

MOTHER INDIA

APRIL 24, 1973

Price : Re. 1-25

Posting Date for MOTHER INDIA ·

JAN. to OCT. issues : 26th to 28th

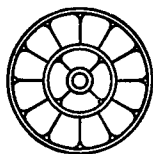
NOV.-DEC. (JOINT) issue : 10th to 12th DEC

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Subscription rates: Annual Rs 12.00, £ 1.25, \$ 3.00
Single copy Re. 1.25 in India.

All correspondence to be addressed to:
MOTHER INDIA, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry-2, India.
Editor's Phone: 782

Publishers : Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.

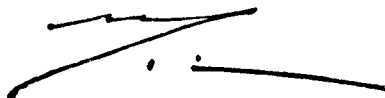


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

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. XXV

No. 4

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail."

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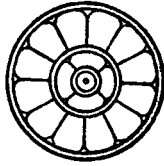
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Editor: K. D. SETHNA
Managing Editor: K. R. PODDAR
Published by: P. COUNOUMA
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM, PONDICHERRY-2
Printed by: AMIYO RANJAN GANGULI
at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry-2
PRINTED IN INDIA

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers under No: R. N. 8667/63



WORDS OF THE MOTHER

SANS discipline on n'est qu'un animal.

On commence à être un homme seulement quand on aspire à une vie plus haute et plus vraie et qu'on accepte une discipline de transformation.

Pour cela il faut commencer par maîtriser sa nature inférieure et ses désirs.

*

Without discipline one is nothing but an animal.

One begins to be a man only when one aspires for a higher and truer life and accepts a discipline of transformation.

For that it is necessary to begin by mastering one's lower nature and one's desires.

April 24, 1973

Au-dessus de la conscience
Au-delà de la parole
O Toi, Suprême Conscience
Unique Réalité
Vérité divine.

*

Beyond man's consciousness
Beyond speech
O Thee, Supreme Consciousness
Unique Reality
Divine Truth.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Continued from the issue of March, 1973)

(This new series of answers by the Mother to questions put by the children of the Ashram appeared for the first time in the Bulletin of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education but in a somewhat incomplete form. We now give, in a new English translation, the full text as it was taped, with here and there a few special additions or modifications made by the Mother herself at the time of its first publication in French in February 1968.)

AUGUST 15, 1956

“It is here that the emergence of the secret psychic being in us as the leader of the sacrifice is of the utmost importance; for this inmost being alone can bring with it the full power of the spirit in the act, the soul in the symbol. It alone can assure, even while the spiritual consciousness is incomplete, the perennial freshness and sincerity and beauty of the symbol and prevent it from becoming a dead form or a corrupted and corrupting magic; it alone can preserve for the act its power with its significance. All the other members of our being, mind, life-force, physical or body consciousness are too much under the control of the Ignorance to be a sure instrumentation and much less can they be a guide or the source of an unerring impulse. Always the greater part of the motive and action of these powers clings to the old law, the deceiving tablets, the cherished inferior movements of Nature and they meet with reluctance, alarm or revolt or obstructing inertia the voices and the forces that call and impel us to exceed and transform ourselves into a greater being and a wider Nature. In their major part the response is either a resistance or a qualified or temporising acquiescence; for even if they follow the call, they yet tend — when not consciously, then by automatic habit — to bring into the spiritual action their own natural disabilities and errors. At every moment they are moved to take egoistic advantage of the psychic and spiritual influences and can be detected using the power, joy or light these bring into us for a lower life-motive. Afterwards too, even when the seeker has opened to the Divine Love transcendental, universal or immanent, yet if he tries to pour it into life, he meets the power of obscuration and perversion of these lower Nature-forces. Always they draw away towards pitfalls, pour into that higher intensity their diminishing elements, seek to capture the descending Power for themselves and their interests and degrade it into an aggrandised mental, vital or physical instrumentation for desire and ego. Instead of a Divine Love creator of a new heaven and a new earth of Truth and Light, they would hold it here prisoner as a tremendous sanction and glorifying force of sublimation to gild the mud of the old earth

and colour with its rose and sapphire the old turbid unreal skies of sentimentalising vital imagination and mental idealised chimera. If that falsification is permitted, the higher Light and Power and Bliss withdraw, there is a fall back to a lower status; or else the realisation remains tied to an insecure half-way and mixture or is covered and even submerged by an inferior exaltation that is not the true Ananda. It is for this reason that the Divine Love which is at the heart of all creation and the most powerful of all redeeming and creative forces has yet been the least frontally present in earthly life, the least successfully redemptive, the least creative. Human nature has been unable to bear it in its purity for the very reason that it is the most powerful, pure, rare and intense of all the divine energies; what little could be seized has been corrupted at once into a vital pietistic ardour, a defenceless religious or ethical sentimentalism, a sensuous or even sensual erotic mysticism of the roseate coloured mind or passionately turbid life-impulse and with these simulations compensated its inability to house the Mystic Flame that could rebuild the world with its tongues of sacrifice. It is only the inmost psychic being unveiled and emerging in its full power that can lead the pilgrim sacrifice unscathed through these ambushes and pitfalls; at each moment it catches, exposes, repels the mind's and the life's falsehoods, seizes hold on the truth of the Divine Love and Ananda and separates it from the excitement of the mind's ardours and the blind enthusiasm of the misleading life-force. But all things that are true at their core in mind and life and the physical being it extricates and takes with it in the journey till they stand on the heights, new in spirit and sublime in figure."

(The Synthesis of Yoga, pp. 155-57)

THIS is the most powerful, the completest and truest answer to all the questions which so many people have in their heads but do not dare to ask.

So many people doubt the efficacy of the Protection, the sureness of the Path, because others go astray. And in their egoism they tremble with fear instead of telling themselves what I have just been reading to you this evening, what is the cause of all catastrophes, small or big, which threaten those who follow the path of yoga without having taken the necessary care to be sufficiently pure and sincere.

No protection, no Grace can save those who refuse the indispensable purification.

And I would add this: that fear is an impurity, one of the greatest impurities, one of those which are the most direct result of anti-divine forces which want to destroy the divine action on earth; and the first duty of those who really wish to do yoga is to eliminate from their consciousness, with all their might, all sincerity, all the endurance of which they are capable, even the shadow of a fear. To walk on the road one must be fearless, and never indulge in that petty, small, feeble, mean turning back upon oneself, which is fear.

An indomitable courage, a perfect sincerity and a self-giving so sincere that one does not calculate or bargain, does not give with the idea of receiving, does not put one's trust with the idea of being protected — does not have a faith which asks for

proofs — it is this that is indispensable in order to walk on the path, and it is this which can truly shelter you from all danger.

(Silence)

You have a question, yes?

Sweet Mother, why does one feel a different atmosphere on Darshan¹ days? How should one conduct oneself on these days?

Different? You ask this question! ... There is an invasion of more or less dark and foreign elements, who may come with good will, possibly, but bring an almost total ignorance and throw it all out in the atmosphere; and then naturally, if one is the least bit open to what is happening, one feels crushed under the weight of this increased ignorance.

I don't mean that there is no ignorance here! But still, the dose is different. Here, there is all the same a sort of manipulation of consciousness going on constantly, night and day, visibly, invisibly; and whether one wants it or not, in spite of everything one takes it in, and after a certain length of time it acts.

When a few people come, something changes, but it is not so much as to give a painful feeling; but when it is a rush like this, hurling itself all at once, then the whole level comes down immediately, and unless one is able to withdraw into oneself and keep one's head up above these submerging waters, this swamping flood of ignorance, if one can't raise up one's head above it, well, one feels very uneasy.

No, Mother, it is an atmosphere of joy!

You find it an atmosphere of joy!

Yes, Mother.

Then that's quite personal, my child. It is something purely personal. And you ought to be able to keep it.

It comes because at this time there are memories awakening in you, a certain concentration. Perhaps what you call joy may be a vital pleasure, don't you think so? Is it not a sort of excitement? When do you feel this joy?

Today, it was after Darshan.

I think it is the same thing that happens to people who are more receptive on

¹ On Darshan days visitors and disciples were allowed to pass one by one in front of the Mother (and formerly Sri Aurobindo) to receive directly their spiritual help. August 15, Sri Aurobindo's birthday, is one of the four Darshans of the year. In the year 1956 there was a particularly large number of visitors.

their birthdays or who need to remember an event to awaken their receptivity.

In the days when Sri Aurobindo was giving Darshan, before giving it there was always a concentration of certain forces or of a certain realisation which he wanted to give to people. And so each Darshan marked a stage forward; each time something was added. But that was at a time when the number of visitors was very limited. It was organised in another way; and it was part of the necessary preparation.

But this special concentration, now, occurs at other times, not particularly on Darshan days. And it occurs much oftener, on other kinds of occasions, in other circumstances. The movement is much accelerated, the march forward; the stages succeed each other more rapidly. And it is perhaps more difficult to follow; or in any case, if one doesn't take care to follow, one is much more quickly out-distanced than before; one gets the feeling of being late or of being abandoned. Things change quickly.

And I must say that these Darshan times with all this rush of people do not serve so much for an inner progress (that is to say, inner for the Ashram) as for a diffusion outside. The usefulness of these days is a little different; it is above all for going farther, having a vaster field, reaching more distant points. But the concentration is less and there is this inconvenience of a large crowd, which was always there but which has been much greater during these last years than at the beginning. At the beginning there was not such a crowd; and perhaps the quality of the crowd also was a little different.

So the joy you were speaking about would rather be a kind of excitement or the feeling of a more intense or more active life; but it is not actually a greater Presence. One puts oneself, perhaps, in a more receptive state in which one receives more, but there is no intensification of the Presence (not to my knowledge).

Hence it must be within you that you must find the reason, and the remedy for keeping this joy.

But, Mother, what is the significance of the message you give on every Darshan? For example, today you gave the picture of the flower symbolising the supramental manifestation.¹

Yes, as I have just told you, this spreads through thousands of copies all over the world. It is an externalisation of the thing, it is a way of spreading the influence, spreading the message, reaching farther. Everything that is said in a Darshan message has been studied, proved, tested, beforehand. And on the Darshan day it is given. First the experiment is made, then it is declared publicly. The first movement is the individual development; at the Darshan it is spread abroad.

Sri Aurobindo always spoke of two movements: the formation of the individual in order to be able to reach the goal individually, and the preparation of the world....

¹ The *haemanthus* which is like a ball composed of hundreds of red and gold stamens

For the progress of the individual is, so to say, not quite held back nor helped by the condition of the whole, but that brings about a certain balance between the two. The individual movement is always much more rapid and more penetrating; it goes much further, more deeply and more quickly. The collective movement forms a sort of base which both restrains and supports at the same time. And it is the balance between these two movements which is necessary. Hence, the more rapidly one goes individually, the more is it necessary to try to extend and fortify the collective base.

Mother, has this day, the 15th of August, an occult (or simple) significance? For, in history, important events occurred on this day.

What do you mean exactly? The 15th of August is Sri Aurobindo's birthday. Consequently, it is a date with a capital importance in the terrestrial life, from the physical point of view. And then?

On August 15 other important events took place...

Which, the liberation of India? It is because the liberation of India came about on the 15th of August? And so, it is necessary to tell you why it happened, you can't find it out by yourself, you can't? It needs to be said? I believe Sri Aurobindo has written it also, hasn't he, in the message he gave? Hasn't he said it?¹

(Silence)

Yes, it is exactly that...

Today, there came to my hand one of those greeting cards which people send on *puja* occasions or for the new year or other such feast days; and on this card was written something like this — I don't know the exact words but anyway it was something like "Greetings on this occasion of the memorable day of the birth of our nation." It was sent by someone who, I think, proclaimed himself a disciple of Sri Aurobindo quite a long time ago.... That seemed to me one of those enormities of which human stupidity alone is capable. If he had said: "On this memorable day of the birth of Sri Aurobindo and its natural consequence, the birth of the nation," that would have been quite good. But still, the important point was left out and the other mentioned, which is quite simply a consequence, a natural result: it had to be like that, it could not be otherwise.

But people always think like that, the wrong way up. Always. They take the effect for the cause, they glorify the effect and forget the cause.

¹ The Mother is alluding to the Message Sri Aurobindo gave on August 15, 1947. We give the full text in an appendix to this talk

And that is why the world walks with its head down and feet in the air. Quite evidently, there is no other reason.

(*Silence*)

I have a formidable collection of questions here. I received yet one more today. This question raises perhaps the most difficult problem for the world; so I don't quite know if, just in this Darshan atmosphere, it is very appropriate to touch upon such a problem. However, it is something infinitely interesting. One would like to find a fully satisfactory solution, for then at one stroke one would have the key which opens the last door.

Man has always found himself facing two possible attitudes when he has wanted to find a solution to the problem of the existence of the universe. It could be said from the practical point of view, that since the universe exists and exists as it does, the wisest thing is to take it as it is, and if one is not satisfied with it, well, to try to make it better. But even if one takes this altogether practical attitude, the problem remains: "How to make it better?" And once again one is facing the same fact which it seems impossible to solve. Here you are, then:

The divine Will (and the Grace manifesting it) is all-powerful and nothing can exist which is not the expression of this divine Will and this Grace manifesting it The logical attitude (the one so precisely described in the little book I read to you on Fridays, now, *Wu Wei*¹): a perfect peace, a total surrender putting aside all effort and all personal will, giving oneself up to the divine Will and letting it act through oneself.

Mark that this is not at all easy, it is not as simple as it looks. But still, if one sincerely takes up this attitude, it is certain that immediately there comes a perfect inner peace, an unmixed bliss, and whatever the events of your life, they leave you totally indifferent. This is always what has been recommended for individual salvation; and I may remark in passing that in this little book, which is also quite beautiful and very well written, the sage compares the state of surrender of which he speaks to a sea which is calm, blue, peaceful, vast, moved by a deep force, swelling up when necessary, subsiding when necessary — indeed, it is an ideal description. But a practical and somewhat objective mind immediately tells you: "Well, yes, but there are also tempests at sea, there are also terrible storms, tidal waves, engulfed islands. And so that is perhaps another aspect of the Divine, but it does not bring peace, at least not in the way described by the sage. One would have to be in another state of consciousness to have peace in such cases, one must not compare oneself with the sea!" So the problem is put once again.

Sri Aurobindo has made a study of all this in *The Life Divine*, and he tells us that there are sure signs of a progressive evolution. An evolution naturally tends towards

¹ *Wu Wei* a novel based upon the philosophy of Lao Tse, by Henri Borel

a goal, and if it is a progressive evolution one may continue to think that all is the expression of the divine Grace and Will, but that at the same time all is not as it ought to be. Everything is in accordance with the divine Will, but everything is not as it ought to be, else things would not move on.

And there we are again facing the problem.

The question I have been asked is this:

“Now that the Supermind has manifested on the earth, it must naturally follow that the divine Grace is all-powerful”, and I am asked: “Is that right?”

The divine Grace has always been all-powerful.

And yet, if we compare the world as it is with the more or less ideal world we can imagine when we come out of our ignorant consciousness and enter a consciousness which we call more divine, how does it happen that it is not always so good, if the Grace is all-powerful?

It would seem that the vision of what ought to be precedes considerably the execution — and that is what gives rise to the whole problem.... One sees ahead (or up above) the realisation, perhaps not the next step, but still what will happen one day; and then as one sees it, one tells oneself: “But this conception is more divine than what is realised at present; consequently, if the Grace is all-powerful, it ought to be realised immediately” (I am now looking at the problem as the human mind, it seems to me, would put it or approximately, in order to try and understand it myself).

But what does one call an all-powerful Grace? I don't want to speak of the conceptions of an ordinary mind for which the all-powerful Grace is that which would realise instantaneously what it wants or believes to be the right thing; I am not speaking of that, we may eliminate this childish instance. But granting that somebody has a deeper, higher vision, a sort of inner perception of an ideal world where all the things which for us are very shocking would disappear; then one is truly before a problem which seems insoluble.

This translates itself in very ordinary minds in an oversimple and very childish form: either the divine Will is something unthinkable for us (which would not be surprising!), unthinkable and almost monstrous if It allows things to be as they are, if It wants things as they are, or...the Grace is powerless.

That — I warn you to put you on your guard against the trap, that is the great argument of the Adversary. He uses it to cloud the mind and raise up revolt; but indeed it is well thought out as a trap.

Then come those who say: “It is because you are in the Ignorance that you see like that; change your consciousness, enter into contact with the divine Consciousness and you will see differently.” This is perfectly correct. I was just telling you, and I repeat, that if you manage to get out of the Ignorance and enter ever so little into union with the divine Reality, you live an ecstatic life where everything is marvellous, sublime, and where the Grace manifests in all things. Consequently,

you have solved the problem for yourself, on condition that you can remain in that state perpetually, which is not very easy. But still it is possible. But that draws you out of the world, prevents you from participating in the life of the world, and above all, if everything had to be changed in that way, I think an eternity would not suffice for all the elements of the world to be so transformed.

And the problem presents itself again. In whatever manner, by whatever way you take it, it will present itself again.

There is a solution.

Think about it, we shall speak about it again another time. There, I would like you to make an effort. For it is helpful, because this is a sort of conflict in the human consciousness which comes up constantly; it is a conflict which forms the basis of all oppositions to a concrete work, it is this conflict which makes people (I am speaking even of those who are the most enlightened in this field) always confuse spiritual life with an annihilation of the physical, material creation, as for them this is the sole means of escape: "Let us run away from the material reality and escape the problem", for to be in the state where the problem doesn't present itself any more, one must get out of life — *according to them*.

There is a solution.

That will be for another time.

When back at the Ashram, after the class was over, the Mother made the following remark:

I gave the solution, this evening. I gave it twice in the class, without speaking.

Has this solution a connection with the date, August 15? Is there a connection between the Feast of the Assumption (in the Catholic Church) and the date of Sri Aurobindo's birth?

Yes. And he has said it himself also. The Assumption of the Virgin Mary is the divinisation of Matter. And this is the aim of the last Avatar.

Appendix

AUGUST 15, 1947*

August 15th, 1947 is the birthday of free India. It marks for her the end of an old era, the beginning of a new age. But we can also make it by our life and acts as a free nation an important date in a new age opening for the whole world, for the political, social, cultural and spiritual future of humanity.

* The message broadcast by *All India Radio*, Trichinopoly, on the 14th of August, 1947, on the eve of the Independence of India.

August 15th is my own birthday and it is naturally gratifying to me that it should have assumed this vast significance. I take this coincidence, not as a fortuitous accident, but as the sanction and seal of the Divine Force that guides my steps on the work with which I began life, the beginning of its full fruition. Indeed, on this day I can watch almost all the world-movements which I hoped to see fulfilled in my lifetime, though then they looked like impracticable dreams, arriving at fruition or on their way to achievement. In all these movements free India may well play a large part and take a leading position.

The first of these dreams was a revolutionary movement which would create a free and united India. India today is free but she has not achieved unity. At one moment it almost seemed as if in the very act of liberation she would fall back into the chaos of separate States which preceded the British conquest. But fortunately it now seems probable that this danger will be averted and a large and powerful, though not yet a complete union will be established. Also the wisely drastic policy of the Constituent Assembly has made it probable that the problem of the depressed classes will be solved without schism or fissure. But the old communal division into Hindus and Muslims seems now to have hardened into a permanent political division of the country. It is to be hoped that this settled fact will not be accepted as settled for ever or as anything more than a temporary expedient. For if it lasts, India may be seriously weakened, even crippled: civil strife may remain always possible, possible even a new invasion and foreign conquest. India's internal development and prosperity may be impeded, her position among the nations weakened, her destiny impaired or even frustrated. This must not be; the partition must go. Let us hope that that may come about naturally, by an increasing recognition of the necessity not only of peace and concord but of common action, by the practice of common action and the creation of means for that purpose. In this way unity may finally come about under whatever form — the exact form may have a pragmatic but not a fundamental importance. But by whatever means, in whatever way, the division must go; unity must and will be achieved, for it is necessary for the greatness of India's future.

Another dream was for the resurgence and liberation of the peoples of Asia and her return to her great role in the progress of human civilisation. Asia has arisen; large parts are now quite free or are at this moment being liberated: its other still subject or partly subject parts are moving through whatever struggles towards freedom. Only a little has to be done and that will be done today or tomorrow. There India has her part to play and has begun to play it with an energy and ability which already indicate the measure of her possibilities and the place she can take in the council of the nations.

The third dream was a world-union forming the outer basis of a fairer, brighter and nobler life for all mankind. That unification of the human world is under way; there is an imperfect initiation organised but struggling against tremendous difficulties. But the momentum is there and it must inevitably increase and conquer. Here too India has begun to play a prominent part and, if she can develop that larger states-

manship which is not limited by the present facts and immediate possibilities but looks into the future and brings it nearer, her presence may make all the difference between a slow and timid and a bold and swift development. A catastrophe may intervene and interrupt or destroy what is being done, but even then the final result is sure. For unification is a necessity of Nature, an inevitable movement. Its necessity for the nations is also clear, for without it the freedom of the small nations may be at any moment in peril and the life even of the large and powerful nations insecure. The unification is therefore to the interests of all, and only human imbecility and stupid selfishness can prevent it; but these cannot stand for ever against the necessity of Nature and the Divine Will. But an outward basis is not enough; there must grow up an international spirit and outlook, international forms and institutions must appear, perhaps such developments as dual or multilateral citizenship, willed interchange or voluntary fusion of cultures. Nationalism will have fulfilled itself and lost its militancy and would no longer find these things incompatible with self-preservation and the integrity of its outlook. A new spirit of oneness will take hold of the human race.

Another dream, the spiritual gift of India to the world has already begun. India's spirituality is entering Europe and America in an ever increasing measure. That movement will grow; amid the disasters of the time more and more eyes are turning towards her with hope and there is even an increasing resort not only to her teachings, but to her psychic and spiritual practice.

The final dream was a step in evolution which would raise man to a higher and larger consciousness and begin the solution of the problems which have perplexed and vexed him since he first began to think and to dream of individual perfection and a perfect society. This is still a personal hope and an idea, an ideal which has begun to take hold both in India and in the West on forward-looking minds. The difficulties in the way are more formidable than in any other field of endeavour, but difficulties were made to be overcome and if the Supreme Will is there, they will be overcome. Here too, if this evolution is to take place, since it must proceed through a growth of the spirit and the inner consciousness, the initiative can come from India and, although the scope must be universal, the central movement may be hers.

Such is the content which I put into this date of India's liberation; whether or how far this hope will be justified depends upon the new and free India.

SRI AUROBINDO

A LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO TO THE MOTHER

JUNE 26, 1916

THE difficulties you find in the spiritual progress are common to us all. In this yoga the progress is always attended with these relapses into the ordinary mentality until the whole being is so remoulded that it can no longer be affected either by any downward tendency in our own nature or by the impressions from the discordant world outside or even by the mental state of those associated with us most closely in the yoga. The ordinary yoga is usually concentrated on a single aim and therefore less exposed to such recoils; ours is so complex and many-sided and embraces such large aims that we cannot expect any smooth progress until we near the completion of our effort, — especially as all the hostile forces in the spiritual world are in a constant state of opposition and besiege our gains; for the complete victory of a single one of us would mean a general downfall among them. In fact by our own unaided effort we could not hope to succeed. It is only in proportion as we come into a more and more universal communion with the Highest that we can hope to overcome with any finality. For myself I have had to come back so often from things that seemed to have been securely gained that it is only relatively that I can say of any part of my yoga, "It is done." Still I have always found that when I recover from one of these recoils, it is always with a new spiritual gain which might have been neglected or missed if I had remained securely in my former state of partial satisfaction. Especially, as I have long had the map of my advance sketched out before me, I am able to measure my progress at each step and the particular losses are compensated for by the clear consciousness of the general advance that has been made. The final goal is far but the progress made in the face of so constant and massive an opposition is the guarantee of its being gained in the end. But the time is in other hands than ours. Therefore I have put impatience and dissatisfaction far away from me.

An absolute equality of the mind and heart and a clear purity and calm strength in all the members of the being have long been the primary conditions on which the power working in me has insisted with an inexhaustible patience and an undeviating constancy of will which rejects all the efforts of other powers to hasten forward to the neglect of these first requisites. Wherever they are impaired it returns upon them and works over and again over the weak points like a workman patiently mending the defects of his work. These seem to me to be the foundation and condition of all the rest. As they become firmer and more complete the system is more able to hold consistently and vividly the settled perception of the One in all things and beings, in all qualities, forces, happenings, in all this world-consciousness and the play of its workings. That founds the Unity and upon it the deep satisfaction and growing rapture of the Unity. It is this to which our nature is most recalcitrant. It persists in the division, in the dualities, in the sorrow and unsatisfied passion and labour, it finds it

difficult to accustom itself to the divine largeness, joy and equipoise — especially the vital and material parts of our nature; it is they that pull down the mind which has accepted and even when it has long lived in the joy and peace and oneness. That, I suppose, is why the religions and philosophies have had so strong a leaning to the condemnation of Life and Matter and aimed at an escape instead of a victory. But the victory has to be won; the rebellious elements have to be redeemed and transformed, not rejected or excised.

When the Unity has been well founded, the static half of our work is done, but the active half remains. It is then that in the One we must see the Master and his Power, — Krishna and Kali as I name them using the terms of our Indian religions; the Power occupying the whole of myself and my nature which becomes Kali and ceases to be anything else, the Master using, directing, enjoying the Power to his ends, not mine, with that which I call myself only as a centre of his universal existence and responding to its workings as a soul to the Soul, taking upon itself his image until there is nothing left but Krishna and Kali. This is the stage I have reached in spite of all setbacks and recoils, imperfectly indeed in the secureness and intensity of the state, but well enough in the general type. When that has been done, then we may hope to found securely the play in us of his divine Knowledge governing the action of his divine Power. The rest is the full opening up of the different planes of his world-play and the subjection of Matter and the body and the material world to the law of the higher heavens of the Truth. To these things towards which in my earlier ignorance I used to press forward impatiently before satisfying the first conditions, — the effort, however, was necessary and made the necessary preparation of the material instruments, — I can now only look forward as a subsequent eventuality in a yet distant vista of things.

To possess securely the Light and the Force of the supramental being, this is the main object to which the power is now turning. But the remnant of the old habits of intellectual thought and mental will come so obstinate in their determination to remain that the progress is hampered, uncertain and always falls back from the little achievement already effected. They are no longer within me, they are blind, stupid, mechanical, incorrigible even when they perceive their incompetence, but they crowd round the mind and pour in their suggestions whenever it tries to remain open only to the supramental Light and the higher Command, so that the Knowledge and the Will reach the mind in a confused, distorted and often misleading form. It is, however, only a question of time: the siege will diminish in force and be finally dispelled.

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

(Continued from the issue of February 21, 1973)

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

JUNE 22, 1940

SRI AUROBINDO: The government is still at Bordeaux, and the negotiations have only started now. The Pondicherry government news was that the French government has left for Casablanca.

P: The German radio speaks of the heroic resistance of the French army and says that their terms won't be unjust and dishonourable.

SRI AUROBINDO: No, it says that they won't be shameful but they will be severe.

S: The Italian news says that they won't be as bad as Versailles.

SRI AUROBINDO: They may not be as bad but still bad enough. Everything depends on what the terms are. If, as is reported, Hitler wants all the colonies contiguous with the British, then our position becomes unsafe.

N: But the colonies may refuse to accept such terms.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, in that case Pétain may find an excuse and break off. But if he surrenders the navy and the colonies, nothing can be more shameful and more disastrous.

S: He may not be so severe now and may be content at present with only occupation of France.

SRI AUROBINDO: France in any case is gone now. Resistance is out of the question but Hitler may give such terms as they may accept and he will make them so powerless that he can later get the colonies and the navy.

S: Many soldiers are passing to Switzerland, they say, and are being interned. They must have been tired.

SRI AUROBINDO: No, not tired. They don't want to surrender perhaps. I saw Gamelin's photo the other day. He doesn't seem to have any brains. He is under the notion that defence is stronger than attack and he prepared only on that principle. Being fortress-minded himself, he made the soldiers also fortress-minded. It is said

that when he met the German mechanised troops he didn't know what to do; he was so unprepared for such things and open attacks. And the wonderful Maginot Line is only partly a completed line: the rest of it is made up of scattered fortifications. This Daladier, who was supposed to be as indispensable a war minister as Briand was an indispensable foreign minister, has done nothing. He and Chamberlain were saying all the time — 'We are preparing and preparing', but have prepared nothing at all. What surprised me most is that Daladier was considered the 'strong man of France' while he was so evidently weak. In their meeting with Hitler, Hitler was clearly the most cunning, strong and powerful, as if he could break them into bits; and Daladier of course the weakest, and Chamberlain was like a crafty fool, thinking that he was dealing most diplomatically with Hitler while he didn't see the truth of what he was doing. I wonder how Chamberlain had such a tremendous influence on the conservatives.

S: Perhaps because of his *laissez-faire* policy and his policy of appeasement.

SRI AUROBINDO: How can a *laissez-faire* policy build up one's reputation as a politician?

S: Except for the war, he would have gone down in history as a big politician.

SRI AUROBINDO: Most probably!

P: A military officer has written that the French had no idea about Germany's strength, the tremendous number of her tanks, mechanised units, etc.

SRI AUROBINDO: They had some idea but not so much. The fact is that, as I said, they have been made fortress-minded, and didn't expect such an overwhelming onrush, for an open attack on such a huge scale. What is England doing to meet these tanks? They are talking only of air force.

P: They are providing for it by building tanks themselves.

N: But how will the Germans be able to carry their own tanks to England? Besides, Churchill doesn't expect an invasion.

S: No, at least not a big invasion. Because of their navy the English will be able to crush much of the German army. Churchill says that as the fighting will be on their own ground they will be at an advantage.

SRI AUROBINDO: What Hitler may do is that he may choose a point and strike with his aeroplanes, destroy the ports and carry his troops over. That is the only possible way, it seems to me. But to maintain a regular supply will be difficult.

P: There is Nazi activity in Uruguay. If America takes up Uruguay's cause, perhaps Berlin will stop threatening her.

SRI AUROBINDO: Oh, if Berlin intervenes, then America will certainly intervene and it may serve as an excuse to Roosevelt to join the war.

EVENING

SRI AUROBINDO: The radio says that the plenipotentiaries are communicating with Pétain. If they come down to communicating, they can't be plenipotentiaries!

N: Then all the previous news was empty rumour?

SRI AUROBINDO: It comes to that.

P: It seems the meeting is being held in the same old place. The terms are about 30 typed pages.

SRI AUROBINDO: Then there won't be any discussion?

P: Not likely. If in the meantime the Italian navy could be destroyed, it could be a great gain.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, but the navy is not wandering about, it must be hiding in ports behind mines.

P: Alexandria has been bombed again.

N: Egypt was once on the point of declaring war. She said that she would do it if her ports and country were attacked.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, she has changed now. She considers these as simply incidents. She removed her troops from the Italian colonies' frontier when in an engagement some were killed.

JUNE 23, 1940

According to the B.B.C., an armistice between France and Germany was signed. The navy, air force and the colonies were supposed to be handed over to Hitler. But the French radio from Saigon said nothing.

P: If the navy and air force revolt and join the British?

(*Sri Aurobindo simply moved his hands meaning, "Don't know what they will do."*)

P: Rumania also has declared itself totalitarian in tune with the Axis powers.

SRI AUROBINDO: Oh! The whole world seems to have been taken up by self-interest, cowardice and treachery.

N: It makes the situation very complicated.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes.

N: But Russia may intervene if Rumania goes over. She has her claims in Bessarabia.

SRI AUROBINDO: She has been assured and so may not press now. Now if Turkey also backs out and Gibraltar goes, then England will be in a precarious condition.

N: Still there are people in the Ashram who think that Hitler wants only Germany's old colonies back and nothing more.

SRI AUROBINDO: He may not want anything else till he has consolidated his position in France. Didn't the American Consul say that Germany wants her colonies and just a little more?

P: France may establish a Fascist dictatorship. The present government consists of all right-wing people.

SRI AUROBINDO: Fascist dictatorship under the Dictator?

S: Has it been in the paper?

P: That is not necessary; one can surmise, because they are right-wingers.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, in the extreme right wing there are two sections: one wants Fascist dictatorship and the other wants to bring back Monarchy.

P: Hitler may try blockade of England.

SRI AUROBINDO: If he has control of the Mediterranean, he will be dangerous.

N: But before that the British navy has to be crushed. It will be different if the French navy surrenders to Hitler.

P: The French navy and the Italian submarines will be powerful enough. But will America join the war?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, if Roosevelt can conquer the anti-intervention feeling.

N: Judging by the inclusion of the Republican members, the situation seems a little worse.

SRI AUROBINDO: How?

P: Has it been confirmed that they have been disowned by the party?

SRI AUROBINDO: No, the members have said that they owe allegiance to the President.

N: But the Republican people have said that they are strongly pro-Allies and heading America to war. Their appointment speaks for itself.

S: How is England going to fight alone?

SRI AUROBINDO: If she can stand against Hitler, it will mean that she is protected by the Divine.

N: But why should there be a special treaty with Italy?

SRI AUROBINDO: Perhaps Italy has special demands.

N: Hitler is protecting Italy's interest. (*Laughter*)

P: Gandhi writes in the *Harjan* that violence hasn't improved the moral stature of man. Non-violence can do that.

SRI AUROBINDO: But he is putting the cart before the horse. The moral stature has to be improved before man becomes non-violent.

S: Sarojini Naidu seems to have visited Raman Maharshi. She writes that she has seen two Mahans: one the Maharshi and the other Gandhi. The Maharshi gives peace.

SRI AUROBINDO: And Gandhi gives charkha? (*Laughter*)

N: There seems to be a Khaksar movement in Bengal also.

SRI AUROBINDO: I see; I didn't know that. In Bihar it is so, in Bengal also it may be so.

N: *The Hindustan Standard* says that the government is not taking any measures against it while it talks of communist and other people.

SRI AUROBINDO: *The Hindustan Standard* is Bose's paper, isn't it?

N: Yes.

SRI AUROBINDO: Then why does it object? They are half Mahommedan themselves!

EVENING

P: It seems to me that very soon there will be a revolution in France. There will be dissatisfaction in the army and among various parties. Already, with the peace terms many sections will be dissatisfied.

SRI AUROBINDO: Oh, yes, within a year of Hitler's going.

P: I do not know if they will wait even for that. The French are such people.

S: Revolution is in their blood and tradition.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, there won't be much chance of success in Hitler's lifetime; Monarchists and Fascists are very few. Most are Republicans. It seems many Leftist leaders have reached London along with rich Jews and others.

N: In that case the prophecy that France will be communist will be fulfilled.

SRI AUROBINDO: All prophecies have turned out wrong. Pondicherry and Bombay prophecies can't be relied on.¹ A French astrologer says that as regards world events Western prophecies have always come wrong while Hindu astrologers were right. Who are the Hindu astrologers? Kapali Shastri also couldn't say about the Year of the Gods.

P: No.

SRI AUROBINDO: About past events not known to them they have said true things.

S: In the *Bhavishya Purana* there are some prophecies.

P: They are more historical than anything else.

SRI AUROBINDO: Apart from the historical prophecies, there are others too, aren't there?

P: Yes, they are more individual than general ones. It speaks of the return of the House of Delhi.

SRI AUROBINDO: The House of Delhi? The Moghul dynasty? But that is finished.

P: The Purana means the Rajputs. As regards historical events, it ends with the advent and establishment of the British Rule in India.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, I remember that during Swadeshi movement Bengali revolutionaries used to quote from it passages to show the downfall of the British.

N: Have you read that Bose is trying to make a pact with Jinnah?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes. But what about the idea of having Pakistan then?

N: He will agree to it.

SRI AUROBINDO: Does he want to Mahomedanise Bengal?

N: Have you seen Gandhi's statement today? He supports the French surrender, saying they did well by bowing to the inevitable.

SRI AUROBINDO: It was not the inevitable.

P: He adds: "provided the terms are honourable."

¹ The former had said that Hitler's fall would begin from June 23, and the latter had put the beginning of the fall at June 20 — Nirodbaran

N: He also says the French did well by refusing to be a party to mutual destruction.

SRI AUROBINDO: Does it mean that you can't do anything but go on being defeated and defeated till you are destroyed? If according to him peace be the aim of life, why fight at all violently or non-violently? You can simply go on peacefully with love for — what is that fellow's name?

P: Virawalla?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, with love in your heart for Virawalla.

P: Gandhi says that Hitlerism produces super-Hitlerism, and that is no solution. Now, regarding the Gospel of Charkha, he says its purpose is not only economic but it is a great instrument of training in discipline and other moral qualities.

SRI AUROBINDO: I see. Why Charkha then? Why not Cricket? You can play Cricket with love in your heart for the bowler? (*Laughter*) I suppose because the Charkha is a weary and monotonous business it helps more to give discipline. Is that the idea? (*Laughter*) (*After a while*) If Bhaskar's new version of radio news is true it means that the Germans will occupy all the ports and frontiers and coasts and the French Government will be interned in Paris and places around it.

NIRODBARAN

SOUL-SEARCH

In the rich receptive silence of the being it blooms;
 And fed by a fire of delight it breathes a fragrance, a presence
 Of the wonderful, a sheer paradise of perfect dreams.
 Each crying gulf of the trembling self thrills to a marvellous sense.

No black inane shadow can mar the glorious vision
 Floating in the sacred waters of the deep devotion.
 Free like a fish, O soul, where no sly net of time
 Woven by death's tremendous skill can cast the gloom,

Plunge deep to the hushed heart of the self-revealing depths
 Where the shining seed of peace in a shoreless sea of power sleeps;
 Lit to a mounting flame of prayer it would burst a volcano of Beauty,
 The purple bloom of God's thousandfold ecstasy.

A. VENKATARANGA

THE IMPERATIVE NEED

IN her message for the 21st February 1973, the Mother has said:

“The more we advance on the way, the more the need of the Divine Presence becomes imperative and indispensable.”

What is meant by this Divine Presence? And why does its need become more imperative and indispensable as we move forward on the way?

For us, of course, the Divine Presence is the Presence of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother whom we adore as the Divine. But what precisely is meant by the word “Presence”?

The fundamental significance of the word is explained by Sri Aurobindo in the following passage:

“It is intended by the word Presence to indicate the sense and perception of the Divine as a Being, felt as present in one’s existence and consciousness or in relation with it, without the necessity of any further qualification or description. Thus of the ‘ineffable Presence’,¹ it can only be said that it is there and nothing more can or need be said about it, although at the same time one knows that all is there, personality and impersonality, Power and Light and Ananda and everything else, and that all these flow from that indescribable Presence. The word may be used sometimes in a less absolute sense, but that is always the fundamental significance, — the essential perception of the essential Presence supporting everything else.”²

The Divine Consciousness is a consciousness of infinite Light, Power, Ananda, Love; but these are attributes of the Divine Nature or Becoming. Their eternal source is the Divine Being. It is the Divine Being or Self that becomes or manifests out of itself the Divine Nature. It is, of course, possible in philosophic thought or on a line of exclusive spiritual experience to deny to the Divine Being any possibility of manifestation or becoming. That would lead to the realisation of the Divine Being as a static Self; but that is a partial and inconclusive realisation. In a more comprehensive and integral experience the Divine Being or Self is realised as the source and fount of the dynamic Divine Nature of infinite Light, Force and Ananda. The Divine Being so experienced in one’s consciousness and existence is called “Presence.”

The Divine Being is simultaneously a transcendent, a universal and an individual

¹ *The Mother* (Centenary Edition, Vol 25, 1972), p. 20

² *Ibid.*, p 64.

Presence. So in the complete experience of the Divine Presence all these three aspects would be felt in a unified totality. But initially the experience may begin with any one aspect and afterwards enlarge and extend itself to the other two. Usually the Presence is first felt within the heart in its individual immanent aspect when the veil of the ordinary consciousness, which thickly covers it, is removed, either as a result of the yogic endeavour or sometimes even without it, because of the inner readiness due to the soul's accumulated experience of past births. Its preliminary contacts are occasional and intermittent, then it is felt as a steadily growing influence; finally there is a permanent union with it. Its development really depends upon the opening of the heart-lotus, *hṛtpadma*, located in the inner being. Sri Aurobindo has described this opening in exquisitely vivid terms:

“When the lotus of the heart breaks open, we feel a divine joy, love and peace expanding in us like a flower of light which irradiates the whole being. They can then unite themselves with their secret source, the Divine in our hearts, and adore him as in a temple; they can flow upwards to take possession of the thought and the will and break out upward towards the Transcendent; they stream out in thought and feeling and act towards all that is around us.”¹

The individual Divine Presence may also reveal itself to us in another way — through the opening of the thousand-petalled lotus, *sahasradala padma*, above the head:

“When the other upper lotus opens, the whole mind becomes full of a divine light, joy and power, behind which is the Divine, the Lord of our being on his throne with our soul beside him or drawn inward into his rays; all the thought and will become then a luminosity, power and ecstasy; in communication with the Transcendent, this can pour down towards our mortal members and flow by them outwards on the world.”²

To most persons the revelation of the Divine Presence first comes in its immanent individual aspect and afterwards slowly or suddenly it extends to the whole world around where it is felt as a universal Presence in all beings and things. To some, however, the Presence is revealed first in the world and afterwards their own consciousness is taken up by the enviroing Presence into itself. As Sri Aurobindo describes it:

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Centenary Edition, Vol. 21, 1972), p. 570. The individual Presence of the Divine immanent in the heart is often taken for the psychic being, but that is a mistake. As Sri Aurobindo says, “They are quite different things. The psychic being is one's own individual soul-being. It is not the Divine, though it has come from the Divine and develops towards the Divine.” (*Letters on Yoga*, Centenary Edition, Vol. 22, 1972, p. 298). The psychic being is constantly in contact with the immanent Divine in the inner heart but it is not itself the immanent Divine.

² *Ibid.*, p. 570.

“There is often a sudden opening by which the veil of forms is itself turned into a revelation. A universal spiritual Presence, a universal Peace, a universal infinite Delight has manifested, immanent, embracing, all-penetrating. This Presence by our love of it, our delight in it, our constant thought of it returns and grows upon us; it becomes the thing that we see and all else is only its habitation, form and symbol. Even all that is most outward, the body, the form, the sound, whatever our senses seize, are seen as this Presence; they cease to be physical and are changed into a substance of spirit. This transformation means a transformation of our own inner consciousness; we are taken by the surrounding Presence into itself and we become part of it. Our own mind, life, body become to us only its habitation and temple, a form of its working and an instrument of its self-expression. All is only soul and body of this delight.”¹

This is the experience of the universal Presence around us on our own physical plane. But we may first experience the Presence in a high-uplifted ineffable transcendence above and may not feel it in ourselves or around us. But afterwards this experience also enlarges itself and we begin to feel it in our own being and in the world around us.

In reality the Divine Being in itself is at once a transcendent, a universal and an indwelling individual immanent Presence. These three aspects are not separate or exclusive as they appear to our experience when we approach it from our ignorant and divided consciousness. In the highest supramental experience they all coalesce without, however, abolishing themselves. We come to realise the Divine Being as the One who is “the transcendent unknown or unknowable Absolute, the unexpressed and unmanifested Ineffable above us; but he is also the Self of all beings, the Master of all worlds, transcending all worlds.... He is the Cosmic Spirit and all this creative Energy around us. He is the Immanent within us.”²

But this integral realisation of the One Divine Being comes only at the end of a very long and difficult endeavour. In the earlier stages it is the personal relation with the individual immanent Divine that is of the utmost importance to us because it brings an intensely close and intimate contact with him. And, in fact, this individual aspect is “a key to his sublimest hidden mystery and ecstasy”³ because it mediates between the transcendent and the universal aspects and can “bridge our passage from the one to the other.”⁴ As Sri Aurobindo says: “In this aspect the transcendent and universal person of the Divine conforms itself to our individualised personality and accepts a personal relation with us, at once identified with us as our supreme Self and yet close and different as our Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher, our Father and our Mother, our Playmate in the great world-game...”⁵

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 571

² *Ibid.*, p. 231.

^{3 4 5} *Ibid.*, p. 244

When we develop this intimate personal relation with the indwelling Presence we feel it as our constant companion on the way who guides and helps and protects us and in whom we take complete refuge with loving trust. In Sri Aurobindo's own moving words: "there are relations, personal, intimate as life itself, sweet as love, encompassing like the sky, deep like deep waters. A Friend walks at our side; a Lover is with us in our heart's secrecy; a Master of the Work and the Ordeal points our way; a Creator of things uses us as his instrument; we are in the arms of the eternal Mother."¹

The One who is simultaneously the Transcendent, the Universal and the Immanent Individual is "The Supreme Lord" of whom the Mother constantly speaks and with whom she is identified in her being and consciousness.

On the path of Integral Yoga we have a constant need of Him because the work of transformation of our inner and outer nature would be impossible to achieve by our own effort. Our need of Him becomes greater as we proceed because the resistance and the opposition which our own nature and the world-forces offer to us increases as we move forward on the path. Eventually, as we draw near the goal, we reach a point where the resistance becomes so vehement and the opposition so overwhelming that we cannot move even a single step forward by our own strength and it becomes imperative and indispensable to depend on Him for all things great or small in an attitude of absolute reliance, abandoning the entire responsibility of our life and work in His hands.

Perhaps in our sadhana we have now reached this point where the need of this absolute reliance on His Presence has become imperative and indispensable, and so the Mother has drawn our attention to it in her message.

KISHOR GANDHI

¹ *Ibid*, p. 249

SRI AUROBINDO'S POLITICAL THOUGHT: AN OUTLINE

(Continued from the issue of March, 1973)

The Ideal Solution: Its Preconditions

IT IS possible, suggests Sri Aurobindo, to devise a better method of solving the problem of international relations. The ideal solution would be, if there is no alternative to the mechanical method of unification — and we are so far assuming that there can be none — to create a loose form of world union with the nations of today or with groups of nations freely joining together in future to form the constituent units of such a union, which may preferably be of the true federal type leaving to the units full freedom in all matters that do not seriously affect the interests of the whole. Such a solution has indeed been suggested by many an idealist thinker. But the difficulties in the way of its actual realisation within a foreseeable future are so enormous that it remains only an ideal, until conditions change radically.

For, in the first place, the nations of the world, even after the great liberating movement set on foot by the Second World War, are still far from being really free to choose their own destiny; apart from the “satellites” within the Communist orbit, many of the newly freed nations are still tied to the apron strings of their former masters. A free world union implies besides some measure of equality in political and economic status among the constituent units; and that is still far away. And above all, so long as war remains a strong possibility, there cannot be a free world-federation; for war or the threat of war and a free consent to form a world union do not go well together. There has also been absent so far the necessary psychological preparation for such a union. The ideal of human unity has no doubt been vaguely making its way to the front of our consciousness. And the internationalist sentiment of the highly intellectual is getting a chance to be shared by the general mass. The United Nations Organisation, in spite of the many malignancies that threaten its existence, still manages to perform a role. But something more is needed.

We shall have, in the first place, to discourage the almost inevitable tendency which must lead any unification by political, economic and administrative means, in a word, by the force of machinery, to follow the analogy of the evolution of the nation-state. And we shall have to encourage and revive that force of idealistic nationalism which before the Great War seemed on the point of being crushed. But at the same time we shall have to find a cure for the as yet incurable separative sentiments natural to the very idea to which we shall have to give a renewed strength. How is all this to be done?

Here, we have to rely partly on one of Nature's major principles of working. The

law of action and reaction, says Sri Aurobindo in this context, is in human action a constant and pervading truth. For Nature works by a balancing system of the interplay of opposite forces. When she has insisted for some time on the dominant force of one tendency, like centralisation, she corrects its exaggerations by calling again into play and bringing into the field the tendency that is exactly opposite, the spirit of multiform variation. This is what has actually happened in recent history. The nation-idea which immediately before the Great War seemed doomed to disappear altogether and replaced by the empire-idea, has revived with startling force since the end of the War. The nation now is assured of practical immortality.

The force of idealistic nationalism which found a poignant expression in the predominantly subjective phases of the liberation movement in India and later in Ireland, received a startling impetus in the doctrine of self-determination propounded by the Allies and later by the Russian revolutionaries during the Great War. None of them could give practical effect to this doctrine to any considerable degree at the time. But, as Sri Aurobindo suggests, even if it fails entirely in its present push for realisation, the principle of national self-determination which relies on free consent rather than on force as the ultimate basis of international relations will have its part to play in a better prepared future.

The need for a better psychological preparation becomes obvious when we bear in mind that the very idea of self-determination carries with it a danger of misapplication. The danger becomes serious if the "self" which seeks its right to exist is identified in the national mind with the nation's ego. That is exactly what happened in the case of the new-born national sentiment in Germany's recent history, with results that should act as a warning to others. National self-determination must harmonise with a common self-determination for the world at large; freedom must move in the frame of unity. To make the nations conscious of their souls, in which alone they can find their true unity with all the other nations in a common aspiration towards the truth of the Spirit: this is the complete formula and this the task set before modern man. This alone can circumvent the national egoisms that stand in the way.

A Religion of Humanity

In a word, there must evolve a new religion of humanity more powerful in its appeal than the religion of country that is the most effective means of keeping the national egoisms alive. This religion of humanity, Sri Aurobindo hastens to add, is not to be confused with a particular set of uniform dogma and ritual. Mankind has tried unity by that means; it has failed and deserved to fail, because there can be no universal religious system, one in mental creed and vital form. A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one, that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth; that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. There must be the realisation by the individual that only in the life of his fellow-

men is his own life complete. There must be the realisation by the race that only on the free and full life of the individual can its own perfection and permanent happiness be founded.

Such a realisation cannot obviously come without a special discipline. And this discipline cannot at first be undertaken except by a small élite who recognise its imperative necessity. Therefore, concludes Sri Aurobindo, the hope of the race lies in the growing number of such individuals who make this realisation their primary end in life. It is only through such individuals and groups of individuals that the true bond of human unity can become generalised in the race. Could such a realisation develop rapidly in mankind, we might then solve the problem of international relations in a deeper and truer way, from the inner truth to the outer forms; we may in that case even dispense largely with the necessity of an external form of union.

But until then, the attempt to bring it about by mechanical means must proceed. For the alternative would be a lingering suicide of the race, which the gods would not permit if they have a use for man.

(To be continued)

SANAT K. BANERJI

SOUL-BIRTH

OUT of the luminous depths of my being
 Rose the silver song of the blue bird
 Thronging the ancient skies with shining notes of harmony.
 Each heart throb now echoes the foam-white sea.

A profound pause on ecstasy's height
 In a perfect poise of self-delight
 Sweeping Vast vistas of visionary sight
 And beings soaked in joyous light.

Then the symphonies of chanting silence
 Flowed out in happy gurgling streams,
 Slowly stirred the new-born flaming soul
 Spiralling to its long forgotten home.

All glowed in the creative splendour
 Of a child-form from Time's hushed hour.

VINAY

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE FUTURE

A SEARCH APROPOS OF R. C. ZAEHNER'S STUDY IN SRI AUROBINDO AND TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

(Continued from the issue of March, 1973)

5 (contd.)

ZAEHNER'S INTERPRETATION OF TEILHARD, THE QUESTION OF TEILHARD'S PANTHEISM

(f)

BETTER to drive to its mark our point that Teilhard fused the genuinely pantheistic with the genuinely Christian, we may revert to a topic already touched upon in an earlier chapter: de Lubac's claim that the Cosmic Christ of Teilhard is essentially present not only in St. Paul but also in several commentators and interpreters of the Apostle. The sole difference stressed is that Teilhard fitted this Christ into an evolutionary framework, thereby modernising Christianity. Very cleverly de Lubac takes care to quote from Teilhard's own contemporary co-religionists, as if to show that the Church of his time was not at all blind to what may be termed Teilhardian truths.

The most important among the experts he begins with is Père Fernand Prat, author of the "classic work, *The Theology of St. Paul*."¹ Prat writes: "without Christ all creatures would be scattered, would be fragmented, and, in mutual conflict, would sink back again into nothingness. It is Christ who preserves for them, with existence, cohesion and harmony.... He is the all-mastering centre of creation.... Even, then, in so far as he is man, Jesus Christ has a cosmic role."²

Next comes Père Joseph Huby in his classic "*Commentary on the Epistles of the Captivity*."³ Huby writes on Christ: "In him all was created as in the supreme centre of unity, harmony, and cohesion, which gives the world its meaning and its value, and so its reality: or, to put it another way, as in the 'foyer' (*the meeting point* — Lightfoot) at which all the threads, all the generating forces of the Universe, are woven together and coordinated.... He is the dominating centre, the keystone of the Universe: 'In him all subsist'.... Of the created world he made an ordered cosmos, giving it a

¹ *Teilhard de Chardin: The Man and His Meaning* by Henri de Lubac, translated by René Hague (A Mentor Omega Book, The New American Library, New York, 1967), p 40

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.* pp 40-1

meaning, a value, and relating it to an end.... Creation is oriented towards him as to the perfection of its fulfilment."¹

Then there is Père Pierre Benoit, O. P.:

"The person of Christ and his work are looked at from a *cosmic* point of view. Christian salvation takes on the dimensions of the universe.... To designate the whole, Paul uses the word Pleroma....

"The central theme that strikes one immediately is that of the *cosmic supremacy* of Christ [Paul asserts] that the *plenitude* of the cosmos lies in Christ.... Christ, God and man by virtue of the Incarnation crowned by the Resurrection, embraces in this plenitude not only God who saves, not only men who are saved, but the whole setting of humanity, that is to say, the cosmos, including the angelic powers.... From these views the Epistle to the Colossians acquires the *cosmic, celestial horizon* that characterises it."²

De Lubac³ exclaims: "The cosmic Christ! The cosmic function of Christ — 'not only moral but physical'! This we see is not simply something that Teilhard invented." But de Lubac never offers an explanation of one glaring fact. The fact springs into relief from his own choosing of writers with a view to aligning Teilhardism with the contemporary Church. Actually his choice cuts the ground from under his feet. Prat's authoritative work in French dates to 1926 — its English translation appeared in 1945.⁴ Huby's famous study in *Verbum Salutis* 8, was published in 1935.⁵ Benoit's *Les Éptres de Saint Paul aux Philippiens*, etc., saw the light in 1949.⁶ And all these books carried the Catholic Church's *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*. The censors found absolutely nothing objectionable in their Cosmic Christ. Yet in the same period they clamped down uncompromisingly on Teilhard's. If "the cosmic function of Christ", which he spoke of, was not "simply something that Teilhard invented", why was his concurrence with his fellow-ecclesiastics so ruthlessly suppressed? They too lived in the modern milieu and not in one where "the world, the 'whole' (with all the organic definitions that these words imply for us), were still non-existent for human consciousness."⁷ They too were aware that Evolution as a world-view had come to stay. So why the inequality of treatment by the Church? We may pick out the answer from de Lubac himself. They never underwent the conversion of thought which de Lubac⁸ describes in Teilhard's case without properly understanding it: "It became increasingly more evident to Teilhard that, if Christ was to remain himself, without diminution, at the centre of our faith, then — if the world is an evolution —

¹ *Ibid.*, p 41.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, pp 41-2.

⁴ *The Theology of Saint Paul*, translated from the French Edition by John L. Stodd (Brown, Oates and Washbourne, London & Dublin)

⁵ De Lubac, *Op cit*, p 41. fn 18

⁶ *Ibid.*, fn 19

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 43-4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

the cosmic Christ, the Beginning, the Bond and the Term of all creation, must now offer himself for our adoration as the 'evolutive' Christ."

It is this "'evolutive' Christ" that is the rub. But to fit Christ into an evolutionary framework does not automatically set up the evolutive Christ or, as another phrase of Teilhard goes, "Christ the Evolver."¹ The crucial step lies in passing from the "moral" to the "physical" or, to put it otherwise, from the "juridical" to the "organic". One can stick to the former category in either pair even in an evolutionary framework, and then there is really no modernisation of Christianity. Teilhard is very precise in this matter and permits no loose thinking. Apropos of "the mystery in which Christianity is summed up, the mystery of the Incarnation,"² he³ writes:

"So long as it is described and treated in juridical terms, the Incarnation appears a simple phenomenon — one that can be superimposed upon any type of world. Whether the universe be large or small, static or evolutionary, it is equally simple for God to *give* it to his Son: for all that is involved, to put it briefly, is a declaration. A very different situation comes to light if we look at it from an organic point of view, which is basically the point of view of all true knowledge of the real. The Christian's (or rather, to be more precise, the Catholic's) dearest belief is that Christ envelops him in his grace and makes him participate in his divine life. When we go on to ask by what physical possibility this mysterious process is effected, we are told 'by the divine power'. Very well — but this is no more an answer than is the Negro's who explains an aircraft by saying 'white man's magic'. How exactly is the divine power to put the universe together in such a way that it may be possible for an incarnation to be biologically effected in it?... If we Christians wish to *retain* in Christ the very qualities on which his power and our worship are based, we have no better way — no other way, even — of doing so than fully to accept the most modern concepts of evolution."

So we see that Christ has to be born in the world biologically, evolutively. To posit such a birth and not merely to adopt an evolutionary framework is what is meant by modernising Christianity. And an even more direct gloss on the modernisation is available when Teilhard discusses the phenomenon of revelation. "God," he⁴ tells us, "never reveals himself to us from outside, by intrusion, but *from within*, by stimulation, elevation and enrichment of the human psychic current..." Teilhard gives a footnote to the words "*from within*". The footnote runs: "i.e. *evolutively*. Correctly speaking, the basic principle that in all domains (creation, redemption, revelation, sanctification) God never acts except evolutively seems to me necessary, and all that is necessary, for modernizing Christianity." Thus, if Christianity is to be modernised and Christ to be evolutive, we must think of him as revealing himself in history not from outside but from within the world by a stimulation, elevation and enrichment of, in

¹ *Christianity and Evolution* (Collins, London, 1971), p. 138.

² *Ibid*, p. 126.

³ *Ibid*, pp 126-27

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 160.

the immediate instance, the general human psychic current and, in the intermediate instance, all the biological currents of the earth and, in the remote initial instance, the currents of the whole universe studied by physics.

Teilhard¹ succinctly puts this view of Christ's historical incarnation and of whatever future results follow from it: "Christogenesis...is none other than the 'soul' of cosmogenesis." Conversely, we may affirm that, to Teilhard, cosmogenesis is the process of bringing out the Christ who dwells as a soul in the evolving body that is the whole cosmos. This would make Christ "incarnate" himself from the beginning in the universe and proceed through all evolution to become the historic Incarnation proper. The basic identity of primal Creation and later Incarnation is the very quick of Christianity's modernisation. This identity is implied in a phrase like "the *axis* of Incarnation, that is to say, of Creation".² To Teilhard, Creation consists in the "progressive unification of the multiple",³ — "pure multiplicity" which is God's "antipodial' aureole'"⁴ (or shadow). When "creation is presented essentially in terms of evolution ... *the same* fundamental process can be called creation, incarnation, or redemption according to what aspect of it is considered.. ."⁵ Thus creation can be called incarnation, for "the Divine 'I', as a direct result of its own operation, cannot but 'immerse' itself in its work"⁶ — just as creation can be called redemption, for, "at whatever point *during* the process of unification the created is considered, it represents a portion of residual non-organization or disorganization (actual or potential) which is the determining factor in all forms of evil...evil which has to be atoned for and overcome."⁷ Teilhard also writes of "Creation (*because* it is unifying) entailing a certain immersion of the Creator in his work, and at the same time (*because* it is necessarily productive of evil as a secondary statistical effect) entailing a certain redemptive compensation."⁸

The basic equating of creation with incarnation stands out again when Teilhard appreciates the traditional concept of God as "triune", a trinity in unity, three persons in one. He says: "If God were not 'triune' (if, that is, he contained no inner self-distinction)...we could not conceive the possibility of his creating (and in consequence being incarnate) without totally immersing himself in the world he brings into being."⁹ This is tantamount to saying that creation is a (progressive) universal incarnation which yet leaves God "transcendent" — subsisting free, independent, self-fulfilled.

Does de Lubac or any other Catholic commentator understand Teilhard's universal incarnationism? And which of the Pauline expositors who were Teilhard's con-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 166

² *Ibid.*, p. 166.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 178

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 133-34.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-35

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-58

temporaries could have subscribed to it? Unless this incarnationism is granted, Christ's "cosmic function" cannot truly go beyond being moral and juridical to being physical and organic. The cosmicity these ecclesiastics, St. Paul's followers, attribute to Christ is easily seen for what it is through some passages in Prat. Prat has other Teilhardian phrases which de Lubac has not quoted — such as that Christ makes all things "converge towards him, as to their common centre." Still, he is leagues away from Teilhard. After expounding St. Paul's formula that in all things Christ holds the primacy (Colossians I. 18) as fundamentally meaning the same as "he is before all things" (*Ibid.*, I. 17), Prat¹ goes on to deal with some outstanding cosmic suggestions in the Apostle:

"The absolute primacy of the Son is expressed by this other formula 'All things are in him, all things are by him, all things are for him.' All things are *in* him because, being the perfect image of God, he comprises the ideal and the model of all things possible and is thus the exemplary cause of all contingent beings. All things are *by* him, as the efficient cause, God, in his outward operations, acting by the Son in the Holy Spirit in accordance with the order and harmony of his inmost life. All things are *for* him by a double right, both because the creation is his work and because God, embracing at a glance the whole multitude of his counsels, connected with his Son, in advance and by a special bond of finality, the world of nature and the world of grace. For these two relations of Christ as God and as man, as the author of nature and as the author of grace, are hardly ever separated, but, whether he be considered as God or as man, his transcendent dignity comes originally from his primacy."

This kind of cosmicity, based on the great so-called cosmic passage of Colossians I, 15-20, is what one would ascribe to all divinity acting with the power of creative and controlling consciousness. It is just to be expected in one who is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Word that was in the beginning no less than the Word that became flesh. And de Lubac² has little difficulty in placing before us various exegeses almost right from the earliest centuries of Christianity, proclaiming Christ's universal presence and domination in vivid concept and concrete imagery. These texts can never smack of heresy, no matter how closely they may seem to anticipate Teilhardian formulas. De Lubac is wrong in labelling as Teilhard's "spiritual ancestry" either "a disciple of St. Hippolytus" or Origen, St. Gregory of Nyssa or St. Maximus the Confessor, Rabanus Maurus or, in less olden times, Cardinal de Bérulle. Nowhere do de Lubac's evidences have any precise relation to the "physical" cosmicity of Teilhard's Christ. Teilhard would scarcely have been stifled for teaching, however vividly in concept and concretely in imagery, the general cosmicity of God.

Starting with this cosmicity, he brings out an entirely new shade of theological vision. From St. Paul's paean to the Christ in whom all was created, he *in quo omnia constant* ("in whom all things hold together" — Colossians I, 17) and who consum-

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol II, pp 146-7.

² *Op. cit.*, pp 55-7

mates everything, Teilhard conjured up an aspect quite original. That is why, despite the cosmicity in the general sense that had always been admitted, he could urge the need for "the rise in Christian consciousness of what we might call the *Universal-Christ*", and write¹ with urgent emphasis:

"Hitherto, the thought of the faithful could hardly be said explicitly to distinguish in practice more than two aspects of Christ: the Man-Jesus and the Word-God. Yet it is clear that a third aspect of the theandric complex was left in the background. By that I mean the mysterious super-human person constantly underlying the Church's most fundamental institutions and most solemn dogmatic affirmations.... Until today, I repeat, this third aspect of the *incarnate* Word has been insufficiently distinguished from the other two — for lack, apparently, of a concrete, 'phenomenal' substratum which could be materialized in Christian thought and piety. But consider what is happening today. Under the combined influence of men's thoughts and aspirations, the universe around us is seen to be knit together and convulsed by a vast movement of convergence. Not only theoretically, but experientially, our modern Cosmogony is taking the form of a cosmogenesis (or rather a psycho-or noo-genesis) at the term of which we can distinguish a supreme focus of personalizing personality [Omega Point]. Who can fail to see the purport, the reinforcement, the stimulus which this discovery of the physical pole of universal synthesis contributes to our view of revelation? Just suppose that we *identify* (at least in his 'natural' aspect) the cosmic Christ of faith with the Omega Point of science: then everything in our outlook is clarified and broadened and falls into harmony. First, the term of the world's physical-biological evolution no longer appears indeterminate to our reason: it has been given a concrete peak, a heart, a face. And secondly there is the effect on our faith. The exaggerated properties attributed to the incarnate Word by tradition lose their metaphysical and juridical character; they take their place smoothly and realistically among and at the head of the most fundamental of the currents now recognized in the universe by science. Christ is indeed, we must admit, in a fantastic position; but, just because it is fantastic it fits the true scale of things. The fact is, that the keystone of the arch to be built is there in our hands. If we are to effect the synthesis between faith in God and faith in the world, for which our generation is waiting, there is nothing better we can do than dogmatically to bring out in the person of Christ the cosmic aspect and function which make him organically the prime mover and controller, the 'soul', of evolution."

Thus adjusting Christ into a new position, Teilhard² says: "Projected, then, on the screen of evolution Christ in an exact, physical, unvarnished sense is seen to possess those most awesome properties which St. Paul lavishly attributes to him."

Surely, nobody can take Teilhard's universalisation of the Pauline Christ for granted? By contrast, how expected and commonplace the general cosmicity of God

¹ *Op cit.*, pp 179-80

² *Ibid*, p. 88

could be to a non-Teilhardian exegete of St. Paul is illustrated by the greatest of Pauline authorities tapped by de Lubac. Prat never speaks of Christ's "cosmic role" in this connection. It is a specific phase of Christ's work that elicits the term from Prat. The term comes in only when Christ, from being the Lord of the universe in a general sense, grows in St. Paul's prophetic eyes the Dispenser of harmony to all existence at the end of human history as well as the Deliverer of the entire universe at that time. Also, the term in question or any equivalent of it appears in Prat as applying to situations that are rare in St. Paul and do not constitute the Apostle's usual "soteriology", his prevalent conception of Christ's Saviour-mission. If we follow Prat, we are not entitled to make too much capital, for Paul's cosmicism, out of a few non-typical verses. Prat¹ is worth hearing on these points.

He commences: "in general, the redeeming plan has our earth for its horizon and comprises only the human race. Sometimes, however, the prospect widens out and the divine plan comprehends the universality of being, making the whole of creation converge towards Christ...." Then Prat quotes Colossians I. 19-20 where Christ, who has complete primacy and in whom all fullness dwells is ordained by God to reconcile among themselves all things on earth and in heaven. Prat stresses the particle *re* in the verb "reconcile", suggesting "a return to a previous state of concord before the appearance of sin". Next, he comments on a similar text, Ephesians I.9,10, where God has willed ultimately to "re-establish all things in Christ, that are in heaven and on earth". Prat writes:

"In the parallel passage the field of vision remains as wide, but the union of beings under the sceptre of the incarnate Word is marked in it by a still more definite characteristic....

"In both there is indicated — or insinuated — the return to a primitive state of harmony and concord; finally, in both the cosmic role of Christ serves as a prelude to the reconciliation of the pagans with God and to the reunion of the Jews and Gentiles in one and the same mystical body.

"Even as man, therefore, Jesus Christ has a cosmic role; he is the head of the angels and has dominion over all creation. If we think of the disorder produced by sin in the entire work of God and of the harmony which the presence of Christ restores to it, we see that this cosmic role is in some way closely related to soteriology. It is a sort of cosmical reaction of the incarnation and a sudden enlargement of the horizon contemplated by the Apostle, whose gaze does not usually go beyond the salvation of man."

To the term "soteriology" Prat has the footnote: "All creatures participate *to a certain degree* in the blessings of redemption. The glorification of man sheds its influence morally over the whole universe. For this idea see Roms. viii 20, 21."

Apropos of the text here referred to, Prat² remarks:

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 89-94.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 381-2

“When man has once arrived at the term of his destinies, what will become of his former dwelling-place? Only one text of the Apostle authorizes us to make some rather uncertain inferences on the subject. It represents the material creation as awaiting with anxiety and impatience the glorification of the elect, in which God has promised to make it participate.

“Without laying undue stress on this poetical word-picture it is evident that the material creation — for it is of this that the Apostle speaks in contrast to rational things — was associated in some measure with the fall of man and that it will to some degree participate in his glorification.”

Then Prat asks whether the earth actually “lost its natural fertility” or whether the situation was merely such as to make “man lose the providential aid which protected him from the hard law of toil”. The question also involves asking what kind of redemption there will be. Prat says: “This isolated text does not allow us to reply to this question with certainty. The curse pronounced by God upon the earth punished man directly, but affected the earth only by reaction.... We should ask Paul, less than anyone, to describe to us the destinies of the material creation. All his interest is concentrated on the history of humanity. Even this history, in proportion as it progresses, becomes bounded within an ever-narrowing horizon; first the human race, then the Church militant, then the elect associated with the triumph of Christ, and finally, God all in all.”

These frank, judicious and cautionary expressions are an excellent antidote to the infection common today of Pauline Christology by the cosmic outlook. And they are more than sufficient to cure us of identifying with the out-and-out cosmicity of the Teilhardian Christ this Christology as well as the Christology of Paul's exegetes in Teilhard's day. No ground is essentially shared by Teilhard and his fellow-religionists of the first half of the 20th century. The venture to prove the Roman Catholic Church not a purblind tyrant towards Teilhard and to suggest a basic affinity between it and him in spite of all contrary appearances is disingenuous and unconvincing.

Surely, Teilhard was acquainted with the Pauline exegesis current in his lifetime? He must have found it totally inadequate and felt that it did not do justice either to the Apostle's vision or to his own sympathetic modern version of it. In his understanding of Paul he was, as Prat's treatment of the Colossians-passage as well as of other verses leads us to think, quite in error, notwithstanding Romans viii, 19.22 and the text in Acts 17.28 where Paul is credited with the strikingly pantheist phrase, “In him we live, and move, and have our being.” The cosmicity read in Paul by Teilhard's ecclesiastical contemporaries and fully approved by Rome was to his mind no more than “moral”. About the Christ who would possess it without possessing “physical” cosmicity he had a very poor opinion, as we may recognise from his assertion that “we must unhesitatingly attribute to the Incarnate Word”, whom St. Paul (Philippians 3.21) invests with the power to subject everything to himself, an organic cosmicity of evolutive energy “if we are not to allow a world to assume greater dimensions, to overflow its limits, around the figure of Christ — a world that would be more

beautiful, more majestic, more organic and more worthy of adoration than Christ.”¹ This clearly shows that — again to use Teilhard’s turns — unless we hold that “the universe is physically impregnated to the very core of its matter by the influence of [Christ’s] supernatural nature” and that “the presence of the Incarnate Word penetrates everything, as a universal element”,² Christianity, in Teilhard’s eyes, lamentably falls short. The traditional Christ, whatever the cosmicity accorded him by the orthodox representatives of the 20th-century Roman Church, is not Teilhard’s Christ: he lacks the latter’s universal incarnationism.

This incarnationism was misunderstood by that Church as being, in the words of Dom Georges Frénaud³, “contradictory of the personal God”; but the Church was right to think that, once more in Frénaud’s phrase, “the ‘Cosmic Christ’ [in Teilhard] is necessarily an expression tainted with pantheism.”⁴ Of course, the participle “tainted” draws its condemnatory life from the mistake in believing that a Personal God has to be sacrificed if pantheism is affirmed. But the essentially pantheist component of Teilhardism emerges with definitive clarity from the very attempt de Lubac makes to deny it by citing Catholic interpreters of what Père Irénée Hausherr designates Paul’s “obsession with totality” and with Christ’s “universalism.”⁵

The same component gains emphasis from some quotations by de Lubac from orthodox predecessors of Teilhard, meant to prove that pantheist-seeming expressions are not really anathema to the Church. Thus St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of Teilhard’s order, taught his followers to “contemplate God as existing in every one of his creatures.”⁶ St. Teresa believed that God is present in all beings, and St. Thomas Aquinas said: “God must be present in all things, and that in an intimate manner.”⁷ There is also a contemporary of Teilhard’s, the Thomist theologian Pierre-Thomas Dehau, O. P., “whose only concern is to state the most fully traditional teaching” and who wrote: “Our habitual concepts tell us only about personalities exterior to and therefore foreign or strange to our own. When we are concerned with God, we must realize that we are concerned with a being who is certainly distinct from us, but who is at the same time the reason for our own being.... If I take myself, suppressing all my imperfections and magnifying to infinity my own poor perfections, even those most personal and peculiar to myself, the most incommunicable, then I have God. That is why theologians can say, ‘God is not another, he is virtually and eminently myself, he is an infinite myself, pure act’.... It is thus that, while completely rejecting pantheism, we retain anything legitimate that may be contained in its tendencies.”⁸ The end of this statement, appearing in 1942, strikes a

¹ *Science and Christ* (Collins, London, 1967), p. 57.

² *Ibid.*

³ De Lubac, *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

note very much like Teilhard's sentence: "The 'universalised' Christ takes over, correcting and completing them, the energies that undoubtedly lie hidden in modern forms of pantheism."¹ And yet Teilhard's sentence could not be published during his life-time. Even now de Lubac, although considering Dehau's expression bolder than any of Teilhard's, has to be at considerable pains to defend Teilhard from those who are inclined to accuse him of worshipping Nature. This is because there are directly pantheist overtones in a doctrine which figures the Christ of orthodoxy as less divine than the infinite evolving universe of modern science, if that Christ is not "universalized" in a form "which is more organic and takes more account of physics".² "A Christ who is no longer master of the world solely because he has been *proclaimed* to be such, but because he animates the whole range of things from top to bottom; a Christ who dominates the history of heaven and earth not solely because these have been *given* to him, but because his gestation, his birth and gradual consummation constitute *physically* the only definitive reality in which the evolution of the world is expressed; there we have the only God whom we can henceforth worship sincerely. And that is precisely the God suggested to us by the new aspect the universe has assumed."³

We may attend to the point that cosmic evolution is equated with the gestation, birth and gradual consummation of Christ. Christ and universal history are identified in the sense that the former underlies the latter and the latter unfolds the former. A divine incarnation co-extensive with all time and space and progressively manifested is implied. To return to a theme already mentioned, Creation, Incarnation and Redemption are now, unlike as in orthodox Christianity, the continuity of a single event in three focuses, each of which discloses more emphatically one or other perspective of the same movement. As Teilhard has put it: "to create is, for God, to unite himself to his work, that is to say in one way or another to involve himself in the world by incarnation. And is not 'to be incarnate' *ipso facto* to share in the suffering and evils inherent in the painfully concentrating multiple?"⁴ After the participation in the world-travail there comes at long last the fulfilment or Pleroma, in which the world will be openly filled with the presence of the cosmic Christ and become directly his vast Mystical Body.

In a more fervent and personal manner Teilhard expresses his cosmic Christian credo thus: "Lord of Consistence and Union, You whose distinguishing mark and essence are that You can grow indefinitely, without distortion or break in time with the mysterious Matter at whose heart You lie and of all whose movements You are the final controller — Lord of my childhood and of my end — God, fulfilled for himself, and yet for us, God whose birth has no end — God who, since You offer Yourself for our adoration as 'evolver and evolutive,' are now the only God who can bring us satis-

¹ *Science and Christ*, p. 134.

² *Christianity and Evolution*, p. 89

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 182-83.

faction — tear away at last all the clouds that still veil You — and tear away the clouds too of hostile prejudices and false beliefs.”¹

De Lubac, in order to remove the fear of some readers that “Teilhard did not believe sufficiently in the eternal present-ness of God or in the initial divinity of Jesus of Nazareth,” comments: “the passage...contains expressions that remove the double ambiguity: the God to whose birth for us there is no end is the God ‘fulfilled for himself,’ and the ‘evolutive’ Christ is first, in himself, Christ ‘the evolver.’” De Lubac is right in assuring us that the traditional divinity of Christ is not negated, but he hardly realises the full implications of Teilhard’s credo. We may sum them up best by harking back, at the start, to his expression that the universe as newly seen by Science shows itself as worthy of adoration. If it draws us to adore it, Teilhard takes it to be a divine entity in its essential being. And his cosmic Christ cannot be interpreted in any way to undivine it. This Christ provides the true reason for its adorableness, the real ground of its divinity. He is the perfect soul, of which it is the evolving body. Nor is this all. There is not only Christ the Evolver by whom the universe evolves, there is also the evolutive Christ, the Christ who himself evolves in what appears to be a universe evolving. A God is being engendered in the cosmos at the same time that a complete and fulfilled God already exists both in himself and as the directing cosmic principle of evolution. They are the same God — one who is transcendent even while being a perfect Pantheos and one who while being this perfect Pantheos is also progressively emergent in matter and life and mind and, beyond individual minds, a collective superconsciousness.

(To be continued)

K. D. SETHNA

¹ De Lubac, *Op. cit.*, p. 50, quoting from *Le cœur de la matière*.

THE WHEEL OF SURYA

O EYE of the divinity we are,
Immaculate all-blending autopsy
Your native splendour and abiding grace,
Full-orbed and lordly in your sovereignty
All-seeing and infiring, near and far
To your majestic sure unhurried pace
The same and One, with life no shade can mar,
Your flaming arrows piercing holy,
O never veil the glory of your face!

Your streaming hair has no comparison,
And wraps existence in its aureole,
Inspired from your vast blazing heart;
Forever do your golden coursers run
And beat the systole and the diastole
Of life immortal in its every part,
O focus of divinity, O Sun;
You are the chariot and the guiding soul,
The inward prompting and the finished art.

All prayer and celebration is your own,
O golden youth in ageless mastery,
O Surya ! emblemmed in the azure fields
You flex your golden arms, your seeds are strown
Throughout the universe, that ever yields
Your substance in its teeming harmony,
Your countless patterned images alone
Are force and being of the destiny
That rhythmically its inborn purpose wields.

Lithe are your golden legs, and swift afire,
All strength and beauty moving time and change
From that eternity that is your home;
You shape the infinite with your vast lyre,
All blessed music turns your heaven's dome
To shapes that in their hearts bear all the range
Of your divinity; and dark and strange
For aeons are the ways your children roam,
Forever deepening and struggling higher.

You slay and heal, your golden hand is sure,
 Its golden touch is turning our poor clay,
 And proving to the perfect hardened round;
 In your caressing blows does love abound
 And dizzying swift whirl, you cast away
 But to preserve and firm with grace all pure;
 O Furnace, beauty is your signature,
 Your closed immense heat opens to the day
 When deathless all shall sign you, true and sound.

Your heavenly vast arc is burgeoning
 And through your cycles blooming; seeds are borne
 As you direct and nourish, to their fruits.
 In light-and-shadow is no soul forlorn,
 The winter stores and gathers that the spring
 Be full, and never die your depthless roots,
 That in your mansions pour all-plenty's horn.
 Long preparation cleanses and transmutes
 In Light supernal of your dance's ring.

The light and rhythmic paths your golden feet
 Imprint bear upward to infinities
 Of light on light forever, and their dance
 Is motion of the worlds your breaths enhance
 Of flame, to lift to your pearl-sapphire seat,
 Whereon enthroned your golden mysteries
 You open plain to those most strong and fleet,
 Who to the height of your great harmonies
 Can mount, and live beyond all raptive trance.

O Crucible, all liquid golden fire
 The glory is of your true blessed souls
 When no more crudeness lingers in the ore,
 And all the bleeding points of their desire
 Blend into one, that cleaves from their life-shoals
 To your abysmal deep without a shore,
 And turning musically evermore
 In seas of light they seek no partial goals,
 But ever further in your bliss aspire.

From wheeling at the outer bounds of things
 Ascending on your alternating flood

Of rise-and-fall in order clearly known
 And furthered by your silent power that sings
 In the sweet pulsing of their golden blood
 When all the thick clouds of their souls are flown,
 Your beings move in your concentric rings
 That know no end, the heart's pure peaceful bud
 All grace unfolding, ever fuller blown.

Through life and life they grow and climb to you
 The spiral turning path, and drink the dark
 Your serpent of devouring time affords;
 Crushed and digested they achieve your mark
 Through long duress, your fires forge into swords
 They wield, no longer cut, and win their due
 And native being, golden-browed and true;
 They fan to bursting your deep-tended spark,
 And strike the beauties of your golden chords.

Your wheel is larger than the largest thought,
 And bears upon its ever moving rim
 The prisoners and slaves of ignorance:
 Who pierced and staggered by your burning lance
 At last, with your bliss-fires deep inly fraught,
 Move inward toward a vision poignant-dim,
 And up your long and slippery spokes advance
 To central stable Truth, and freely hymn
 Your golden body full, divinely wrought.

And, turning, all the wheel their life they hold,
 To move existence through its journeying
 All purified in your clear golden gaze,
 That is their own: and so their pulse-beats bring
 The ordering of the all-teeming maze
 To blessing as its endless ways unfold:
 And so ablaze divinely they shall sing
 Great nature glorified in deathless gold,
 One Paean and celebration all their days.

Untold is your divine complexity,
 And wheels on wheels your men and gods beguile,
 And all the beings that are your one Light;
 Still in the one wheel endless in your sight

Your golden face approves its majesty,
And all comes measured to your master dial;
You are the substance and the destiny,
The power and moulding life so blinding bright,
Till the one eye centers in your golden smile.

In inward opening vasts of swirling flame
Your all-self children win their flaming seas
And grow to you, O Surya. Long it yearns,
The heart awakening, beclouded lame,
Before it many trials and victories
Till its freedom and its dancing; slow it learns,
Till in your blessedness it calls your name,
O Surya! — and is borne through symphonies
Your all-embracing bosom holds and turns.

O more and more of your all-quickening rays
May you bestow upon me, O Divine,
That I may live, and sing your glories true;
Give me a golden voice that every line
Moulds perfectly, all joined in rondure due
Of your creation's splendour, phrase on phrase;
A golden pen be mine, that every hue
Imparts of your mute depths that whitely shine,
My every pulse your being and your praise.

JESSE ROARKE

**LOTUS-FLAME
OR
SURYAMAN**

**Book I: The Origin
Canto I: The Holocaust**

God's primal holocaust began the world.
In the prelude to the play of Space and Time
All was a nameless bodiless aureate drowse.
Then a dream whispered in the infinite pause,
A breath of happiness faintly fluttering
Caused a vague rupture in the impalpable vast.
Then all again fell back to the unnamed
Silence and stillness of the giant unborn.
Again another wave arose like a breath,
The secret smile on the visage of a God
To withdraw anew to voiceless oblivion.
Again a tumult rose unforgettable,
A fissure in the Spirit's measureless stance.
A beam of light amazing, sheer and sharp,
Plunged, a lone sword, into the eddiless pit
Of God's unfeatured solitude. A screen
Divided now the heights and ancient gulfs;
A curtain fell upon the global stage;
Above, a sheer uncompromising peak,
Below, a stark limbless unending shade;
Above, a transparent loneliness of gleam,
Ocean-thrilled spaces of a burning trance,
Wed to the white incommunicable bliss;
Below, a dumb nudity of somnolence
And the bare, obscure, unthinking limitless nought.
The fallen flame, lost in the womb of Night,
Stirred the sepulchral chasm, the ageless cave,
With the hidden impact of a living seed.
A sabre-stroke, a lightning's sudden streak
Pierced the void's grey unsubstantiated reverie.
The leaning superconscient skies beyond
Withdraw to their lairs of white transcendent peace,
Uncaring for the fate of the self-lost Fire

Now an undiscovered throb, a fallen Sun.
And then the spectre-forms wheeled in the midst
And dusk-dreams and incoherent Nothingness
Like soulless beats recurring in a grey expanse,
Flung in the black and eerie firmament
Like meteors cleaving through a frozen space.
But no eye was there to view the marvel act
Of sweeping tides and fast volcanic waves
Leaving in their wake the universe in throes,
The budding nescient worlds and spiralling globes
Across the unresisting, ebon hush.
None felt the course of secret dawns in their skies
Or fresh young moons bursting from whispering seas.
A seed, a throb, a leap, a drunken rush
Were the beginning of the cosmic game,
God's passion-play of all-consuming joy.

(To be continued)

ROMEN

THE WORDS SHAKESPEARE HAS GIVEN US

(Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564 and died on April 23, 1616.)

To know Shakespeare and to know the Bible was, at one time, to know the English language.

Exaggerated as this belief may sound today, it is not altogether an over-statement, for the writings of Shakespeare account for an immeasurable portion of all that is indispensable in English literature.

How many of us realise that we quote the poet daily in our talk and in our writings without even a thought of it?

Unlike any other writer, Shakespeare features in the commoner's conversation no less than in the dissertations of intellectuals.

Even those who have never read the Bard are often indebted to him either for their most persuasive arguments or their most impressive oratory.

Most of the time we are borrowing a phrase from him or lifting his lines to season our speech or sharpen angry exchanges, and all this with hardly the foggiest idea as to their origin.

In other words, we do not only speak Shakespeare's language but also his vocabulary. In the English tongue Shakespeare has brought into use the record sum of 23,000 words.

And the multiplicity of words coined by him explains the keenness of his perception to the needs of the language.

His genius, however, does not consist in the number of new words he added to the literary vocabulary but, as philologist Bradley observes, "in the multitude of phrases derived from his writings which have entered into the texture of the diction of literature and daily conversation."

We may call them "household words" which is his own expression.

When we describe a person as "a man of few words" or "a tower of strength," "a popinjay" or "a blinking idiot," we are merely quoting the poet.

If it is a "mad world" and something is "Greek to me," it's because Shakespeare said so.

When we swear at our politicians for delivering speeches "full of sound and fury signifying nothing" or lament that the condition of the country "beggars description" we know—or probably don't—that Shakespeare is the inspiration of these discontented outbursts.

Instead of saying he's had a miraculous escape we would rather say with Shakespeare that he "bears a charmed life," and if someone is figuratively digging his grave,

he is probably "hoist with his own petard" in the words of Shakespeare.

"What's done is done" is Shakespeare's way — and our way too — of saying it's useless crying over spilt milk.

When Sir Winston Churchill deplored the "beginning of the end" in one of his famous speeches, Shakespeare was at the back of his mind.

So-called Romeos who fall in "love at first sight" and declare that "love is blind" merely use Shakespeare to express what they could probably never be able to utter in the sweetness of their own originality.

Shakespeare's vocabulary is a veritable gold mine from which one may extract at random such timeless gems as "mind's eye," "pound of flesh," "unkindest cut of all," "poor but honest," "one fell swoop," "take up arms," "neither here nor there," "the short and the long of it," "to wear one's heart upon one's sleeve."

These expressions which lie at the tip of one's tongue could come only from the master.

We often describe a coward as "showing his heels" or "having no stomach for a fight" for which thanks are due to Shakespeare.

For his grammar test a student was asked to compose a complex sentence.

He wrote: "In his 'heart of hearts' the man recalled having 'seen better days' of 'cold comfort' but 'as luck would have it,' the 'grim necessity' of modern times had 'eaten him out of house and home' so that he left 'bag and baggage' on 'life's uncertain voyage' to brave 'a sea of troubles.'"

Without knowing it the pupil had gleaned his choicest expressions (put in inverted commas here) from the works of the dramatist. We are doing it all the time.

If you feel that your "reputation is at stake," or you "haven't slept a wink" or must "hold your tongue" and "suit the action to the words," then you are employing the Shakespearean idiom as a mode of expression.

Many of Shakespeare's expressions have undergone changes with daily use through the ages but here too their origin is not far to find.

The short and the long of it is that no one ever invented clichés in English literature as Shakespeare did.

It is "a foregone conclusion" that without Shakespeare the English language would wear "a lean and hungry look" and we would be "at a loss for words."

JIMMY HAFESJEE

(With acknowledgements to *The Sunday Standard*, 11-1-1970)

SEVEN LIVES

A SAGA OF THE GODS AND THE GROWING SOUL

(Continued from the issue of March, 1973)

CHAPTER IV

PART 2

AFTER their afternoon meal and the rest that followed, Amalthea and Aureus busied themselves with their daily duties, then at nightfall barred their door, and lay down to sleep beside each other on their beds of hay. It was during the hours of sleep which followed that Silent Daughter rose out of her identity as Amalthea and returned to her native realms to meander slowly and wistfully through their dream vistas. Now far from all burden or responsibility — for not even her golden son did she retain by her side — she immersed herself in the substance of her own being, in her vast skies of twilight rose, and in an immensity of space so translucent and blue that no physical sky could approach it in the depth or clarity of its substance. Later she retreated to yet another favourite portion of her inner landscape — a range of mountains so white and still, so perfectly untouched that only the most inaccessible of the earthly Himalayas could echo their solitary grandeur. In this setting, as a sylph she trod the virgin peaks and ridges, while her being drank in the elixir of its own essence, thus renewing and heightening its force and vitality.

Aureus meanwhile dreamt of green fields through which he wandered, or on which he lay from time to time with his face up so that the sun could pour its rays upon his outstretched form. After this, he became a bird and flew out across the Adriatic Sea beyond his native shores. He followed the Roman galleons and triremes as they laboured their way, oar stroke by oar stroke, through the dark waves; and last of all he returned and found himself flying over the Roman port of Ligerium where he and his mother sold their produce. But instead of seeing it as he normally did at the height of its morning activity, he saw it a ruin, silent and utterly deserted. The waves of the bay washed over the place where the wharves had been. The outlines of the buildings that had stood directly behind them remained merely as wavering patterns under the shallow fringes of the encroaching water, while the town itself survived as no more than a heap of broken masonry and columns whose roofs had long since fallen into dust. Yet the tumbled stones of what had once been carefully erected walls were more sun-bleached than ever, the Adriatic breezes as soft and sweet, the sea and its shores as inviting as they had been yesterday morning with the turquoise-blue panorama of the water stretching to the horizon. Only the quiet was new, the quiet of something

that is only a memory once the voices have been hushed, the activity laid to rest, and the life force long since given over to time and history. Yet with his dream eyes, as he hovered over the scene, Aureus was able to re-people the streets, re-erect the structures, and re-create the movements of Ligerium's life in ghostly form. As transparent grey phantoms, all lived and moved again. The speech and bustle of the place came to him like whisperings of the wind, and a pall of fear and sadness gripped him as he watched the pantomime of the past playing itself out over some precocious and uninvited image of the future. The dream gripped him with such vividness that he awoke damp with sweat and rolled over instantly to nestle against his mother. She too awoke, and feeling her son's cold wet hands on her shoulder, enquired what was the matter. Glad that she was not asleep, for he was eager to relieve himself of the haunting vision, he described his dream to her in breathless undertones while she held him tight and stroked his hair. When he had finished she kissed him and answered, "Ah, my little traveller in time, why are you afraid? Has mortality taken a hold on you so firmly already in this tiny span of earth time? Yes...it seems so. The earth is a stealthy magician and her potions swifter and headier than any known to Bacchus. Then remember with me again, my love, that we are what we are only for the moment, that this particular humanity in which we are clothed is but a transient thing — indeed no more than a small portion of your own immortal memory."

By now she had once again reverted to an inward speech, and she paused as the child rubbed his fists into his eyes and strove to part the veils and membranes that had, unbeknown to him, grown over his consciousness as he slept.

"Yes — visitors — we don't belong here, we..."

"We have belonged before, and we belong again to relearn what has been forgotten, and re-live the growing that has occurred and then been lost. But immortal we still are, my child, and free to move back and forth in time as we please. So why be surprised, if while leafing through your dream tomes of remembrance, your gaze happens to fall on a page where Rome and all she possesses have ceased to be? You are frightened because things seem to cease and fall to ruin. Life seems to cease and leave no mark but the sorrow of its passing. Silence falls on what had been, as though to make mockery of life's noisy, momentary stir. And, at all of this, mortality trembles on its cot of infirmity."

Sheepishly Aureus looked at his mother as she spoke and noticed that she had changed. And she changed still more with her next silently impassioned question: "Do you remember me, child, before I donned this human vestment? Do you remember yourself?"

He paused for a long, stunned moment and then all at once for a few resplendent minutes both ceased to be human. As they gazed at each other, their luminous, ethereal forms emerged — that of the goddess and of her divine charge — and all that was known recalled, all that had been forgotten, remembered.

"Do you fear your vision now?" Silent Daughter asked.

The child shook his head, for as an immortal he knew no fear. Instead a great

pity flooded him.

"When things pass and die there is sorrow," he observed simply.

"Yes," she replied, as her own memories returned to her and she remembered the visage and demeanor of her terrible suitor. With the thought itself she felt his coldness creep into the darkened room, for he was ever alert to any remembrance of himself, and checking her shock of dismay, she mustered all her force to repulse the dolorous presence. Yet weakened by her own mortal trappings only one recourse remained — to call upon the divine's guardians. Even Unicorn would not descend to these earthly realms, for too light and airy was his substance to cleave their density. Instantaneously, she recalled the warrior who had stood over the golden infant when he had first cried out to her, and noiselessly, her plea winged out to him across the inner spheres. Almost at the same moment, the peasant dwelling became bright with his being. An air of serene security dispersed the clutch of tension that had begun to grip the room, and suddenly the boy placed his head on his mother's breast and breathed deeply. He had not noticed the angelic being that stood above them, perhaps because he was sleepy and perhaps because his mortality had again hampered his vision. But he felt a great relief as though bands of metal that had held his body in their grip had all at once been cut. Then he remembered that he had said something to his mother and that she had inexplicably fallen silent instead of communicating with him freely as before. Wanting her to speak again he gently shook her arm.

"Yes, yes, dear one," she murmured with her inward voice, coming out of her apparent reverie. "We are safe now. You were speaking a short time ago of the sorrow that comes from death and parting. But how can I explain it away, my child? Later you will understand, when you are older. At this moment, only one caution can I give that you must try to bear in mind even in your sleep: beware the danger of mortal thoughts and mortal pain. For these very things is man mortal — for these very fears, these very shapes of anguish, these very emotions that weep at the passage of time and the demise of that which has been loved and known by the human heart. But the gods float on the breezes of our immortal remembrance, and your being also — the one that walked down onto this earth with me hand in hand but yesterday. Cling to that identity, my beloved child, and turn from the tricks played upon you by the clothing of your acquired human nature.

"Sleep now in the warmth and sanctity of this room till our next sunrise." And as she enfolded the child in her arms they fell asleep, while their godly guardian stood above them tireless and luminously watchful.

Nor was this to be the last of their earthly days and nights as the humble peasant pair. Not merely the days but even the months and years rolled by, season after season, with scarcely a variation in their daily routine. Always there would be the farm, the seaside walk twice a week to the market of Ligerium, and then the return to the farm again. And always the two remained indistinguishable from the rest of Imperial Rome's peasant population. Perhaps in terms of earth time, the two decades that Amalthea and her son spent in the apparently mundane and petty occupations of their

lives would have seemed a dreary lifetime of hard and thankless toil. But to the inwardly concealed goddess, twenty years were but a vaporous instant of eternity as she knew it, and far from grudging the time, she savoured every portion of it. Her son too was unaware of any sense of haste, for he felt and treasured the growth within himself, and followed lovingly each touch of the divine working as it built the fortress of his being particle by particle. Sometimes he marvelled at the minutely detailed perfection of the structure arising within him. Sometimes he abandoned all watchfulness and all thought, and felt himself instead held between great gentle hands. All he would know at such times was that the hands which caressed him with a father's love more vast than any man could ever feel, were those of the Great One he had called to so long ago. Meanwhile, Silent Daughter in the garb of Amalthea, remained ever faithful to her charge and never left her son's side nor failed to pour forth the beatitude of her presence for his benefit and protection. Nor was he the only one to receive and enjoy her bounty. As she walked across the dewy meadows, wild flowers sprang to bloom beneath her feet, while fruit trees that would long since have shrivelled on the sustenance of their stony soil, gained nourishment from her touch and bore fruit enough that their mistress and her son might never be forced to go hungry.

Yet Amalthea's indefatigable concentration remained primarily on her child, and silently, almost secretly, she would water each plant and tree that she saw growing in his inner garden, that none may ever wither away again or be affected by the Dark Powers' blight. She watched as the strength of his being grew from a fragile sapling within the first earthworks of his inner fortress to the imperturbable solidity of an oak within high, firm bastions, whose leaves and branches waved and rustled in the winds of a storm but never abandoned their hold on the trunk that was their source of life and strength. She observed the clarity and simplicity of his intent, unmarred by selfishness or self-seeking, reach forth like fresh bloomed cherry blossoms over the virgin pools of his consciousness and reflect back their perfect images into his inner skies as also into his outward gaze. She found the sweetness rising in his heart sometimes like crocuses of Spring in his fortress gardens, sometimes like a torrent of mountain water that gushes passionately and irresistibly from its high, immaculate source. And she felt his tenderness like moss beneath her feet, soft and green and perfect as any plant the Creator grew in the forests of a man's soul. Joy she founded in him too, but a joy mingled with that gravity that comes from a long association with Silence. For his was the grave and silent joy of a sunrise at sea, or of a summer sky that holds the world in its breathless, sun-seared grasp, or of the wood where in another existence he had seen Apollo come to rest and play. But most of all, perhaps, the silence in which he lived and grew, and in which even his joy acquired its special nature, came from his mother who, even when she spoke, exuded the quality that gave her her name, and through which she was able to know all she knew and all she felt, and was able to accomplish all she was entrusted to do by the Great One. Thus her child could not help but receive it as one of the prime characteristics of his own internal nature.

Then at last Amalthea saw that the work of growth had been accomplished, that

this earthly memory too was fortuitously approaching its natural end, and that they would both be able to depart at the best possible time. She was now approaching old age — as the peasants of Rome knew it, for she was nearing fifty — while her son had barely reached his prime in his early twenties.

(To be continued)

BINA BRAGG

SURREALITY

We stood with friends gently discoursing
 by the shore at the rock
 and I could hear the animals talking:
 we had a secret chat
 and saw the horses playing
 in the distant fields.
 My hand outstretched I held toward
 their beautiful grace
 longingly.

Alas, my joy unshared, for my companions
 could not hear, nor see.
 "Oh sad," I said to the cat
 sitting upon the rock, next to me.
 "Yes," she replied, "they cannot see."

How beautifully my horses prance
 and gallop
 happy and free —
 we so poor!
 They played on another field,
 unperturbed,
 unharnessed,
 free.

GEORGETTE

SYMBOLS AND THE QUESTION OF UNITY

(Continued from the issue of January, 1973)

II

THE NINTH MANIFESTATION

*Le Divin, pour nous, c'est la quatrième dimension ...
c'est...a l'intérieur de la quatrième dimension.*

La Mère
8-2-1973

THE way has been opened by the first part of this treatment to penetrate more deeply into the matters there touched upon and to uncover even vaster horizons which will eventually bring us to realise the unity underlying all teachings, all myths, all scriptures and revelations. The task is not easy, because the work at hand is a synthesis arrived at through a sort of rounded penetration, in a sense coming into the central point from all points of the outer circle simultaneously. When the means used are the ordinary forms of communication, this rounded approach can be transmitted to the reader only with difficulty. In possession of certain keys and by the help of a particular type of perception, one is able to go very far into the past and future, knowing all to be contained in the present. Certain mysteries are made clear by these keys and no longer belong to the realm of the unknown. Let us therefore penetrate them together and unravel the seemingly unsolvable. By this treatment it is hoped man will be taken beyond his customary manner of viewing the world game and brought from a limited standpoint to a large and wide scope, a superhuman scope, belonging to a dimension he has only unconsciously known until now. Thus to some extent he will understand the cosmic harmonies which govern everything from the most minute events in existence to the great cyclic changes and the divisions of the Ages of mankind. The reader should be made to know that these harmonies work for and not against him; by understanding them in the true and spiritual sense he can only be brought to a closer union with the Divine, enthralled by the order, the precision and the infallible harmony revealed to him of the Source that determines and sustains all movements, that is behind all action and non-action, all being and non-being.

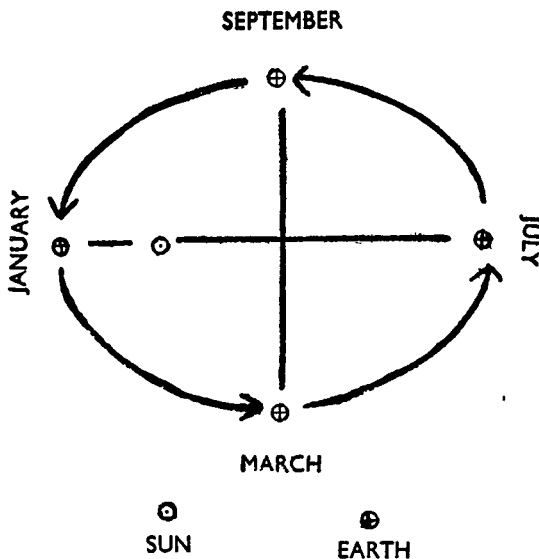
Certain points were touched in the first part which merit more attention in order that it may be shown how these cosmic harmonies are vitally related to and visible in our lives; they are not abstract concepts devised to superficially appease man's legitimate thirst for knowledge in a purely intellectual manner. Knowledge is not to be looked down upon. It is one of the ways to approach the Lord and thus it forms a part in the integral development of an individual. The Age of Unity calls for precisely a

unified development and it was shown in the first part how the next step in the spiritual vistas of humanity, that of an integral yoga, was clearly in view. Thus it is man's duty to be *aware*, in ways he was not before. He must now know things which in former times he could not know. Because the play was less defined the knowledge could not be brought to all mankind, there were many opposing forces and the conflict between "light and dark" was such that this knowledge could have been used by elements striving for the supremacy of forces which would have hindered the divine plan and not have allowed it to fulfil itself as established, that is, to bring evolution farther and farther into the light until a full and total union would be accomplished.

We spoke briefly of the Earth's elliptic orbit; let us go more deeply into the matter, for from it so much can be understood. December 21st is the shortest day of the year in the northern hemisphere. In astronomical language this means the Sun is at its maximum distance south of the Equator, and from there it begins its apparent journey back, producing the reverse phenomenon in the southern hemisphere. What does it mean in astrology? That the light is growing, that we have reached the bottom of the abyss and at this lowest ebb the Divine has manifested once more in His ever-recurring cycle. However, in actual fact it is not the seasonal process that gives rise to the legend of the Saviour's birth during this period. It is the Earth's position with respect to the luminary that gives us the nearness of light, affecting the whole globe, and by this position we can know the entire journey of our soul's descent into matter. This is the study of astrology, and while astronomy studies these motions as an end in themselves, for the sake of the phenomena involved, astrology studies the movements solely for the purpose of understanding the greater meaning, the spiritual meaning. It wants to unveil to man the reason for his appearance on this Earth and

at once it will show him the actual minute and major events involving this appearance and its ultimate goal. Unless astrology can awaken in man this understanding, its study is pointless.

Therefore, we see in the diagram here reproduced that the Earth, irrespective of season, south or north, is closest to the Sun end-December, beginning-January each year. The fact of the seasons being hemispherical and not universal is what allows us to know the truth is fragmentary. It cannot be the reason giving rise to the traditional birth of the Saviour nor signify



the soul's entry into the sphere of maximum light. These movements must be reflected in a manner denoting their cosmic and timeless nature. Thus the orbit of the Earth around the Sun in an ellipse is the key and this movement affects the whole globe and not just one hemisphere, bringing it closer to the Light, the source of Truth, and for this reason the legendary Saviour is born. Likewise in the individual's journey; this phase in his development refers to his initiation, a plunge into the innermost depths of being, into the abyss, thus bringing the greatest Light to illumine his obscurest parts. Consequently this is perhaps the most important understanding in the question of Unity as reflected in cosmic harmonies: it is imperative to always have a vision of the whole, the unity of all things, macrocosm and microcosm. The recurrence of the seasons is not of prime importance in the esoteric meaning of astrology. While it is summer in the North, it is winter in the South. How can these two be reconciled? While for the North December 21st signifies a return of Light, in the South it means a lessening. Does this mean the Saviour's light comes only to the North?

The answer can be found only when one goes beyond the physical manifestation and feels the energy flow *behind* the change of seasons. Thus, summer and winter, autumn and spring in their beginning all correspond to the *Cardinal* energy flow and though the exterior manifestation is different in each case, the pressure or impulse of all the seasons is exactly the same. To speak of the seasons in astrology as the key to a deeper meaning is to reveal a lesser knowledge, a remnant of the Middle Ages. We speak of the three energy flows, Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable, corresponding to beginning, middle and end season — Creation, Preservation and Dissolution, repeated four times, irrespective of whatever season is involved. These three movements are then translated into significance for the individual and his reason for existence; he comes into life on one of these flows (the three *gunas* of Hindu philosophy¹) and this will be of importance throughout his whole life and will determine a major portion of his destiny.

It has been made quite clear that certain discoveries came through an understanding of the sphere and hence the number 9. In these factors lies the clue to the stage we are now in with respect to the past. In addition to this number there are two others that through a Name and its numerical value were shown to be essential: the 5 and 1. With these three, 9, 5 and 1 the doors could be opened.

In the simplest manner it is possible to show how the 9 is the numerical symbol of the Divine Mother, and this we can do by a process in numerology sometimes referred to as theosophical addition, that of adding all the digits in a number to arrive at one final digit. Thus, 1973 would be $1+9+7+3=20=2+0=2$. Observing this addition a pertinent fact is noted: drop the 9 as well as the 0 and we shall see what occurs. $1+7+3=11=1+1=2$. By eliminating the 0 and 9 we still come to the same value. We see therefore how the 9, though being a value containing 9 units as opposed

¹ The *gunas*, , Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, understood in their higher, "transmuted" sense

to the 0 containing none, has equal properties in the actual functioning of the addition. At most what the presence of the 9 does is to alter the semi-final digit from 11 to 20, an important factor nonetheless, indicating a further cycle in the process but still ultimately arriving at a 2 vibration. When we speak of numbers and such things it must be understood that these can be translated into a host of phenomena, on and on until finally we reach vibration.

And so, we see that 1973 is a 2 vibration, and we see that 9 and 0 are of the same importance in the play of numbers. *O is the unmanifest and 9, the manifest*, the zero brought to its farthest development, hence it confirms the Mother's definition of the number: *creation in matter*. Both these numbers are contained in the symbol of the Sun ☉, or better said, they make up the symbol of the Sun: the 0 is the inner dot and the 9 the outer circle, the sphere of 360° which can be reduced to 9. To the ancient Indians we must be grateful for the decimal system we use today, brought to Europe in the ninth century by the Arabs. It is interesting to note that the Indians used the dot to indicate the 0. Later it expanded to the figure we now know. Also, their word for zero means "empty".

One point must be made clear: as the entire Zodiac is the "horoscope" of the Divine Mother, so all numbers can be regarded as representing the Mother. But there is one that absorbs and contains them all within itself and also there is only one that has the same properties as the 0, and this is the 9. The combinations formed with it and its multiples can be achieved with no other number, its harmony and perfection none other can equal, for any multiple of 9 will equal 9 in theosophical addition, such as $9 \times 2 = 18 + 1 = 8 + 9$, or $63 \times 40 = 2520 = 2 + 5 + 2 + 0 = 9$, and so on. Also the combinations with dates and time cycles involving this number are unique. As it refers to material creation and matter, it can help one to understand that the ultimate perfection which is the Supreme's secret Will is only to be fully manifested in the very densest level of creation. Only in matter, the so-called lowest in the scale of creation can the Divine be fully realised or, better said, can the most perfect Perfection be understood. In the tradition of the Kabala this number is "the archetype of the primordial Female, hence life from which all forms gradually evolve"¹; in the same tradition it is considered representative of the *cell*. All of these traditions are contained in the Hindu concept of the Divine Mother, so it can be seen why the 9 is always associated with her manifestations.

The 9 and the 0 meet; this is the serpent biting its own tail, and it is only the temporary limits of our perception that make us view these questions in terms of linear dimensions, in terms of *lower* and *higher*, matter being the lowest and spirit the highest. When one plunges into another dimension one learns to "see" in forms of circles, so to speak, and then one can understand that there is no question of lower and higher. There is unity; spirit and matter are always one and ever have been. We go beyond the 3rd dimension and pass into a dimension that belongs to the sphere,

¹ *Les Lettres Nombres*, Carlo Soares.

widening our vision so as to perceive in "circles". Only in this way can the true Knowledge come.

The matter of understanding this number and revealing its meaning is at present important for the following reason: we are now in the 9th stage of development of the collective and individual evolution, what we shall call "the 9th Manifestation". Therefore we are in the period of closest rapport or link with the universal force of manifested divinity. In a word, the force of the Divine Mother is pushing itself out into creation as it has only rarely done before, to our knowledge. We are at the summit or, better said, are approaching the summit, and we have a very practical example of the connection of the 9 to the sphere to the Divine Mother and to our present stage, if we observe the Matrimandir¹ now under construction.

Before doing this, however, let us go into the past and discuss monuments of similar value, structures which have reached us from antiquity and hold the message of the Ages in which they were built and the revelation of the future. One such structure is the Great Pyramid. From this we can precisely know the stage of development of the civilisation that built it, not only its builders' technical knowledge but primarily their spiritual development and hence the level of development of the collectivity of that period. It is possible to even know the period in which it was built.

The pyramidal shape represents the 7, and all the knowledge of the epoch in which pyramids were constructed was of the level of this number. These structures are built of triangles and squares, forms derived from the relation of 3's and 4's, leading to 12. Schools of esoteric thought have gone very far in explaining the meaning of symbols such as the square and triangle. They show how matter is related to the cube, how this is its basic structure, and from the cube we arrive at the form of the pyramid. There is no need to enter into lengthy discussion here, but briefly we can say this is so: the cube is related to matter and contains within its structure the tetrahedron. They have shown how the triangle refers to divinity and thus how within the confinements of matter one can reach the divine essence; in the cube one can find the tetrahedron and hence the triune aspect of God is to be found in man and can be experienced. One can go further: it is shown how the cube as a solid form is 7, six sides and the centre, and then how the number 7 is the number of matter, all of this symbolically contained in the pyramids. Most schools of esoteric thought carry over this tradition of 7 from the past and it is often referred to as the magic number. What is overlooked by those who revere ancient traditions is that constructions such as the pyramids outwardly represent the stage of evolution of the period in which they were built but hide within their proportions that which is to be understood only by future Ages. The pyramid openly points to 7, but only a knowledge of the sphere can fully explain its mysteries. And from this we can know the future stages that await us. The ancient traditions taught the following: the line is equal to the number

¹ "The Temple of the Mother" now under construction in Auroville, 9 kms. outside of Pondicherry, India.

3, initial point, middle portion and end point, therefore 3 is the number of the 1st dimension; 5 is the number of the square, four sides and middle, hence this is the number of the 2nd dimension; 7 is the number of the cube and thus 7 is the number of the 3rd dimension. However, let us go even farther than they: the next step in the ladder is 9, consequently this is by logic the number of the 4th dimension, and in the sphere the answer can be found to the mystery pertaining to that dimension. Let us go into this a bit.

There is a process of "rounded" perception which we shall say is a form of "thinking in circles". When doing so one enters into a dimension that is consciously altogether new to us. For example, all important discoveries made in the realm of astrology have come by a capacity, at a given moment, to think in "circles". In fact, the whole universe that everyone is so busy measuring, in order to come to understand the shape or form pertaining to the 4th dimension, happens to be entirely circular: there is no square planet or triangular orbit! As a symbol the circle transmits the understanding of the 4th dimension; it is the *Eternal Now* so-called, in which past, present and future exist and are experienced simultaneously. It is a breakthrough of the barriers of time and space, precisely the two limiting factors when we try to unravel the mystery. In that state we appear to touch divinity, or, let us say, there is the unity which allows us to perceive the Divine. Width, length and height are studied, but because there is not the realisation of THAT which sustains the form or upholds it, which we see represented as the circle, perception is blocked. Thinking in "circles" represents the capacity to cognise the Source and Sustainer of all phenomena, *not separately from the phenomena* — and here is the essential difference — but rather one with them. That further dimension we ignore in our normal state of consciousness but which is as real as the other three and more so. It is not a question of measurement in any direction; it is a state which allows of a particular perception that is able to simultaneously unite and experience all existing measurements as one whole. The 4th dimension is the sphere of the experience of unified perception.

This is what we know as divinity, but it is only a part. The farther we penetrate, the more it appears that we move away from the Source, the centre, we feel the frustration of never being able to touch the inner dot of the Sun, the Unmanifest; it is always and ever to be the unknowable and ineffable. When we project this without, beyond, outside ourselves we immediately feel the despair of separation, and it is only by drawing the perception back into ourselves, into the centre of our being, as it were, that again there is the experience of union, the bliss of oneness.

Because man can experience all the dimensions within himself and know that Source to be his Source, he is the privileged witness and instrument in the divine drama of creation. All possibilities lie within him, he is the centre of the universe.

Knowledge is one step, but to *know* the Lord is not enough or cannot signify that union. It is *being* THAT, this is man's hope, his salvation, his ecstasy: to realise the sphere within. The answer therefore to the 4th dimension can never be found

through equations or measurements, it is only in the experience or *being* that we can comprehend — what mystics refer to as the realisation of the divine or of one's soul.

Thus in man is the pivot of creation; in him two movements meet. This does not occur in any other manifestation, and it has been superbly illustrated by Leonardo in his symbol-drawing of the Man in a Circle and Square previously discussed. But in order to understand that drawing and the factor of — let us say — man's privileged position, one must realise the sphere.

Humanity at the time of the building of the pyramids could only have the truth revealed in the form of triangles and squares. They could not go directly to the Source that upholds these symbols, there was not a direct link, so to speak, from the Supreme to His creation, which is understood by the circle; a true and total unity of being was not possible. That is, man could not fully manifest the Divine Mother, bear all the pressure of her force in all aspects of his being, nor understand her directly without any intermediaries. He could not achieve a unified development of the physical, mental and vital — a simultaneous realisation of all levels governed by the soul of man. The Matrimandir represents precisely this. It indicates the stage we are now in; the form is a sphere, and this contains all other possible forms.

We can go even farther in our penetration. By use of the circle and a knowledge of certain arts we can come to know that the 7 refers to the period of 15,120 to 8,640 years ago. Within that time the Great Pyramid was built; more precisely, about 12,960 years ago the seeds of the pyramids were planted. It is necessary to go step by step.

The understanding came long ago that in order to properly grasp what was contained in the Zodiac it was necessary to study the sphere of 12 signs divided into 4 quarters; therefore we would be studying three signs at a time, or a trinity of Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable energy flows. It was seen that in the case of an individual's development — proceeding through the Zodiac counterclockwise — the first quarter referred to the physical, the second to the emotional, the third to the intellectual and the fourth represented the unified man: Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces, the last quarter, was Sat-Chit-Ananda. The truth of this division of the Zodiac in quarters has ever proved itself, even to the matter of unravelling the Ages of mankind. Thus in the diagram here reproduced we find the inner circle divided by the cross in four sections (oddly enough this is the astronomical symbol of the Earth). The four traditional figures of the sphinx are placed within these quarters at the signs to which they correspond. The numbers 1, 5 and 9 had been revealed as the key to our Age, and if we begin a spiral, for creation and the whole of the physical cosmos moves in spirals, at 0° Aries, going backwards through the signs or clockwise as does the Precession of the Equinoxes, we find that each time we pass through the final quarter corresponding to our present Age, we mark these very numbers. They are the Trinity of Fire.

Another clue was the sphinx. In this symbol we are told that the divine knowledge is revealed to humanity during one of the four Ages contained in the animals represented within the structure, the Bull (Taurus), the Lion (Leo), the Eagle (Scorpio),

and the Man (Aquarius). Esoteric schools call these the four faces of God; the Bible continuously refers to them, as well as to the number 7, until the end of the Revelations of John the Divine when the 7 changes to 12 with respect to the divine City. These four faces, the four Fixed signs of the Zodiac, form the basis of Sri Aurobindo's horoscope, as well as part of his symbol, and are the divisions of the four inner petals of the Mother's symbol.

The 7th Manifestation began at 0° Libra moving from there clockwise through Virgo, Leo and Cancer. But the preservation of the knowledge of the Manifestation was only carried out when the Precession reached the Fixed sign Leo, the middle of the trio of Creation, Preservation and Destruction — one of the four faces of God. Hence the building of the Giza Sphinx — half-man, half-lion, and the Great Pyramid. On the Sphinx inscriptions are to be found. For example, one reads: "Harmakhis (Sun) on the western horizon." Explanations of these inscriptions are not entirely satisfying, but they become clear if we relate them to the Zodiac. The symbol for Libra represents precisely the setting western Sun on the horizon; and it is the sign of *Cosmic Sunset*. Sri Aurobindo is born with the rising Sun on the horizon in Leo, an important and meaningful difference. From these inscriptions scholars deduced that the Sphinx was made to honour the Sun-God Ra. The two figures here reproduced show the symbol of Libra and the Egyptian hieroglyph meaning "horizon"; their relation is evident.



The historical facts are fascinating and they fit into our picture nicely. The pyramids are said to carry over a solar cult tradition from the past. In On, later called Heliopolis by the Greeks, a very powerful priesthood had their centre and worshipped an image, the *benben*, which was a miniature replica of the pyramids. They say this evolved into a religion in the Pyramid Age; certainly this was at a much later date as these priests were no doubt not priests but Initiates, and later their knowledge was crystallised into a religious cult without the faithful really understanding the secrets they were transmitting. The cosmogony the "priests" taught was very beautiful and corresponds to other ancient cosmogonies, and reveals a precise understanding of the Zodiac. It was all based on the Sun as the central truth, representing the highest light. According to our own calculations this priesthood existed 13,000 to 10,000 years ago in its purest form, or during the Age of Leo. This sign is ruled by the Sun, so it is logical that a strong movement should have arisen during the Age centered on this luminary. They taught that Ra was born of the primordial ocean Nun. He had four offspring, each of which represented one of the four elements. From the god and goddess of Earth and Air (coinciding with the parents of the gods of the Vedas) Osiris, Isis and two others were born, and these nine deities they called the Great Ennead. (It is interesting that in India also the 9 figures in the Zodiac. They conis-

dered the ancient planets to be nine, not seven, and each of these had a presiding deity.) All of this information was contained in the "benben", in particular the division of 12 signs, 4 elements, 3 energy flows.

It is clear therefore how the origins of this ancient cosmogony were Zodiacal, how the pyramids retain this knowledge and how, in fact, the Great Pyramid was built with advanced astronomical knowledge and was used as an observatory of a sorts. But particularly important was the fact that the Sun was the central cult, and the Lion was an ever-present symbol, as the Giza Sphinx and hundreds of other figures of the period show. We read: "The lion was an important symbol. Today this animal has disappeared from Egypt and it was certainly more numerous in pre-history than at the time of the Pharaohs, when it was considered king of the beasts."¹ And further: "In Egyptian mythology the lion often figures as the guardian of sacred places. How or when this conception first arose is not known, but it probably dates back to remote antiquity. Like so many other primitive beliefs, it was incorporated by the priests of Heliopolis into their solar creed, the lion being considered as the guardian of the gates of the Underworld on the eastern and western horizons. In the form of the Sphinx, the lion retained the function of sentinel, but was given the human features of the Sun-god Atum."² To clarify matters, the Giza Sphinx, Man and Lion, represents the Age of Leo which has as its opposite the Aquarius Man. It could be said then that the eastern-western constellational horizon was at the time in Leo and Aquarius because of the Precession of the Equinoxes, and therefore through this monument we are able to know that its builders were perfectly aware of this celestial movement some 12,000 years ago, a movement only recently discovered by modern scientists. This same information is given to us by the fact that the pyramids are all built on the western bank of the Nile and the continuous emphasis given consequently in all the inscriptions to the western Sun. Later this was thought to be related to the "death" of the Sun and thus the ultimate use of the pyramids for tombs. No priesthood capable of transmitting knowledge such as that contained in the pyramidal shape could ever limit the concept of immortality to the physical body and lay such emphasis on its preservation. They taught the eternity of the soul and divine essence, but hundreds of years later, when the religions formed, this knowledge degenerated and the pyramids became the houses of mummies, marking the fossilisation of a great civilisation. In actual fact the stress on the western Sun was based on accurate astronomical knowledge of the 7th Manifestation beginning with 0° Libra, *Cosmic Sunset*. Our 9th Manifestation, however, began with 0° Aries, *Cosmic Dawn*, the reason for our stress on the East and all the important scriptures beginning with the Dawn, the Vedas, *Savitri*, to mention some — and Sri Aurobindo's birth occurring at sunrise.

Both the Pyramid and the Sphinx are no great riddles as most believe, the former being the Zodiacal-geometrical key to the stage of evolution and containing the eso-

¹ *Encyclopedia of World Art*, Vol. XIV, page 945.

² *The Pyramids of Egypt*, I.E.S Edwards, page 107.

tric knowledge in its shape and measurements, as well as the movements of the celestial spheres, and the latter being the precise indication of the Age when they were all built. Their message is evident and the whole enigma is only the simplicity with which the Knowledge has been transmitted. All discoveries made have always revealed the utter simplicity of the divine plan. Complications and difficulties in these matters are only a product of the intellect, through which channel one can never arrive at the answer. Man believes superior knowledge to be a very "occult" affair, when really its beauty lies in that it is the easiest and most evident of all things to grasp and understand, for which no books are needed nor complicated formulae — only unity of vision. One need only penetrate the secret recesses of the heart and there find all that is contained in these vast and monumental structures. Likewise the Matrimandir; a person need never visit the building, for he carries it within himself. The Matrimandir is a perfect representation of the soul of man based on the highest Knowledge. This very golden sphere that is under construction he must strive to unveil within himself. As the building is a sphere divided into 12 parts, so his soul is divided, in a sense, in 12 parts — or we can say his spiritual development, as well as the evolution of humanity, is carried out in 12 steps: the 12 signs of the Zodiac, the 12 books of *Savitri*, and so on. This golden sphere is the same that lies within man, within all mankind, and knowing his own he unites with his fellow man. It is the only basis for human unity.

In the future if only this structure remains, people will say it is a perfect replica of the Zodiac, the 12 counterclockwise chambers, the spherical shape, the 4 cardinal points (the 4 pillars), as well as a perfect image of the symbol of the Sun, the outer sphere with the central dot. They will look at those twelve chambers and begin to imagine many things, as we do now about the pyramids. They will say they were rooms for initiation, where the neophyte went from room to room, always a farther step up on the ladder of initiation. But, in fact, this is precisely the initiation one goes through, though not in a building. The Initiation of the Matrimandir is in one's soul. This is the Initiation of today. This is the difference from the civilisations of the past, where the outer ritual played such an important part, and the High Priestess was an indispensable figure in the process. Today there is a direct link established with the Divine Mother, and the Matrimandir is the living symbol of that link. One can be directly initiated by her in the depths of one's soul. There she can be met and can guide one through the darkest recesses of one's being to the supreme heights. There she reveals to man the secret knowledge and all he need know at each of the 12 stages. Man carries his Temple within and in the 9th Manifestation the Matrimandir is this: a perfect, harmonious image of that inner Temple. The Matrimandir contains the key to perfect harmony, a symbol of the Eternal Now.

The ancients could not present Truth to the world in the form of a sphere because humanity was only in the 7th stage of development and collectively living in the 3rd dimension. There is nothing farther of importance to be found in the pyramids, though clairvoyants and esoteric schools have said many things to the contrary.

Scientists may search and search, but as they go in detail through each pebble and stone, they increasingly lose sight of the overall structure which itself reveals all they need know.

We are now fully in the 9th Manifestation and within that we are in the Aquarian Age, the "Man" of the Sphinx, and within that we are in the Age of Unity, the period when the Truth of the 9th Manifestation must be revealed and preserved — the period of Vishnu. This Age lies directly in opposition to the Age of Leo; we are the higher octave of that sign, its greater complement and we must necessarily surpass what was then accomplished. Of these four faces of God there are two which are His *dynamic* faces: Leo and Aquarius, the very faces of the Giza Sphinx. The other two are His shadows and His feminine parts, the "in-going" movements, the preparation for His great Manifestations. Of these great Manifestations the 9th is the most sublime because it is only in the 9th that the Fire Trinity of Spirit incarnates, all aspects of the Supreme simultaneously appear on Earth. And the 9th marks the beginning of the last Round when each passage through the subsequent Manifestations, the 10th, 11th and 12th, signify a completion. In each of these quarters, beginning with the 9th, the Trinity manifests, but on different levels, pertaining to one of the four elements. Yet the 9th is that of Fire, Spirit, which sets the pace or is the seed of the following and final three. Therefore our Age is so important. In the human being the same process takes place. The individual manifestation begins first with Aries (Fire), then Taurus (Earth), Gemini (Air), and then Cancer (Water).

The 9th Manifestation is clearly spoken of in the Puranas; there it is called the 9th Creation, considered only a symbolical representation of the phases of evolution, when in actual fact it points to a precise epoch and advent. Also in the Puranas written so long ago, it is said in very clear terms that the Earth revolves around the Sun and that we are only deceived by the apparent rising and setting of the luminary. As well, the whole of our system is said in the Puranas to revolve around a greater centre. These are scientific facts only recently verified, especially the latter. In these supposedly lesser scriptures we find also the astronomical data of the Yugas, figures derived from the multiples of 9 based on the intricate knowledge of the Precession of the Equinoxes, and a deeper penetration reveals the cycles of the Yugas to be three major cycles divided into 9.

In the 9th Creation of the Puranas the Kumaras appear, or the divine men, those who were ever pure and refused to be born by making use of the ordinary means of procreation. They are the *virgin-born*. The 9th Manifestation began with the Piscean Age, the time of Christ — thus the symbol of Christ can be further understood, he being considered as born of the Virgin. Truly the connection existing between all teachings, all scriptures, all religions is splendid. There is a great Hand that sets everything in its place, and with a certain vision one can see how all over the globe, in a host of different ways, the same Truth is revealed.

So the 7th Creation of the Puranas is of *man*, the 9th is of *superman* and the 8th is of the link in between, what Sri Aurobindo calls the *Overmind*. In the

Zodiac this corresponds to the Ages of the 8th Manifestation when Taurus was the time of preservation of the knowledge. During that period, between 6,480 to 4,320 years ago, the stories of the incarnation of Krishna arose, so typical of Taurus the Bull, in particular the youthful Krishna, Gopala, then his adolescence, his flute playing, the Gopis, Brindavan, and so on. It is interesting to note that November 24, 1926 is a numerological 8 day, the day Krishna consciousness descended into the physical in Sri Aurobindo. Also Taurus corresponds to Vishnu of the Trinity, of whom Krishna was said to be an Incarnation, and the fact of Vishnu's *vāhana* (vehicle) being an Eagle finds its correspondence and will be discussed farther on. Practically on every page of the Gita we find the key of the 9th Manifestation; besides the fact of its being taken from the 18th book of the Mahabharata, containing 18 Chapters and speaking of the 18 day war, we have then the 36 year reign of Yudhisthira (a further multiple of 9) and Krishna supposedly to have died 36 years after the Victory. The 8th Manifestation scriptures and Incarnations prepare the way for the 9th because they were the "in-going" movement, as mentioned earlier.

The proof in clear terms that we are in the 9th Manifestation and that this signifies a direct link with the Supreme is precisely the fact that all the legends and symbols are no longer abstract terms but can be shown to be fully related to one's life and to be fulfilling themselves now, as the myths themselves have been predicting for hundreds, sometimes thousands of years. And this brings us therefore to a very important symbol, the most important in fact, as far as the 9th Manifestation is concerned, the *Durga Legend*, because Durga, the Divine Mother, is the incarnated force of our times. In this legend we are given the same key as the 9th Creation of the Puranas. But in order to properly understand the symbol of Durga, it is necessary to have an astrological background.

The first day of the Navaratri ('Nine Nights', the festival in celebration of Durga's Victory) begins with the new Moon in the latter part of the sign of the Virgin; from this we begin to see the connection with the 9th Creation, the Kumaras or virgin-born. Durga, also called Kumari, represents an incarnation of the Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, and is therefore three-eyed and is said to be formed of the energy of all the gods. Here is a brief account of the myth taken from Balendranath Tagore's *Durga Puja*: "The kingdom of heaven was in danger, the Demons and Asuras made all powerful by the suffrance of the Almighty attacked the regions of the gods, dethroned them, reduced them to the most abject condition of poverty and defied the command of the Creator himself. In this imminent crisis help was invoked of Vishnu the lord of gods. He was so indignant at beholding their wretchedness that streams of glory rushed forth from his face from which sprang Mahamaya. Streams of glory issued also from the faces of the other gods and entered the person of Mahamaya, who became a body of glory resembling a mountain on fire. The gods then gave their weapons to this lady, who in a frightful rage ascended into the air." Let us unravel the myth. She is golden, the colour of the Sun; she "ascends into the air" after being formed because she makes her appearance in the Age of Aquarius, an Air sign. She resembles

“a mountain on fire” because she represents the Fire Trinity in manifestation and, in further detail, she is given a Trident by Vishnu with which she kills the Asura and her *vāhana* is a lion. The Trident is the symbol of Pisces and the Lion is the sign Leo. On the 9th day (or in the 9th Manifestation) her work is completed. Sri Aurobindo is Leo and the Mother Pisces. By the time Durga’s work is over the new Moon of Virgo which marked the beginning of the festival has moved to the sign of the Goat, Capricorn. In fact, on the 9th day in particular goats are sacrificed in abundance in honour of her Victory, and are thought to be most pleasing to the Goddess. Capricorn is the sign signifying the conquest of the Divine Mother in matter, the establishment of the reign of her sons on Earth. We then have the Divine Mother’s son, Kartikeya, also called Kumara, linking the legend once again to the 9th Creation of the Puranas, whose *vāhana* is a peacock, the bird of Victory. The tenth day of the festival, or the Day of Victory, finds the Moon in the tenth sign, Capricorn. By this the reader can also be made to see how the lesser cycle of the month fits into the greater cycle of the year and then into the even greater cycle of 25,920 years of the Cosmic Ages. The 27 day phase of the Moon sets the Durgotsava, relates intimately to the Sun’s monthly passage through the signs and then to the Ages as determined by the clockwise movement of the Precession, carrying us through the 9th Manifestation, a period of 6,480 years.

For thousands of years, since the beginning of our Manifestation, people have been celebrating the Durgotsava, building up to this very moment of its culmination, when humanity would be in the Aquarian face of God and the message could be revealed and the Incarnation would take place. But how many are really aware that the myth has actually incarnated, that it is not based on faith, but a precise knowledge? Which then shows us the unity of all myths and legends and hence all religions and finally all of mankind. The Durga Legend is intimately related to the story of Christ and to the Greek myth of Demeter and Persephone. In this we have a union of the major civilisations that have most influenced the spiritual evolution of the races: Egyptian-Greek, Hebrew-Roman and Indian. And if we are living the legend, what need have we to enact the ritual?

The Puranas, the Tantra with the superb Sri Chakra, the Gita, the Bible and so on, all speak of or point to the same advent; their words may differ though in general their tales are the same, as are their goals. All of them contain the same *hidden* knowledge, that of the 9th Manifestation. We are taught by this perception not to be limited by words, for in the past the Word could not be fully and directly revealed. The Truth was clothed a bit in garments that were often changed, sometimes altered here and there to fit the individual, often mended when a piece was missing or left out. Today we witness the incarnation of the Trinity: the Speaker, the Voice and the Word; the Voice has spoken and the Word is given directly, fully. We touch the Sun. Man can find the Word within, his own *mantra*, unique and exclusive, that links him with the Supreme and by which means the Lord reveals His Truth directly. He becomes a neophyte, and the High Priestess is the Divine Mother herself.

"O Aswapathy, random seems the ways
 Along whose banks your footsteps stray or run
 In casual hours and moments of the gods,
 Yet your least stumblings are foreseen above.
 Infallibly the curves of life are drawn
 Following the stream of Time through the unknown;
 They are led by a clue the calm immortals keep.
 This blazoned hieroglyph of prophet moons
 A meaning more sublime in symbol writes
 Than sealed Thought wakes to, but of this high script
 How shall my voice convince the mind of Earth?"

Savitri, Book VI, Canto 2

PATRIZIA NORELLI-BACHELET

(to be continued)

OUT OF THE ONENESS

OUT of the Oneness
 helmeted love descended
 blowing a trumpet loud and clear
 piercing his way with vast commotion
 straight through the wax of my sleeping ear.

My heart bounding in fear and reluctance
 heard his challenge:

"You have called me and I am here."

"Give me time" my shrinking heart murmured

"to steady myself and prepare

a suitable hearth for so mighty a guest."

"Don't trouble yourself with time" Love laughed

"or we'll be at it forever"

and with his diamond trumpet

in one swift flashing motion

cut my heart out and entered my breast.

MAGGI

“LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL”

SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EDUCATION: EXPERIMENTS IN NEW EDUCATION

(Continued from the issue of March, 1973)

Sri Aurobindo has given a new philosophy of life, a new turning for the thinking mind. Dr. S. Narvani has well said: "... 'The fiery messenger who has come with the lamp of God'...such is the tribute which Tagore pays to Sri Aurobindo in a beautiful poem. It is an apt tribute because the most enduring impression that Sri Aurobindo's teaching leaves on us is that of luminosity and optimism. No other thinker of our age has dwelt so confidently upon the future of the human race, nor attempted to visualise that future in such resplendent forms. Sri Aurobindo is concerned not so much with what we have inherited, not even with what we are, but with what we are yet to become." *Modern Indian Thought*, p. 206.

What is Sri Aurobindo's solution to break the educational deadlock?

Sri Aurobindo insists that education should not stop with mental acquisition and equipment. It should include not only vital and physical education but also psychic education. Psychic education links life with the light of an inner knowledge, and a light that can lead us out from the universal ignorance in which we are engulfed.

Instead of working under the instigation of the ego let us learn to work under the inspiration of the psychic being and see what a miraculous change awaits life.

What is psychic education?

That which removes darkness of the soul.
That which breaks the seal of Ignorance.
That which helps man walk the earth like a god.

Man is said to be "almost a quarrelling and fighting animal": can he ever hope to reach the status of the gods?

All problems are with the mind
All woes and worries of life are with the mind!
Stop the buzz of the mind, peace is yours!
Still the noise of life, heaven is yours!
Make the cells the home of peace — immortality is yours!

Man is mad in his search for happiness. He has a wonderful control over fire,

water, air and space, yet he finds himself bewildered, empty-handed. Vast reaches remain untapped but he is not aware of their absence.

“A whole mysterious world is locked within”,

but he is not conscious of it. The call is upon the lovers of psychic education to make this discovery with the zest and zeal of an explorer for a new land, a new continent.

This question was asked the Mother: “When one has a depression it lasts for quite a long time but when one feels a special kind of joy it does not last. What should one do to make the joy last longer?”

The Mother: “The pleasure of the vital is a very fleeting thing, and I think in life (in life as it is at present) there is more occasion for displeasure than for pleasure. Pleasure in itself is an extremely fleeting thing, for if the same vibration of pleasure is continued a little longer, it becomes unpleasant or even repugnant — exactly the same vibration.

“But if you are speaking of joy, that is altogether a different thing, it is a kind of warmth and an illumination in the heart.... It has nothing to do with pleasure: it is a kind of inner happiness. One is rarely in a state to feel it, unless one has become fully conscious of one’s psychic being.”¹

Yoga links education with the evolution of the psychic being to prepare one for a true life. The more conscious the evolution of life, the greater the progress towards the educational goal.

Knowledge for us is not just for knowledge’s sake. That is why our Centre does not follow the Western system of education blindly. Even the four basic faculties (Arts, Science, Engineering Technology and Physical Education) of the Centre are aimed at preparing the child to realise, in his own life, the supremacy of the spirit.

Einstein observed, “It is essential that the student acquire an understanding of and a lively feeling for values. He must acquire a vivid sense of the beautiful and of the morally good. Otherwise he — with his specialised knowledge — more closely resembles a well-trained dog than a harmoniously developed person.”²

Why do we so often fail in the battle of life?

Because modern education gives youth no weapons with which to fight the battle. This system of education is largely imitative and there is little in consonance with India’s own traditions — India’s Indianness — in it. Modern life is like a well finished house without light.

One of the key roles of psychic education is to awaken the inner shakti and enrich the character. Good manners of the teacher and the taught should be instinctive.

But the crucial point is how to arouse this inner strength. Let these words of Sri Aurobindo uttered in the beginning of this century serve as a mantra:

¹ *Mother India*, July, 1972.

² Quoted in the convocation address by N.A.Palkhivala, Bangalore University 1972.

“Strength then and again strength and yet more strength is the need of our race. But if it is strength we desire, how shall we gain it if we do not adore the Mother of strength? She demands worship not for Her own sake but in order that She may help us and give Herself to us. The gods cannot, even if they would, give themselves unasked.

“We cannot get strength unless we adore the Mother of Strength.... Her worship is to flow over the whole country She will pass like fire into the brains and hearts of her worshippers.

“In proportion as we put from us the preoccupation of bodily desires and interests, the sensual gratifications, lust, longings, indolences of the material world, we can return to the ocean of spiritual force within us.”¹

Below the turmoil of the surface vital there is a true vital — a real warrior in us. Behind it is our psychic entity. Let them have a free play in the field of life and see what charm, bliss and beauty emanates in life.

What a world of possibilities for the future is suggested by the education of “psychic science”. It is only by the acquisition of inner strength that one finds the conquering of difficulties a very real pleasure.

The psychic education would supply us with the habit of attacking problems, the habit of quick decision and quick action. “It is the psychic consciousness alone,” says the Mother, “that has the needed knowledge and the clear vision to do the right thing in the right manner.”

(To be continued)

NARAYAN PRASAD

¹ Sri Aurobindo: *Bhavani Mandir*. Pathmandir Annual 1956.

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry, by *J. Allen Hynek*, Abelard-Schuman. U.S.A. Pp. 276.

J. ALLEN Hynek is the first ranking scientist to come properly to grips with the vexing subject of Unidentified Flying Objects, and his long term of office — over twenty years — as scientific consultant to the United States Air Force adds much to the authority of his investigation. The book deals with the two basic aspects of the UFO problem: the classification and evaluation of the phenomena, and the attitude of the scientific and military establishments.

The author has come to the conclusion that there is an overwhelming case for treating the UFO sightings as an important body of empirical observations which demand proper study and investigation; the sightings dealt with are limited to those of our own generation, and necessarily exclude the great number of reports which have been recorded since the fifteenth century, among which the enigmatic “slow bolides” logged by French astronomers in the last century are perhaps the most challenging. Many people believe that such a proper investigation has indeed been carried out in America, and it is to this aspect that some of the most important sections of Dr. Hynek’s book are devoted. For he reveals — the appropriate word, unfortunately — that the United States Air Force’s “Project Blue Book”, which was charged with the investigation of UFOs, amounted to little more than a thinly-veiled fraud, whose methods included the discreet “cooking” of statistics and other even more questionable practices.

The dilemma of the Air Force stemmed from the understandable attitude of certain sections of the scientific establishment, although it now appears that many of the scientists who succeeded in exerting this negative influence were not, so to speak, from “le haut du panier.” Dr. Hynek refers to “the cavalier disregard by Project Blue Book of the principles of scientific investigation,” in order to support the basic belief that UFOs just don’t exist. Beset by a host of hoaxers, hysterical cultists and other members of the lunatic fringe, the US Air Force decided to take refuge behind a cover organization which purported to study the phenomenon, but actually set out to pan it. The leaders of the Establishment, including the discoverer of Pluto — Professor Tombaugh, who has himself witnessed UFOs — have for years kept out of the arena, presumably to avoid getting their feet wet, despite the desire of such men as U Thant and other members of the UN organization to set up an international investigatory body.

When public dissatisfaction with “Blue Book” became embarrassing the Air Force subsidized the massive Condon Report which, by British standards, was suspect from the start, and soon graduated — via a “leak” from one of the committee — to

the status of a tainted document.

It has been a sorry story from the beginning, and we must be grateful to Dr. Hynek for rescuing an absorbing subject from the twin clutches of hysteria on the one hand and officialdom on the other. Dr. Hynek's closing remarks are worth careful consideration by the more timorous members of the scientific community: "When the long awaited solution to the UFO problem comes, I believe that it will prove to be not merely the next small step in the march of science, but a mighty and totally unexpected quantum jump."

(With acknowledgements to the Times Literary Supplement, London, November 17, 1972, pp. 140-1.)

INVOCATION

O MOTHER of the New World
 And all the Worlds preceding it
 And all the Worlds proceeding
 Towards the New Creation,
 Come forth!

Manifest in Your Children!
 Touched by the Golden Ray of Your Existence
 They shall rise, and standing
 at the gateway to the Cosmic Battlefield
 Win the Victory for You—
 And for You alone.
 For we are Your Children!
 With Your Strength
 And Your Power of Sustenance
 May we climb
 The Ladder of the Worlds
 And from our appointed places
 On the Mountains of the Sun
 We, the Children of the Golden Light,
 Will conquer!

VICTOR B. KING

Students' Section

EYE EDUCATION

USEFUL HINTS IN READING

1. Hold the book at a distance from where it is seen best, move the head and sight with gentle blinking on each line. Usually the distance is 10 to 12 inches.
2. Move the book forward and backward.
3. Observe, each word appears darker.
4. Shift the sight just below the line of letters and read.
5. Look at the white spaces instead of the black type.
6. Move the body forward and backward.
7. Reading in lying posture — blinking is necessary.
8. Reading in dim light with strain helps myopic patients.
9. Reading in moving vehicles is not harmful.
10. Reading in candle light is very useful.
11. Reading of Fundamentals and chart at 10ft. alternately is helpful.
12. Read a portion and look away.
13. Reading with a card hole.
14. Stitching and Reading alternately.
15. Reading of photographic type reduction is very useful.

Mistakes in reading:

1. No blinking or wrong blinking.
2. Trying to see many words at a time.
3. Distance more than what is needed.
4. Trying to see black instead of glancing at white.
5. Strong light on paper.

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