come away saying to himself, "This is indeed a blessed place".

The Mala Ashram looks reverently to Pondicherry not only because of the Master and the Mother but also, secondarily, because of its founder, Charuda, best known to us as gate-keeper at the Playground. Nearly thirty

years ago they bade him farewell and he has never yet re-visited Mala, drawing instead to Pondicherry his old gurubhais and neighbours ! But he did not leave Mala until, as they described it to me, there had come through his labours "a renaissance to the whole countryside". He supported the revolutionary movement, led in those days by Sri Aurobindo and Tilak, and started a Harijan movement before Gandhiji. The centre began as a national school, also inspired by Sri Aurobindo, and in 1940 it became an Ashram.

Its eight or nine members, sadhaks and sadhikas, rise at 4:30 for meditation and prayer. They literally earn their food by the sweat of their brow, by hard labour in the fields, from 6:0 to 11:0 and 3:0 to 6:0. There are two cows and a small weaving department. Vegetables are sold locally for cash needs. During the mid-day period there is a flower offering and from 2:30 to 3:0 Meditation, the women of the neighbourhood attending on Friday, with reading and discussion thereafter. Evenings include an hour for outdoor games, "Concentration" and Meditation. Neighbours drop in for individual worship and there are occasional visitors for hours or days from Calcutta and beyond.

The property, which became "free and clear" only last year, with Bengal's abolition of *zamindari*, is in the Mother's name, with Charuda as Trustee. A monthly account is offered to the Mother, in token of stewardship.

There is a surprisingly ample library, and although there are the long hours of manual labour and the frequent devotional periods, there seems to be also a vigorous intellectual activity. Again, it is the integral character of the life of the Sri Aurobindo Sadhanpith at Mala that impresses the visitor.

Shillong, the capital of Assam, presents an instance of a new centre in a hill station. A most beautiful and adequate property adjoining Government House has been given to the Mother by a retired professor, and it is growing into something of an ashram. One has the impression of unusual potentialities in Shillong, which seems to be blessed not only with a bracing climate and with rich cultural facilities but also, as I felt, with not a few persons who seem to have the time and disposition for the spiritual quest.

Spontaneously centres are coming to birth in almost every part of India. This is particularly true of the North, where centres have recently sprung up from Srinagar in Kashmir, to Digboi in Assam.

Moving among the centres, one feels the stirring of a fresh awakening to that which we should expect at this threshold of the New Age, a realisation that the privilege the centres enjoy (and all of us as individual disciples, as well), the privilege of glorious freedom in this entirely adequate way, calls for a corresponding responsibility for faithful service in the Divine's work. Is this not specially true in this fateful year 1957 ?

Let us recall that in her interview of three years ago, concerning 1957

and the unity which India needs to meet the crisis victoriously, the Divine Mother was asked "How to bring about the much-needed cohesion and faith in the country?" She replied, "By following Sri Aurobindo's teachings. His Independence Day Message issued on August 15, 1947, needs to be read and re-read and its significance explained to millions of his compatriots. India needs the conviction and faith of Sri Aurobindo".

Must we not believe that the 144 Sri Aurobindo centres in this land have a great opportunity and a corresponding responsibility in this connection? Does the Mother's statement not imply that "millions of our compatriots" are ready to hear the Master's historic message? Who is to bring it to their attention? Does this not accentuate the importance of the literature service, which we believe to be one of the readiest ways in which centres and sadhaks can undertake the Mother's work? Let this service be free from any taint of the propaganda approach; let it be our alert response to divine openings towards those prepared for the Truth.

Is it not the glory of this Integral Way that what best advances the divine purpose for society promotes also the progress of the individual towards his integral perfection? For did not the Master say, "Yoga through work is the easiest and most effective way to enter into the stream of this sadhana"?

In an interview with the Mother on the eve of the fourth tour, I referred to her statement that there is an important difference between work for the Divine and the Divine's work. Then I observed that in the Ashram we, her sadhaks and sadhikas, have a clear standard of faithfulness to her work; each of us looks to her for a definite assignment of his share in her work, according to his *swabhav*. Then I asked the Mother, "Should it be the same in the centres?" She replied "Yes." And if we stop to think, how can it be otherwise? Is the Integral Yoga one thing in the Pondicherry Ashram and another in the centres? I asked the Mother further, "Can we work out some practical way in which each sadhak-worker in the centres who wants to be faithful can get from you such an assignment of his share in your work?" Again the Mother's reply was "Yes." Where there is a will, in centres and in sadhaks, to measure up to this standard of faithfulness to the Divine's work, the way will be found to implement it.

Surely the call is not to become busy-bodies in "promoting" the divine work! That would be indeed to give ourselves to "a new edition of the old fiasco". But may we not, whether here in the Ashram, in the centres, or elsewhere, in this fateful year of the New Age, in this "Hour of God", aspire for a more integral self-giving to the Mother's work?

JAY SMITH



## LIBRARY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AND THE INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE

IN these days of scientific approach to everything in life, libraries and the reading of books in them have also given rise to a Library Science. This approach can be said to be the temper of our age. In library matters it first started its course in Europe and America, but perhaps developed more in America than anywhere else. In India the movement was taken up by S. R. Ranganathan with the zeal of a religious founder and by the end of three decades he had written a great number of books perhaps amounting to forty or so on his subject. When one reads his books it seems the genius of India, the land of Bharat, has taken to this work through him with the attitude of the king Bharata himself who celebrated a hundred Aswamedha Sacrifices. With that attitude of the olden days, Ranganathan has performed perhaps as many sacrifices in the field of Library Science and has to his credit many results. He has made, in the course of these thirty years, several universities open classes in Library Science and several State Governments pass Library Acts.

While the temper of the age all over the world was pursuing all things in life with a scientific approach towards mundane things, Sri Aurobindo, the Avatar of our age, approached Spirituality and spiritual experience with the experimental systematic outlook of a scientist. Later the Mother joined him and both have pursued their subject with a scientific spirit greater than that of any other person in any other field. Since spirit and soul which are their field of work are the origin of all things, mental, vital and physical, they covered in their work all life-activities of the world and no ordinary science can escape the influence of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's all-comprehensive Knowledge, Power and Love upon it. Their outlook on everything is of a global or integral nature which yet perceives and guides every detail of every "individual universe of movement in the universal motion", not with the physical eye but with the supreme inner eye. Hence their influence on Library Science must likewise be integral.

Library Classification System is only one part, though an important part, out of several parts of Library Science. The five Laws of Library Science as enunciated by Ranganathan are : firstly, books are for use; secondly, every reader has his book; thirdly, every book has its reader; fourthly, the time of the reader in getting his needed book has to be saved; and, fifthly, the Library

is a growing organism. All these five Laws are of course as eternal as any other eternal Law or Dharma and they would be governing the activities of a Library whether one is conscious of it or not.

By the Supreme Spirit that has always been guiding this world, sometimes from behind and sometimes from the forefront, the first book brought into this world was the Veda through the Master Mystics, the god-men, the Rishis of India. The hymns of the Veda, born of Sabda Brahma, were called suktas or vachasas, their verses were called Mantras, and the words used to invoke them along with the invocation itself were called Girs; the deity presiding over the Veda was called by various names, Bachaspati, Brahmanaspati, Girpati, Girdevi, Saraswati and so on; the language itself was called Girwana Bhasha, the language spoken by Girwans who are gods. The immense service of that first book, the Rigveda, by the power and inspiration of its word, is the prototype of the fact that books are the best friends of men all over the world and it is no wonder Ranganathan says that the first Law of Library Science is that books are for use. His other laws too may be traced to the light shed by the ancient scripture. In Rigveda, 9th Mandala, 112th Sukta, the Rishi Sisu, a descendant or follower of the still more ancient Rishi Angirasa, perhaps of some previous cycle, says : "Various are our thoughts or ideas and various are men's devotional activities (corresponding to the ideas)" and then he invokes the gods in the words, *Indrayendo Parisrava*, which mean, "Oh (*Indo*) God-Sensation, (*Parisrava*) flow from all sides, (*Indrasya*) for the sake of God Mind (into us)". The Rishi by his invocation to the individual cosmic godhead, Indu, representing cosmic sensation, that he may pour down himself into the minds of men through the individual cosmic god-head, Indra, representing cosmic mind, did really bring down the power of cosmic sensation through Indra, the representative godhead of cosmic mind, into all human individuals who turned their beings consciously in a spirit of consecration towards those godheads. Such was the power of the Vedic Mantra in the olden days and such is its power even now. It had three disciplines with three different results,—the ritualistic discipline for the physical well-being of man, the psychological discipline for his psychological growth and the spiritual discipline for spiritual growth. If the ritualistic power of the Mantra by the method of the Vedic sacrifice is lost to the succeeding ages and to us, it is still left to us by some other methods; so also are the psychological and spiritual powers of the Mantra. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, the ancient Rishis who chanted the Mantras have become types of certain psychological and spiritual victories which tend to be constantly repeated in the experience of humanity. They are waiting still and always ready to chant the word of inspiration, to rend the cavern of ignorance, to find the lost herds of illumination and to recover the hidden Sun of knowledge. When the aspi-

ration along with the spirit of an inner sacrifice is there, then, whether one knows it or not, the Rishi with his Mantra, the god with his power, make it bear fruit to the extent of one's sincerity and intensity. It seems as if the psychological truth of the Mantra of the Rishi, Sisū, that each man has his idea or thought to pursue, has been applied by Ranganathan to Library Science and the result is his second and third Laws.

With regard to his fifth Law, it is not the Library alone that is a growing organism, all life is a growing organism; for man the growth in his social organism is the sign of his growing collective life. And then it is not vital life, vital vigour and vital happiness alone that keep the social organism progressive but, along with these, it is his mental and spiritual life, their vigour and happiness that do so. In every age and every period, the psychological and spiritual disciplines embodied in themselves by individuals—be they religious founders, saints, Avatars or other great men in any other field—and made available to others is what has always kept the race progressive. Sometimes the disciplines built up by great men in previous ages are lost to the succeeding ages but they are always revived in some other form for the same result. In the Vedic days the social organism was kept spiritually progressive by the spiritual truth and method of the Vedic Mantra, by men turning their minds Godward and performing all life-activities in a spirit of sacrifice with the use of the Mantra which filled their Godward-turned minds with god-sensations, as invoked by the Rishi Sisū in the above Mantra. We are on the threshold of a new cycle of spiritual age; the spiritual truth and spiritual method begun by the Vedic Rishis at the beginning of the fast receding cycle are revived by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on a loftier scale and for far-reaching results through their establishing a new method of world-embracing psychological and spiritual discipline and making it available to man. Thus when all life on earth on all planes is progressing, the fifth Law of Ranganathan's Library Science that the Library is a growing organism would be only a very small part of the Law of the rapidly growing social organism that comprises the whole humanity.

As regards the fourth Law that the time of the reader in finding his needed book, of which sometimes he himself does not know, must be saved, the evolved Library Science comes to his rescue, saves his time and provides him with his needed book. The arrangement of the books in an intelligible serial order of numbers represented by subjects expanded in a gradual progression, the staff with their part of the work, and the reader for whom the library is meant, all these three which form the trinity of a library are used by Library Science with its classification system in such a way as to fulfil the need and save the time of the reader. To help man in the growth of his

consciousness libraries are instruments, Library Science a means and the real guide is the Supreme Divine Spirit, of whom all the inspired writers of books in libraries, the Rishis, Avatars, poets, *littérateurs*, scientists and men of arts are representatives. Sri Aurobindo calls this ultimate source of inspiration the "Supermind".

For one who aspires to have an *integral knowledge* on a subject through books, classification system of books in libraries helps him not only to locate his book on a particular shelf but also to choose the right book on his subject either in its parts or in its totality. The editors of all classification systems divide the one knowledge which is the total knowledge of the cosmos that man possesses on the terrestrial plane into a certain number of main subjects called classes and go on expanding the universe of knowledge regarding that subject, through extension of space and sequence of time, into all its available detailed subjects in accordance with the different aspects which the main subject or its branch possesses. This expansion of subjects, main or branch, is made either by the editors themselves of the classification systems or on their behalf by persons who are supposed to be experts of knowledge on these subjects. Regarding this expansion, the editors of Dewey classification system say that a good expansion takes a great amount of time and expense for study, research, interviewing and correspondence and necessitates a broad and dispassionate over-all approach. Such a project is generally of too great a magnitude for the majority of libraries with their multiplicity of duties. On the same subject Ranganathan, in a letter to the present writer, says that "the discipline of classification—suited to a dynamic and almost turbulent universe of knowledge—is a difficult one. It is costly to change a scheme frequently. If any scheme has been designed on the basis of a system of well-defined postulates and with the aid of stated principles it is likely to be more stable, it can stand the challenge of the developing universe of knowledge much better and it will have a greater expectation of life." All that the editors of the two classification systems say is quite true. But well-defined postulates and clearly stated principles concerning the modes of development of the universe of knowledge regarding any subject can, in its perfection, be found only in the Supermind or else in a less perfect way in the cosmic consciousness of a Master-Mind.

However, when the editors of classification systems expand a subject in some way either by themselves or through others, a symbolic method of representing these subjects in numbers is used and the numbers are written on the labels of the books which are arranged in a serial order. The symbolic method of representing a subject in numbers is a technical aspect which it is not my object to discuss here and now. One can understand any technical method, if it is explained properly, even from books. But with regard to the proper

selection of a book on a subject of which the reader does not know in full but wants to know, he will not be getting proper guidance unless proper expansion of the subject is there which while giving an integral view of it gives the right relationship among its detailed subjects and then the relationship of each with the main class to which it belongs.

Just as the one total cosmos covers several universes, not only the main planes like the physical, vital, mental and spiritual but also the intermediate ones and just as each man who is only an individual in the cosmos is yet a microcosm in the macrocosm, so too each subject, main or branch, covers a cosmos in itself with its own aspects physical, vital, mental and spiritual spreading into one another. The sciences of physics, chemistry and biology are trying to bridge the gulf between Matter and Life. The other gulfs that exist between Life and Mind and Spirit are already bridged by the Sciences of Life and of Mind and by the already existing Yogic systems. In some subtle dimension of the physical plane Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have already bridged the gulf between Matter and Spirit. So when the gulf between Matter and Life gets bridged even on the physico-vital plane by its corresponding science, the gulf between Matter and Spirit would have been bridged not merely in philosophical theories but by sciences physical, vital and mental in actual practice. Then every science and every subject would be a world or cosmos of knowledge in itself which would remind us of the first line of the first sloka of Isopanishad, — *Isavasyasmīdam sarvām yat kincha jagatyam jagat*. If each subject is a world or *jagat* of knowledge by itself, what are the modes or methods of expansion of these subjects? According to the materialistic theory of evolution as well as the spiritual, plants have evolved first out of Matter, then animals from either plants or from an elementary living unit common to themselves and the plants and finally men out of animals. It is hoped by advanced thinkers that out of man, who is the topmost of conscious beings on earth, will further evolve superman. Of such advanced thinkers, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have been practical realisers of the theory and a help to others to realise it. Since nothing can evolve from anything if it is not already there in essence, the why and how of evolution are explained in the spiritual theory by saying that the Spirit—by a process of involution and descent through the different planes of consciousness, worlds of existence, degrees of power and grades of substance—has become Matter, and then a reverse process of ascent is achieved in the course of evolution and all this as a joy of manifestation. So in finding the modes of development of the cosmos of knowledge regarding any subject these processes of involution and evolution have to be borne in mind. But then we must have scientific data of these phenomena understandable to Reason. With such available data on such of those subjects that Sri

Aurobindo and the Mother have dealt with, they have gone to the very source of that subject and so without a study of their writings and a knowledge of their modes of expansion of the universe of knowledge regarding that subject, no justice can be done to that subject even for classification system.

For instance, with regard to the formation of religions in general and Hinduism in particular Sri Aurobindo says that the accepted view of the present-day thinkers that the ancient religious thought was a progression from the physical to the spiritual, from a purely naturalistic to an increasingly ethical and psychological view of Nature and of the world and of the gods is by no means certain. He further says, "I do not think we have any real materials for determining the first origin and primitive history of religious ideas. What the facts really point to is an early teaching at once psychological and naturalistic; that is to say with two faces, of which the first came to be more or less obscured, but never entirely effaced even in the barbarous races, even in races like the tribes of North America. But this teaching, though prehistoric, was anything but primitive" (*On the Veda*, page 105.) The Westerners and the modern Indians want us to believe that the Vedic Aryans and their religion were primitive; and then they say the immediate successors of the Veda, the Brahmin priests who are the authors of the Brahmanas and the sages who are the authors of the Upanishads, at once rose to great intellectual and spiritual heights with extraordinary occult and spiritual powers. But how these people explain the spiritual flowering of the Upanishads from the primitive Veda is not known. Then again, Sri Aurobindo says, in the Vedic days "each department of life, each line of activity, each subject of knowledge had its science or Shashtra"... "All Shashtra was put under the sanction of the names of the Rishis, who were in the beginning the teachers not only of spiritual truth and philosophy,...but of the arts, the social, political and military, the physical and psychic sciences, and every instructor was in his degree respected as a Guru or *āchārya*, a guide or preceptor of the human spirit. All knowledge was woven into one and led up by degrees to the one highest knowledge". (*Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 188-9.)

To expand Hinduism, on every activity of which the Veda has put its stamp and for which the highest authority even to-day is the Veda, on the basis that the Veda is neither psychological nor spiritual is to miss all. To expand Vedic Hinduism on the basis of its ritualistic practices into four religions corresponding to the four Vedas, and to discard its mysticism, its spiritual experience, its yogic methods and its philosophies is to give a wrong idea of Hindu religion. Sri Aurobindo says, "No Indian religion is complete without its outward form of preparatory practice, its supporting philosophy and its Yoga or system of inward practice or art of spiritual living; most even of what seems

irrational in it to a first glance has its philosophical turn and significance.” (*Ibid.*, p. 188.) Religious practice, philosophy and yoga are the three inseparable parts of Hinduism and, though intermingled, the first leads to the second and the second to the third, These three parts of Hinduism differed from age to age. Though it is true that the Vedic fire-altar of the so-called Vedic Hinduism was replaced by the Puranic temple of the so-called post-Vedic Hinduism and the Karmic ritual of the Vedic sacrifice was transformed into the devotional temple ritual, the post-Vedic Hinduism in its philosophical thought and yogic experience kept its inner continuity with the Vedic and Vedantic thought and experience. To miss this continuity in Hinduism from the beginning and lay stress on the difference between the external ritualistic practices and to expand Hinduism as if its spiritual experience, its mysticism, its yogas and its philosophies were separate from Hinduism is to misrepresent and give a partial view of it.

This has been the traditional view of Indians regarding the Vedas and Hinduism all along; and this is the interpretation given to them by Sri Aurobindo and Swami Dayananda so far as I understand them. The other interpretation given to the Vedas by Max Muller and his group of modern historians is indicated in the following quotation from *Satapatha Brahmana*, Part I, translated by Julius Eggeling and edited by Max Muller : “The Brahmanas, it is well known, form our chief, if not, our only source of information, regarding the most important periods in the social and mental development of India. They represent the intellectual activity of a sacerdotal caste which by turning to account the religious instincts of a gifted and naturally devout race has succeeded in transforming a primitive worship of the powers of Nature into a highly artificial system of sacrificial ceremonies and was ever intent on deepening and extending its hold on the minds of people by surrounding its own vocation with the help of sanctity and divine inspirations. A complicated ceremonial requiring for its proper observance and consequent efficacy the ministrations of a highly trained priestly class has ever been one of the most effective means of promoting hierarchical aspirations.” It is this attitude of Max Muller and his group towards the Vedas that has influenced the modern Hindus and misinterpreted the Vedas and Hinduism and it seems to have been at the back of expansion of Hinduism in Colon Classification system

In Colon Classification System, the main subject Religion to which the symbol Q has been assigned is firstly expanded in two aspects or facets, one the religion facet and two the problem facet; each of these facets is made into eight divisions, which are called foci. Of the eight foci of religion facet the two foci Q1 and Q2 represent Vedic Hinduism and Post-Vedic Hinduism respectively. The eight foci of problem facet are: 1. Mythologies; 2. Scriptures; 3. Theology;

4. Religious Practices; 5 Preaching; 6. Religious Institutions; 7. Religious Sects, 8. Heresies and Persecutions. Then, the two religions Q1 and Q2 are again expanded by a second round of religion facet; in this second expansion the four Vedas which are given four separate numbers are considered as religions and each of these four Vedic religions are further expanded on the basis of their different schools or branches. Then again these same Samhitas, along with Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Sayings and Traditions, form six divisions of the second focus, Scriptures, of the problem facet; while the Kalpa Sutras and Manava Dharma Shastras form the divisions of the fourth focus, Religious Practices, of the Problem facet. So far as I understand Hinduism, the four Vedas are not four different religions, not even four different sects of one religion, but are four different functions of one religion which may have been specialised through different periods in course of time. Sruties which comprise the four Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads are the scriptures of the first age. Smritis are the scriptures of the second age. Puranas and the two Itihasas form the scriptures of the third age. Tantras form the scriptures of the fourth age.

About these four ages Sri Aurobindo writes, "We may say that here in India the reign of Intuition came first,...and after reaching this height there was a descent which attempted to take up each lower degree of the already evolved consciousness and link it to the spiritual at the summit. The Vedic age was followed by a great outburst of intellect and philosophy which yet took spiritual truth as its basis and tried to reach it anew, not through a direct Intuition or occult process as did the Vedic seers, but by the power of the mind's reflective, speculative, logical thought;...Then followed an era of the development of philosophies and Yogic processes which more and more used the emotional and aesthetic being as the means of spiritual realisation and spiritualised the emotional level in man through the heart and feeling. This was accompanied by Tantric and other processes which took up the mental will, the life-will, the will of sensations and made them at once the instruments and the field of spiritualisation." (*Letters, First Series*, pp. 6,7.).

If, however, for the sake of convenience, Colon Classification puts the ritualistic functions of the four different Vedas as four different religions, then a question arises: Have there been no such sects or religions of Hinduism from the time of these four Vedas through all the periods of Brahmanas, Sutracharyas and the Smritikartas up to the Puranic religions of Smartaism, Vaishnavism and Saivism etc. into which Q2 has been expanded and which can also be called religions? If the four Vedas are called religions and scriptures by Ranganathan at one and the same time, cannot the Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Sutras, and Manavadharma Shastras which are considered as scriptures be called religions



at the same time ? It is not known to me if the author of Colon Classification System has cleared these matters in his other books than *Colon Classification System*. So far as the schedules of expansion of the different facets and foci of Hinduism are given in this particular book they do not give us the evolutionary stages of Hinduism in their correct relationship to each other and in all their different aspects. The problem facet of Hinduism in Colon System begins with Mythologies. It is the Rīgvedic Rishis, who are mystics, that created the mythologies. Sri Aurobindo says, "The Vedic Rishis were capable of creating mythological symbols which represent not only those obvious operations of physical Nature that interested their agricultural, pastoral and open-air life but also the inner operations of the mind and soul". The mythologies have all originated either in the present Rīgveda or in some other Rīgveda of the previous cycle. The mythologies are all acts concerning gods, Rishis and kings of whom the last are the descendants of Manus; it is these three kinds of cosmic beings, as agents of the Supreme Divine, that by some acts of mutual relationship play their part in the mythologies to create some new phenomena of physical Nature and of mind and soul. Of course there are other mythologies of Avatars, Saints and Siddhas. Of the mythologies elaborated in the Brahmanas and the Puranas, some belong to the Vedic period of the present cycle and some, as is mentioned in the present Rīgveda itself, to the Vedic periods of a previous cycle. We have a record of the present Rīgveda which is the earliest record of Hinduism and have no record of mythologies apart from what they are in the Vedas and the later scriptures. Anyhow it is the Mysticism of the Vedas, either of this cycle or of previous cycles, that created mythologies. Hence one wonders if it is proper to put the mythologies as preceding the Vedas.

I have pointed out some facts of Hinduism, its universe of knowledge and its modes of development as I understand them from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and I suggest that the expansion of subjects in Library Classification System can be done best if one follows closely the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

NARAYANA C. REDDI

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