

The Call Beyond





Highlights

Integrating Higher Consciousness in Creative Writing ... Page 6

Scholar Nonpareil ... Page 20

Does Integral Yoga Have a Method? ... Page 25



Cover Picture: A musical offering in the Meditation Hall of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch, in memory of Devi Karunamayee, popularly called Karuna Didi, who was synonymous with music for more than 50 years before she left her body in 2017.



An Online Publication of
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM - DELHI BRANCH

Contents

Editorial

- *Awareness, Ordinary and Extraordinary 4*

Article

- *Integrating Higher Consciousness in Creative Writing 6*

Words of the Mother

- *Before Reacting Think a Little. 13*

Words of the Master

- *The Sources of Poetry. 14*

Twenty-five years ago

- *Scholar Nonpareil. 20*

Poetry

- *Pain Leavened by a Caress of Masked Delight 23*

May I Help You

- *Does Integral Yoga Have a Method? 25*

Appreciations

- *Feedback and Encouraging Words 28*

Notice Board

- *Contact us 29*



Awareness, Ordinary and Extraordinary

The sense of separation is spread everywhere, but it is an illusion; it is one of those false moods of which we must be cured if we want to enter into the true consciousness.

The Mother ('Conversations 1929-1931', p. 59)

Consciousness is a confusing word because it has two valid and interrelated, but quite distinct, meanings. In ordinary language, and in neurophysiology, consciousness means awareness – when so used in writing, consciousness begins with a small 'c', unless it is the first word in a sentence. In spiritual literature, Consciousness (spelt with a capital 'C') means an awareness that is much wider, deeper and higher than ordinary human awareness. Although there is a superficial resemblance between the two meanings, and therefore also a justification, the difference is enormous.

If we go back to the times when the material universe did not exist, the only 'thing' that existed was God. God was a non-material entity, but was everywhere (omnipresent), all-powerful (omnipotent) and all-knowing (omniscient). According to the spiritual philosophy called Vedanta, when God chose to manifest in a material form, the result was the creation of the material universe. Since the material creation is just another form of the supremely conscious God, the Supreme Consciousness of the Creator is hidden in all creation. However, different forms of creation express the Supreme Consciousness to varying degrees. Non-living things express so little of it that they seem unconscious. Primitive forms of life express a little more of it. Animals with a mind express still more of it. Human beings, by far, express more of it than any other animal. But even human consciousness is only a very small fraction of the Supreme Consciousness. However, human consciousness is unique in having the capability of undergoing



remarkable growth over a lifetime. Thus, a human being need not die with the same level of consciousness with which he is born. Yoga and other similar disciplines accelerate the growth of consciousness. A few rare individuals grow so much in consciousness in a lifetime that their consciousness approaches Supreme Consciousness itself. Such a person lives with a sort of double vision. Like everybody else, he is aware of what he can see or hear. In addition, he is aware of the invisible Spirit of the Divine within everything animate and inanimate. His awareness includes also the unseen hand of the Divine behind all happenings. All his outer actions are also shaped by this higher, wider and deeper awareness, or as Sri Aurobindo says, he acquires the nature of the Divine. He loves all because he feels one with all. The consciousness of this person may be spelt with a capital 'C'. Apparently just a change from 'c' to 'C', and yet what a great difference it is!

Posted as a blog on Speaking Tree on 11 May 2012



Every attitude we hold is a source of positive or negative power for which we are accountable.

Caroline Myss ('Anatomy of the Spirit', p. 4)

The desire for a spiritual context and interpretation of life is universal.

Caroline Myss ('Anatomy of the Spirit', p. 8)

The conventional medical world is on the brink of recognizing the link between energy or spiritual dysfunction and illness.

Caroline Myss ('Anatomy of the Spirit', p. 11)



Integrating Higher Consciousness in Creative Writing

Neil Deuchar

No matter how assiduous an author may be in terms of deploying the tools and devices of creative writing craft, they may not capture the imagination or demand the attention of their reader unless the work has *soul*. What is meant by the word “soul” in this context is not related to the energy or register with which words are recruited to form a buoyant and engaging narrative (not that that isn’t fundamentally important) but, rather, the possibility that the author will do the reader a further, perhaps an even greater, service if they manage to at least occasionally get themselves out of the way, such that words of wisdom or beauty are allowed to arise from somewhere that transcends the egoic consciousness that predominates in the mundane world.

Integrating a higher consciousness with creative writing is often referred to as psychography or automatic writing. Although a respected way of expressing the wisdom of the spirit world, dating back at least a thousand years in Chinese folklore, western dabbling with automatic writing has attracted unhelpful associations with spiritualism, clairvoyance, occult practices around ouija boards and planchettes, and table-rapping in response to claimed messages from the dead. Many hoaxes have been uncovered and scientific skepticism has branded automatic writing a subconscious dissociative process frequently occurring in or between suggestible people (Burgess et al, 1998). Whether such references to neuro-psychology are compatible with a connection with higher consciousness is at least debatable: neurotheological studies (more commonly nowadays referred to as “spiritual neuroscience”) have shown concordance between spiritual experiences and certain types of demonstrable brain activity (Newberg, 2014) and studies of psychographers have



shown replicable changes in the central nervous system that can differentiate a deliberately conscious writer from someone writing in an apparent trance state (Perez et al, 2012).

There are various ways in which automatic writing has been conceptualised. “Channelling” is mainly a New Age-type concept wherein the voice of a spirit (typically an “Ascended Master”) is made manifest directly through a scribe. One of the best-known channelled works is Helen Schucman’s *Course in Miracles* (1976), which the scribe claimed was dictated to her by Jesus Christ. Although the book attracted a fury of scepticism (see for example Carroll, 2003) it is of note that Schucman, a tenured professor of medical psychology at a prestigious New York hospital, was assisted by a colleague (another professor in the same department, who transcribed the notes she took and who, unless the pair were suffering from folie à deux, must have conferred some objectivity onto the process) and never claimed authorship or, therefore, presumably, royalties. There is an indistinct boundary between channelling of this nature and “revelations,” which are said to be communications of purposive messages or knowledge from a divine entity for the good of mankind and which have typically underpinned sacred texts such as the Judaeo-Christian Bible, the Islamic Quran, and the Hindu Vedas.

However, the essence of automatic writing is not necessarily about religion. Being a subjective phenomenon that is not falsifiable, neither, however, does it subtend easily to science, and attempts to rationalise it to satisfy skeptics (which can stray into pseudoscience) tend to corrupt it (Edward, 2009). Automatic writing is not a form of magic, Enochian or otherwise, nor does it depend on belief in muses, be they Ancient Greek goddesses of inspiration or more modern concepts of supernatural forces delivering divine intuition. At its simplest level, all automatic writing involves is the allowance of inspiration to arise naturally and without overly obstructing it with egoic thought: writing,



according to Bijlani (2019) “with least resistance offered by the writer.” In this way, a consciousness other than the writer’s own comes to manifest in the act of creation, and consequently moulds the writing.

It is very common to suspect that inspiration happens from somewhere beyond one’s own individual mind. Vernacular phrases such as “divine intervention” and “seeing the light” are testimony to our acceptance, at one level or another, that ideas and energies come into awareness from places within, above or beyond our normal quotidian cognition. We refer to thoughts occurring or coming to us as if we know, deep down, that they derive from somewhere beyond the self, (even though we claim ownership of and rights to them!).¹ Even the ubiquitous way a writer will divert their gaze from the screen and look up down or away in order to lose focus for a moment belies the spiritual search for inspiration: defocussing encourages brain activity such as alpha waves (Varvarides, 2021) which have not only been associated with creativity (Lustenberger, 2015) but, for some time now, also with meditation (Anand et al, 1961; Larson, 2019). While this does not prove any causal process between the non-material world and the impetus to write, nor does its interpretation require a belief in God (at least not an anthropomorphised entity that is distinct from the cosmos), it does speak to our primal instinct that, while it is and will always remain a mystery, we can’t help but know in our subjective worldview that there is more to existence than what we can see, hear or touch; and, further, that enlightenment implies gaining an insight into this mystery that not only adds a spiritual dimension to music, art, literature or any other creative or generative endeavour, but to the seeking and expression of which is everyone’s birth right.

Many have tried to reference such inspiration in the creative process. Leitch (2001) quotes Plato, for instance, as having

¹ Courtesy Yoga Education & Spirituality - YESpirituality



said: “the poet ... is not able to make poetry until he becomes inspired and goes out of his mind.” Watt (2012) observes that “sometimes in our creative frenzy we were not even conscious of what we were writing.” Thinking is often vilified in contemporary spirituality as inimical to spirit: Orwell (1946) issued a warning against cognition: “... it is better to put off using words as long as possible,” and Bradbury (1994, p103) said it even more succinctly: “DON’T THINK!” adding “you don’t know what you’re doing, and suddenly it’s done.” (*ibid* p8). A character in ‘Boomeritis’, a novel by contemporary integral philosopher Ken Wilber (2002) describes why he meditates: “I seem to enter this space, this incredibly creative space, and songs come out of that space, almost like they were fully formed;” and Bach (1977), in the preface to his spiritual novel ‘Illusions’, puts it more demotically: “... once in a while there’s a great dynamite burst of flying glass and brick and splinters through the front wall and someone stalks over the rubble, seizes me by the throat and gently says ‘I will not let you go until you set me, in words, on paper.’”

Indian spiritual teacher Sri Aurobindo, by whose models of integral yoga and conscious evolution Wilber has been heavily influenced, and whose epic poem ‘Savitri’ was described by Sethna (2008) as having “mantric force ... from intuitive planes beyond the mind,” wrote of creative work as “no longer done as part of an ignorant mental life ... [but] turned into a movement of spiritual consciousness [that] becomes part of ... comprehensive illuminating knowledge” (Sri Aurobindo, 1970). Whilst this necessarily needs to retain a certain mystery, a pragmatic approach to a teleological rationale for inspired writing is offered by American poet and spiritual teacher Pat Schneider (2013, p261) who speaks of allowing words that come from “within [to] trace the outline of the mystery.” Pulitzer Prize winner Paul Muldoon (2011) sums it up: “The idea that poetry comes from beyond oneself is vital, as is



the sense that one writes a poem in a condition that is often associated with a spiritual position, ie [sic] the condition of humility. But this doesn't mean one's completely inert, or passive; rather, it's just about allowing a poem to come from wherever it comes from and getting it into the world."

How might this "allowance" be operationalised in the repertoire of the creative writer's craft-box? How does an artist draw from and integrate higher consciousness in the writing process? Assuming ego is related to identity, and that identity is related to "I," then it might be useful to avoid a first-person narrative. Further strategies to background the narrator might include free indirect speech, writing quickly so it has to flow from somewhere other than thought, and audio-recording a stream of consciousness and then transcribing it. It could be relevant to pay attention to ideas that arise, either in the course of conventional life or through the admission of ideas to consciousness during meditative or other altered states, and capture them by way of journaling. Discerning whether they might be inspirational (in the sense being addressed here) can draw from Ignatian principles of "examen," where experiences are assessed for the degree to which they give rise to consolation or desolation implying, respectively, proximity or distance from the source in which one is interested. If balanced with patience and detachment from the outcome, this approach can reconcile creativity with its spiritual function (Wright, undated). **Playing to one's literary strengths does not imply arrogance as long as it is remembered that talents are charisms entrusted to individuals for the good of all.** Making a note of one's dreams calls for a means of journaling that is immediate – dreams contain material that may not be available to us while we are fully awake but are invariably quickly erased from memory. And, finally, anchoring work to the wisdom and insights of those who have gone before will ensure spiritual momentum in the writing world is not lost.



In conclusion, integrating a higher source of consciousness into the creative process is not predicated on theistic or religious constructs, nor does it necessarily take the scientist into esoteric territory, nor does it confront the sceptic with mentalism or spiritualism (as opposed to spirituality). Rather, automatic writing can at its simplest level refer to ways in which writers can be subjectively inspired by an energy that, through the writer as a medium (in the prosaic sense of the word), gives rise to words of beauty or wisdom (or both) of the derivation of which the writer can claim only part (or in some cases none) of the credit. The result is a creative endeavour that serves to evolve the consciousness of both the creator and the audience. It therefore behoves all writers, be they writers of fiction or creative non-fiction, to remain alert and receptive to other-worldly or transcendent impulses and offerings that seem to want to find expression through them. This may not only enhance the spiritual capital of the creative work but also serve the evolution of the soul the writer inhabits.

References

- Anand, B.K., Chhina, G.S. & Singh, B. (1961) *Some Aspects of Electroencephalographic Studies in Yogis*. 'Electroenceph Clin Neurophysiol'; 13:452-456
- Aurobindo, Sri (1970) *'The Synthesis of Yoga'*. Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust p133
- Bach, R. (1977) *'Illusions'*. William Heinemann Ltd, page not numbered
- Biljani, R. (2019) *'Understanding Spirituality'*. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch p 294
- Bradbury, R. (1994) *'Zen in the Art of Writing'*. Joshua Odell Editions. pp 8 & 103
- Burgess, C.A., Kirsch, I., Shane, H., Niederauer, K.L., Graham, S.M., & Bacon, A. (1998). *Facilitated Communication as an Ideomotor Response*. 'Psychological Science' 9:71-74.
- Carroll, R.T. (2003) *'The Skeptic's Dictionary'*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Edward, M. (2009) *Automatic Writing*. <https://www.skepticblog.org/2009/03/21/automatic-writing/> (Retrieved 14 March 2024)



'Foundation for Inner Peace' (No Author): *A Course in Miracles*. New York: Viking, 1976

Larson, J. (2019) *What Are Alpha Waves and Why Are They Important?* <https://www.healthline.com/health/alpha-brain-waves> (Retrieved 19 March 2024)

Leitch, V. (2001) In: *'The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism'*. Norton Publications

Lustenberger, C., Boyle, M.R., Foulser, A.A., Mellin, J.M. & Fröhlich, F. (2015) *Functional Role of Frontal Alpha Oscillations in Creativity*. 'Cortex', 67:74-82

Muldoon, P. (2011) *Where Do Poets Get Their Inspiration?*

<https://www.oprah.com/spirit/where-do-poems-come-from-inspiration-for-poetry/all>

(Retrieved 1st March 2024)

Newberg, A.B. (2014) *The Neuroscientific Study of Spiritual Practices*. 'Front Psychol'. 5:215. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00215

Orwell, G. (1946) 'Why I Write'. Penguin Books. p119

Perez, Julio F., Moreira-Almeida, A., Caixeta, L., Leao, F. & Newberg, A. (2012) *Neuro-imaging during trance state: a Contribution to the Study of Dissociation*. 16 November 2012. 'PLOS ONE'. 7(11): e49360

Schneider, P. (2013) *How the Light Gets In: 'Writing as a Spiritual Practice'*. Oxford University Press, NY p 261

Sethna, K.D. (2008) In: Raja, P. (2018) 'K.D. Sethna'. New Delhi, Sahitya Akademi. <https://www.sahitya-akademi.gov.in/pdf/K.D.Sethna.pdf> (Retrieved 13 March 2024)

Varvarides, L. (2021) *Creative Writing as a Spiritual Flow*. <https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/creative-writing-as-spiritual-flow-2d3cd3bdc72> (Retrieved 19th March 2024)

Watt, A. (2012) 'The 90-Day Re-Write'. The 90 Day Novel Press. p13

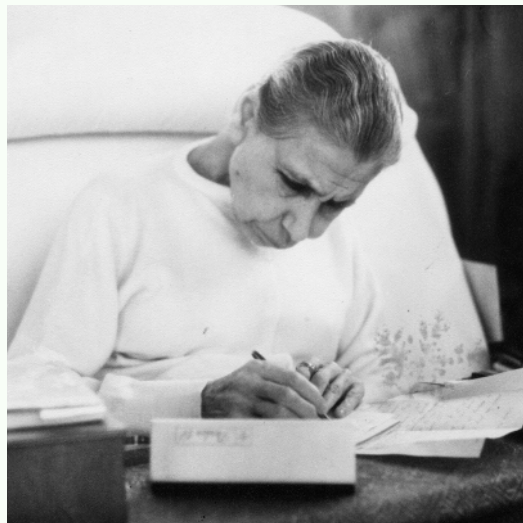
Wilber, K. (2002) 'Boomeritis'. Shambhala, Boston. p112

Wright, V.H. (undated) *Creativity and the Ignatian Spirit*. <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/creativity-and-the-ignatian-spirit/> (Retrieved 19 March 2024)

See also the related essay by Sri Aurobindo, 'The Sources of Poetry' p.14



Before Reacting Think a Little



Do not ever take lightly all the circumstances of each day, all the tiny little things of life, all the small events, you know; never take all this lightly. Never react with your lower being. Each time you are told to do something or not to do it – you are not told this very often, but each time you are told, before reacting think a little, try to find in yourself the part which reacts. Do not react just like that with what is most commonplace in you. Enter within yourself, try to find the best in yourself and with this you must react. It is very important, it is very important.

There are people who mark time for years because they have not done this. There are others who seem to fly, so fast they go, because they pay attention to this. And those who do not do that throw the blame always on the Divine. They accuse the Grace. ... And so, naturally they make their case worse because they push away even the help they could have had in their difficulty. There we are.

The Mother ('The Great Adventure', pp. 73)

All the pages of The Mother's work, 'The Great Adventure', in Tara Didi's voice, have been uploaded on the YouTube channel of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. The link to the playlist is: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLbJ59iL6vu-UXeufBeKQlUTwGf3GhZ9LJ>



The Sources of Poetry



The swiftness of the muse has been embodied in the image of Pegasus, the heavenly horse of Greek legend; it was from the rapid beat of his hoofs on the rock that Hippocrene flowed. The waters of Poetry flow in a current or a torrent; where there is a pause or a denial, it is a sign of obstruction in the stream or of imperfection in the mind which the waters have chosen for their bed and continent. In India we have the same idea; Saraswati is for us the goddess of poetry, and her name means the stream or "she who has flowing motion". But even Saraswati is only an intermediary. Ganga is the real mother of inspiration, she who flows impetuously down from the head of Mahadev, God high seated, over the Himalay of the mind to the homes and cities of men. **All poetry is an inspiration, a thing breathed into the thinking organ from above; it is recorded in the mind, but is born in the higher principle of direct knowledge or ideal vision which surpasses mind.** It is in reality a revelation. The prophetic or revealing power sees the substance; the inspiration perceives the right expression. Neither is manufactured; nor is poetry really a poesis or composition, nor even a creation, but rather the revelation of something that eternally exists. The ancients knew this truth and used the same word for poet and prophet, creator and seer, *sophos*, *vates*, *kavi*.



But there are differences in the manifestation. The greatest motion of poetry comes when the mind is still and the ideal principle works above and outside the brain, above even the hundred petalled lotus of the ideal mind, in its proper empire; for then it is Veda that is revealed, the perfect substance and expression of eternal truth. This higher ideation transcends genius just as genius transcends ordinary intellect and perception. But that great faculty is still beyond the normal level of our evolution. Usually we see the action of the revelation and inspiration reproduced by a secondary, diluted and uncertain process in the mind. But even this secondary and inferior action is so great that it can give us Shakespeare, Homer and Valmeki. There is also a tertiary and yet more common action of the inspiration. For of our three mental instruments of knowledge,—the heart or emotionally realising mind, the observing and reasoning intellect with its aids, fancy and memory, and the intuitive intellect, —it is into the last and highest that the ideal principle transmits its inspirations when the greatest poetry writes itself out through the medium of the poet. But if the intuitive intellect is not strong enough to act habitually, it is better for the poetry to descend into the heart and return to the intellect suffused and coloured with passion and emotion than to be formed directly in the observing intellect.

Poetry written from the reasoning intellect is apt to be full of ingenious conceits, logic, argumentation, rhetorical turns, ornamental fancies, echoes learned and imitative rather than uplifted and transformed. This is what is sometimes called classical poetry, the vigorous and excellent but unemotional and unuplifted poetry of Pope and Dryden. It has its inspiration, its truth and value; it is admirable in its way, but it is only great when it is lifted out of itself into intuitive writing or else invaded by the heart. For everything that needs fire rather than light, driving force rather than clearness,



enthusiasm rather than correctness, the heart is obviously the more potent instrument. Now, poetry to be great must have either enthusiasm or ecstasy.

Yet the poetry that rises up from the heart is usually a turbid stream; our own restless ideas and imaginations mix with the pure inrush from above a turbulent uprush from below, our excited emotions seek an exaggerated expression, our aesthetic habits and predilections busy themselves to demand a satisfaction greatly beyond their due. Such poetry may be inspired, but it is not always suitable or inevitable. There is often a double inspiration, the higher or ecstatic and the lower or emotional, and the lower disturbs and drags down the higher. This is the birth of romantic or excessively exuberant poetry, too rich in expression, too abundant and redundant in substance. The best poetry coming straight from the right centres may be bare and strong, unadorned and lofty, or it may be rich and splendid; it may be at will romantic or classical; but it will always be felt to be the right thing for its purpose; it is always nobly or rapturously inevitable.

But even in the higher centres of the intuitive intellect there may be defects in the inspiration. **There is a kind of false fluency which misses the true language of poetry from dullness of perception.** Under the impression that it is true and inspired writing it flows with an imperturbable flatness, saying the thing that should be said but not in the way that it should be said, without force and felicity. This is the tamasic or clouded stimulus, active, but full of unenlightenment and self-ignorance. The thing seen is right and good; accompanied with the inspired expression it would make very noble poetry. Instead, it becomes prose rendered unnatural and difficult to tolerate by being cut up into lengths. **Wordsworth is the most characteristic and interesting victim of tamasic stimulus.** Other great poets fall a prey to it, but that superb and



imperturbable self-satisfaction under the infliction is his alone. There is another species of tamasic stimulus which transmits an inspired and faultless expression, but the substance is neither interesting to man nor pleasing to the gods. **A good deal of Milton comes under this category.** In both cases what has happened is that either the inspiration or the revelation has been active, but its companion activity has refused to associate itself in the work.

It is when the mind works at the form and substance of poetry without either the revelation or the inspiration from above that respectable or minor poetry is produced. **Judgment, memory and imagination may work, command of language may be there, but without that secondary action of a higher than intellectual force, it is labour wasted, work that earns respect but not immortality.** Doggerel and bastard poetry take their rise not even in the observing intellect but from the sensational mind or the passive memory guided only by the mere physical pleasure of sound and emotion. It is bold, blatant, external, imitative, vulgar; its range of intellectuality and imaginativeness cannot go beyond the vital impulse and the vital delight. **But even in the sensational mind there is the possibility of a remote action from the ideal self; for even to the animals who think sensorially only, God has given revelations and inspirations which we call instincts.** Under such circumstances even bastard poetry may have a kind of worth, a kind of inevitability. The poet in the sensational man may be entirely satisfied and delighted, and even in the more developed human being the sensational element may find a poetical satisfaction not of the highest. The best ballad poetry and Macaulay's lays are instances in point. **Scott is a sort of link between sensational and intellectual poetry. While there are men mainly sensational, secondarily intellectual and not at all ideal, he will always be admired.**



Another kind of false inspiration is the rajasic or fiery stimulus. It is not flat and unprofitable like the tamasic, but hasty, impatient and vain. It is eager to avoid labour by catching at the second best expression or the incomplete vision of the idea, insufficiently jealous to secure the best form, the most satisfying substance. Rajasic poets, even when they feel the defect in what they have written, hesitate to sacrifice it because they also feel and are attached either to what in it is valuable or to the memory of their delight when it was first written. If they get a better expression or a fuller sight, they often prefer to reiterate rather than strike out inferior stuff with which they are in love. Sometimes, drifting or struggling helplessly along that shallow and vehement current, they vary one idea or harp on the same imagination without any final success in expressing it inevitably. **Examples of the rajasic stimulus are commonest in Shelley and Spenser, but few English poets are free from it.** This is the rajasic fault in expression. But the fiery stimulus also perverts or hampers the substance. An absence of self-restraint, an unwillingness to restrict and limit the ideas and imaginations is a sure sign of a rajasic ideality. **There is an attempt to exhaust all the possibilities of the subject, to expand and multiply thoughts and imaginative visions beyond the bounds of the right and permissible. Or else the true idea is rejected or fatally anticipated by another which is or seems to be more catching and boldly effective.** Keats is the principle exemplar of the first tendency, the Elizabethans of the second. The earlier work of Shakespeare abounds with classical instances. As distinguished from the Greek, English is a pronouncedly rajasic literature and, though there is much in it that is more splendid than almost anything done by the Greeks, —more splendid, not better,—a great deal even of its admired portions are rather rich or meretricious than great and true.

The perfect inspiration in the intuitive intellect is the sattwic or luminous inspiration, which is disinterested, self-contained,



yet at will noble, rich or vigorous, having its eye only on the right thing to be said and the right way to say it. It does not allow its perfection to be interfered with by emotion or eagerness, but this does not shut it out from ecstasy and exaltation. On the contrary, its delight of self-enjoyment is a purer and more exquisite enthusiasm than that which attends any other inspiration. It commands and uses emotion without enslaving itself to it. There is indeed a sattwic stimulus which is attached to its own luminosity, limpidity and steadiness, and avoids rich ness, force or emotion of a poignant character even when these are needed and appropriate. The poetry of Matthew Arnold is often though not always of this character. But this is a limited inspiration. Sattwic as well as rajasic poetry may be written from the uninspired intellect, but the sensational mind never gives birth to sattwic poetry.

One thing has to be added. A poet need not be a reflective critic; he need not have the reasoning and analysing intellect and dissect his own poetry. But two things he must have in some measure to be perfect, the intuitive judgment which shows him at a glance whether he has got the best or the second-best idea, the perfect or the imperfect expression and rhythm, and the intuitive reason which shows him without analysis why or wherein it is best or second-best, perfect or imperfect. **These four faculties, revelation or prophecy, inspiration, intuitive judgment and intuitive reason, are the perfect equipment of genius doing the works of interpretative & creative knowledge.**

Sri Aurobindo ('Essays Divine and Human', CWSA Vol. 12, pp. 28-32)

See also the related article 'Integrating Higher Consciousness in Creative Writing', p.6



Scholar Nonpareil



Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar
(17 April 1908 - 15 April 1999)

Prof. KR. Srinivasa Iyengar, who passed away on April 15 – two days short of his ninety-first birthday – was the doyen among the professors and critics of English literature in this country. An austere man with an air of abstraction about him, he was actually a great humanist who had an equal love for his students and for the classics which he had made his own through constant study, and penetrating insight. His choice of a subject for his Ph.D. thesis, Lytton Strachey, reflected as much his adventurousness in literary matters as his wide and curious reading (those were days when literary theses were still being written on Shakespeare and his ilk). After a stint as a school-teacher in Ceylon, he began teaching at the Lingaraj College in Belgaum (if memory serves me correctly). Later, he moved on to the Andhra University for his most productive years as a teacher of English literature.

Eventually he became the Vice-Chancellor of the University, a mixed blessing as administration was not really his metier.

He had many achievements to his credit, but none was more important to the students of literature than his monumental study of Indian writing in English, a pathbreaking work on which all successive writing on the subject depended. The Indian writing in English was scattered all over India and Great Britain. With patience and diligence Prof. Iyengar sought out the materials from a wide variety of sources, used his incomparable critical faculty to separate what was good and likely to survive from the simply ephemeral. Time has shown that some of his judgements were inaccurate, but his judgements were based on what he considered solid worth.



And he was not afraid to change his opinion. This writer had a long discussion with him once on which of R.K. Narayan's novels (as of that time) was the best. After weighing the pros and cons he agreed that 'The English Teacher' was outstanding. It is a trite phrase, but he really put Indian writing in English on the topography of world writing in English – this at a time when Indian writers in English were not sure of where they belonged.

Prof. Iyengar's intellectual interests were not limited to English literature. Born in an orthodox Brahmin family, he imbibed early the better aspects of that culture, and had a profound understanding of the epics and religious literature in general. This made its appearance in his thinking, when in his early thirties he was exposed to the thoughts and ideology of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Not that he considered them the only true inheritors of ancient Indian culture and wisdom, but he saw in them the true exponents of the ideal man, what he should be like, and how different the world would be if the new man, as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo, came into being. He became an absolute devotee of the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, while maintaining his own intellectual integrity and independence. He wrote extensively on the two, but one gets the feeling that he did so both as an insider and as an outsider looking in. Opinions may vary on this aspect of Prof. Iyengar's intellectual contribution, but he was nobody's handmaiden.

One of the crowning works of his later years was 'Sitayana', the story of Sita, retold from her point of view, but in the style of the Ramayana. Some time after this work creeping blindness began to advance in him, and there cannot be a greater tragedy for a man to whom the written word was meat and drink. Milton, in a great threnody of self-anguish, complained: 'When I consider how my light is spent/Ere half my days are done.' In the case of Prof. Iyengar his light was spent, slowly but steadily, as he reached the ripeness of years. But it was a great tragedy



as he had so much more to give to the world. It will be long before we see again such a man as he.

His life was gentle, and the elements / So mixed in him that Nature might stand up / And say to all the world 'This was a man!'

Courtesy: Indian Review of Books

Reproduced from 'The Call Beyond', Vol. 24, No. 3, 1999, p. 20.

* William Shakespeare, in 'Julius Caesar'

[Editor's note: 'The Call Beyond' is privileged to remember Prof. K.R.S. Iyengar on the 25th Anniversary of his departing from this world. He was the author of 40 books, including two elaborate thoroughly-researched biographies, about a thousand pages each – one that of Sri Aurobindo titled 'Sri Aurobindo: A biography and a history' and the other that of the Mother titled 'On The Mother: The chronicle of a manifestation and ministry'. Prof. Iyengar's daughter, Dr. Prema Nandakumar, once narrated that when her father was asked how he could write 40 books, he replied, "By not hitting back."]



I ache now for that Boon of boons – the will

To tame the ego's perverse rebellion

With the might of radiant, adoring Love.

Make me your Flute and you the Flutist be:

For then, I know, shall flow through me the flawless,

Inviolable melodies you will compose.

Dilip Kumar Roy ('The Immortals of the Bhagavat', p. 70)



All poetry is an inspiration, a thing breathed into the thinking organ from above; it is recorded in the mind, but is born in the higher principle of direct knowledge or ideal vision which surpasses mind.

Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, 'Essays Divine and Human', p 28)

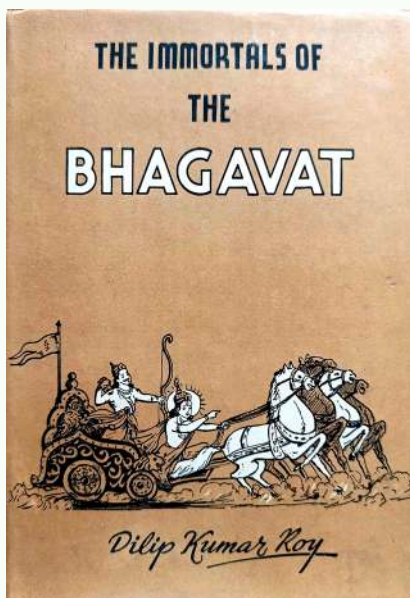
Pain Leavened by a Caress of Masked Delight

Dilip Kumar Roy

*Dark visitations swoop to cower the timid
Who would play only for the smallest stakes
Unmindful of thy mystic invitation:
But was there ever one among the crew
Who heard thy dangerous fluting's call and still
Eschewed thy luminous vasts for shadowy gains
Of twinkling shore-lights? Can one reck of risk
Or even regard a shipwreck as disaster,
Once he has glimpsed thy deep resistless main?
Thou knowest mine is no mere flimsy fancy's
Ephemeral effusion, nor a poet's
Dramatic ache for pain for pain's own sake.
For pain is pain and suffering flails the flesh:
Only the pain is more than countervailed
By a subterranean bliss when it is borne
For the one Beloved's sake. Then we perceive
That all such pain is leavened by a nameless
Caress of masked delight and we feel thy love's
Rapturous upheave in our lone heart-beats:
The darker our anguish, the whiter our soul's rapture.
When consciousness is tuned to this strange bliss*



Lone-petalling within—a mystic hush
 Deepens with the ever-deepening storm without.
 And then an embryonic premonition
 Stirs in the womb of pain hailed for thy sake,
 Which sings: 'Beyond the Night waits the New Dawn.
 O gratitude born of the recognition
 Of thy Love's pollens fecundating Life
 Flowering through sorrow even as through joy,
 Through separation as through union,
 Through din and silence as through life and death;
 I suffered agonies ?—yes, my flesh was weak:
 My spirit never. For, however lowly
 And flawed my being, I have yearned to thee
 Not only with my present self so wan
 But with all my spirit's invincible aspiration.



[The context: The Divine has finally appeared to rescue Prahlad from the cruelties of his father, Hiranyakashipu. The above lines are being spoken by Prahlad to explain why all the pain inflicted on him has been a source of joy to him. The pain was “more than countervailed by a subterranean bliss” and led to further intensification of his “spirit's invincible aspiration,” says Prahlad]

Excerpted from 'The Immortals of the Bhagavat' by Dilip Kumar Roy,
 pp. 95-96.



In this column, we try to answer three types of questions: those related to spiritual quest ('aspiring high'); those related to psychological issues ('feeling low'); and those related to physical health ('frailties of the flesh'). It is needless to say that the identity of the person asking the question is kept confidential if the question is about a sensitive issue. The questions may be sent to callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in.

Does Integral Yoga Have a Method?

Marcelo, a sincere adherent and teacher of Integral Yoga in Argentina writes:

For a long time ago I have been hearing people saying that Integral Yoga is the Yoga that has no method. To me it looks like a half-truth at least for two reasons:

1. If it is the Yoga that has no method, it contradicts Sri Aurobindo's very definition of Yoga as "a methodised effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the potentialities latent in the being..."
2. If we say that Integral Yoga is the Yoga that has no method then Integral Yoga becomes "The Yoga whose method is to have no method".

Maybe what is meant is that Integral Yoga has no rigid method prescribed for everybody all the time in every circumstance.

Editor's response:

That's a common question. That integral yoga has 'no method' means that it has no **fixed** method. There are broad guidelines available, such as 'Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender', 'The Four Aids: Shastra (scriptures), Guru, Time and Enthusiastic effort'. But the seeker has the freedom to work out his own method depending upon his inclinations, temperament, special strengths and weaknesses, and circumstances. This much of



freedom can be difficult to use; hence the 'complaint' that integral yoga has no method, which generally indirectly implies that the seeker wants specific dos and don'ts.

"Methodised effort means there is a method," as you say. This also means that the effort is disciplined, not haphazard. You also say, "Integral Yoga has no rigid method prescribed for everybody all the time in every circumstance." Absolutely.

Here are some excerpts from the works of Sri Aurobindo:

"There are three outstanding features of this action [action of the Divine] of the higher when it works integrally [on the physical, vital and mental] on the lower nature. In the first place it does not act according to a fixed system and succession as in the specialised methods of Yoga, but with a sort of free, scattered and yet gradually intensive and purposeful working determined by the temperament of the individual in whom it operates, the helpful materials which his nature offers and the obstacles which it presents to purification and perfection. **In a sense, therefore, each man in this path has his own method of Yoga.**" ('The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23-24, p. 46)

"What is his [of the Inner Guide] method and his system? He has no method and every method. His system is a natural organisation of the highest processes and movements of which the nature is capable. Applying themselves even to the pettiest details and to the actions the most insignificant in their appearance with as much care and thoroughness as to the greatest, they in the end lift all into the Light and transform all. **For in his Yoga there is nothing too small to be used and nothing too great to be attempted.**" ('The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23-24, p. 61)

Integral yoga uses everything in life as material for sadhana (personal effort): "nothing too small to be used." Again, along the same lines, in 'Savitri':



*Then is our life a tranquil pilgrimage,
Each year a mile upon the heavenly Way,
Each dawn opens into a larger Light.
Thy acts are thy helpers, all events are signs,
Waking and sleep are opportunities
Given to thee by an immortal Power.*

(‘Savitri’, CWSA Vols. 33-34, Book 6, Canto 1, p. 434)



*Your life on this earth is a divine poem that you are translating
into earthly language or a strain of music which you are
rendering into words.*

Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, ‘Essays Divine and Human’, p. 100)

*To rise into divine existence, force, light & bliss and recast in
that mould all mundane existence is the supreme aspiration
of religion & the complete practical aim of yoga.*

Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, ‘Essays Divine and Human’, p. 102)

*Firmness, without dogmatism, in our own system, toleration,
without weakness, of all other systems should therefore be
our intellectual outlook.*

Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, ‘Essays Divine and Human’, p. 104)





Feedback and Encouraging Words

Feedback from a Visitor

Dear Dr. Bijlani,

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to you for generously offering your time to enlighten us on diverse dimensions of spirituality. Your insights into profound questions like “Who am I,” particularly on self-management akin to managers managing themselves, have been profoundly impactful. Moreover, your discussion of various health-related facts added another layer of depth to our understanding.

Having you with us was a great pleasure indeed. We aspire to perpetuate the enthusiasm to nourish our quest for self-awareness.

Warm regards,

Rashmi (Saxena)

Chief Operating Officer (COO)

Udyogini (Delhi Chapter)

(in an email dated 22 March 2024)

—————*—————

Love knows no middle way: ‘either all or nil’,

Is the motto of the adventurous nomad soul.

Dilip Kumar Roy (‘The Immortals of the Bhagavat’, p. 104)

—————*—————



Contact us

Our bi-monthly magazine in Hindi, '**Sri Aravind Karmadhara**', is also available on-line now, and may be viewed on our website www.sriaurobindoashram.net.

For a free subscription to '**Sri Aravind Karmadhara**', please send an e-mail to sakarmdhara@gmail.com

To get '**The Call Beyond**' online regularly, month after month, please send an e-mail to: callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

To learn about the recent and forthcoming activities through the Ashram's e-magazine, '**Realization**', send an email to: callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

Please follow a simple two-step process:

1. Subject: Subscribe
2. Click on Send

If you subscribe either to '**Realization**', or to '**The Call Beyond**', you will start receiving, month after month, both the magazines.

For information about Auro-Mira Service Society and the Kechla project, please visit the website www.auromira.in



Note

In view of the Hundred and Fiftieth Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo on 15 August 2022, the Ashram is expanding its mailing list to reach out to more and more who may benefit from the teachings of the Master and the Mother. To get included in the Mailing List, please go to <http://erp.saaonline.net.in/addcontacts.cfm> to fill in a form, which will take you only a few minutes.



Get in touch with Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch on:

Our website: www.sriaurobindoashram.net

YouTube: <https://youtube.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/saadelhibranch>



Feedback

Please send your feedback to
callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

The Call Beyond is a publication of
Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch

Sri Aurobindo Marg

New Delhi 110 016

contact@aurobindoonline.in

91-11-2656-7863