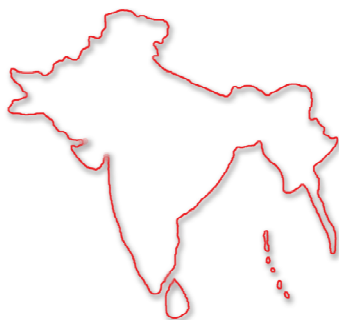


The Resurgent India

A Monthly National Review

May 2017



*“Let us all work for the Greatness of India.”
– The Mother*

Year 8

Issue 2

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SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

(Full of Promise and Joyful Surprises)

Botanical name: Gaillardia Pulchella

Common name: Indian blanket, Blanket flower, Fire-wheels

Year 8

Issue 2

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A Declaration

We do not fight against any creed, any religion.

We do not fight against any form of government.

We do not fight against any social class.

We do not fight against any nation or civilisation.

We are fighting division, unconsciousness, ignorance, inertia and falsehood.

We are endeavouring to establish upon earth union, knowledge, consciousness, Truth, and we fight whatever opposes the advent of this new creation of Light, Peace, Truth and Love.

— The Mother

(Collected works of the Mother 13, p. 124-25)

‘BAAHUBALI: THE CONCLUSION’: A QUALITY MOVIE AT A RIGHT TIME

A recently released Indian movie made in Telugu, **‘Baahubali: The Conclusion’**, has created a revolution of sorts in Indian cinema and beyond. Combining the best technology and engineering skills which has given tough competition to Hollywood blockbusters along with the mighty story, excellent acting and **complete originality of imagination**, the movie had grossed Rs. 1,060 crore within 10 days of release.

In South Asian countries, it has become a new symbol of cultural pride. Citizens from Bangladesh booked a chartered flight to Kolkata to watch the movie, **with many even saying that they are proud that such a movie came from South Asia.** In Pakistan, after the success of the movie elsewhere, people wrote to Indian distributors to facilitate its release in that country too.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

‘Baahubli: The Conclusion’ is the second part of the movie **‘Baahubali: The Beginning’** which, again, enjoyed a high degree of popularity. **Besides the technical perfection, originality and artistic finesse, the deeper reasons for the latest movie’s immediate connect with the people lie in the fact that it has managed to connect to the real Indian psyche and collective cultural instincts – and visual mediums can make powerful immediate impacts on the average person.**

The first movie viz. **‘Baahubali: The Beginning’** describes the mighty battle fought between the forces of good and evil over the kingdom of ‘Mahishmati’, with the clashes between the demons, ‘Kalakeyas’ and the warrior princes of Mahishmati (Amarendra Baahubali and Bhallal Dev). The second movie viz. ‘Baahubali: The Conclusion’ takes us through the internal battle between the two cousins, Amarendra Baahubali and Bhallal Deva. All along, in the both the parts, Amarendra Baahubali’s son, Mahendra Baahubali

(both the Baahubali roles are played by the same actor), is the witness who hears his father's and Mahishmati's story and fights the final war with Bhallal Deva.

While the story is an interesting, albeit typical, suspense-filled one about political strategy and court intrigues and evil forces, **what sets the movie apart is not the story but the ideas, the messages and their mighty portrayal.** Inspired by his childhood interest in Hindu epics rendered through Amar Chitra Katha, the director recreated the kingdom of Mahishmati. **Many entities in movie have actual historical references. For example, the evil 'Kalakeyas' have origins in Indian scriptures, referred to as sons of Kalaka, who is the daughter of Vaiswanara (son of Danu). Similarly, the kingdom of 'Mahishmati' itself has actual historical references, as being the most important city in the southern part of the Avanti kingdom.**

Thus, even though the story itself is entirely mythical and a product of the director's imagination, **the naming of many entities in the movie after actual historical objects fulfills the purpose of making it easier for the audience to connect to Hindu cultural objects.**

THE LARGER IMPLICATIONS – POLITICAL AND CULTURAL

This sense of Indian culture and its key chords came across loud and clear without any compromise and were, yet, interwoven seamlessly in the movie. Rajmouli, the director, clearly poured his heart out in every scene and gesture, leaving even the most skeptic intellectual audience spell-bound. **In fact, it is for the first time that people – including critics – from across the ideological spectrum have united to laud the movie. And this includes the army of feminists, leftists, conservatives and common man.** Editorials are being written to analyse the political import of the movie. The sense of unity and identity fostered by this movie is so strong that one or two exceptional critics who have tried to find

faults with the movie have been bashed thoroughly by all and dismissed at once.

And while what this well-intentioned movie conveys through its forays into Hindu mythology is nothing as compared to the real thing, it is certainly an eye-opener and a first taste for people, who had so far been completely alienated from their culture. The movie is bold and loud and clear and is not an apologist for any kind of secularism or any such thing.

In terms of the political import, it certainly has left a lot of left-wing commentators shaken, with many even claiming that the movie seems to have come at a right time – a time when Modi is bringing about actual cultural and political changes among the people – since it stands out for its depiction of a Hindu Kshatriya society through and through.

In this context, in Pakistan, it was surprising that the movie received an ‘all-clear’ certificate without a single scene being censored by the Pakistan Censor Board (PCB) – a body which is otherwise known to be very particular about what is being released in the country.

Given these trends unleashed by the movie, there are three things which stand clear:

First, the success of this movie heralds the beginning of a new era of Indian cinema. For the first time, an Indian – and, no less, a Telugu and not a Bollywood – movie has left Hollywood stunned by beating many of its superstars against all numerical odds. In the United States, which is the hub of globally-dominant movies, Baahubali set a big record, becoming the third-top Box Office hit. **Even though it was released across just 420 screens in that country (while other Hollywood movies were released across a thousand plus screens), it has stormed the box office, leaving many commentators confused about how a Telugu film appealed to such a wide audience and with a miniscule Indian-American population.**

This success is an example of how India will culturally lead the world in all aspects, and excellence in art and films is one such important area.

Other movies will and should strive to replicate the technical perfection and detail as well as the consistency and boldness of the message to strive towards perfection that expresses the inner inspiration of the maker.

Second, this movie sends across the message that powerful movies can contribute to not just a sense of cultural nationalism in the country, but also regional nationalism within the Indian sub-continent, such as being seen in countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan. And certainly, releasing this movie – which depicts woman valour – amongst a Muslim population is no mean task. Showing outspoken Hindu women warriors, it will raise a sense of yearning amongst the already revolting-Muslim women too.

And coming at a time of political churning in the country, the influence of the movie on the people is sure to contribute to the larger process of national awakening, at least visibly and in immediate terms – this sense of cultural and national pride has been widely acknowledged by people after seeing this movie.

THE KASHMIR CRISIS: WHAT IT REALLY IS AND THE ANSWERS BEFORE US

The escalation of the Kashmir crisis in recent times has led to the emergence of the misplaced belief that the government must stop using excessive force against the civilians in order not to antagonize them any further and should 'engage' with all the 'stakeholders' including the separatist organizations. Now this is a very short-sighted view, concerned only with the achievement of some immediate, selfish aims, and it is to the credit of the ruling party, the BJP, that the government is not doing any such thing. We have been treading this path of appeasement since 1947 and it has only made the problem of Kashmir worse.

What such so-called secular parties deliberately fail to realize is that it is simply not done to proclaim Kashmir as an integral part of India on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to negotiate with militants and separatists. This is called paying insincere lip-service to a cause, since you know very well that such an approach can never take you closer to a permanent solution to the Kashmir problem.

Indeed, the clamour for 'engagement' and 'negotiation' with the terrorists over the issue has been, and can only be a sheer disaster, since **the real issue has been about the religious expansionism of Islam. And Islam, in its current nature, can never co-exist with anything external to it. As soon as it sees something external to itself, it treats it as an object of *jihad* which needs to be either swallowed up or eliminated.**

And, make no mistake – the real issue is about the Islamization of the valley. **Separatists who assert that they do not want to join Pakistan and are only interested in a distinct Kashmiri autonomy based on regional aspirations are misleading the people. They may not want to join Pakistan, but Islamization is something that runs in the blood of separatists and Muslim Kashmiris across all camps.** While there are enough historical proofs of this, the most recent one has come in the form of the resignation

of Zakir Musa from Hizbul Mujahideen on the ground that he had signed up to ensure the Islamization of Kashmir rather than simply 'azadi'. Right now, the separatists are treading cautiously and that is why they will try to downplay their Islamic identity, otherwise it will weaken their claim to the argument of Kashmiri independence. But **Islam is the main anchor that has fueled separatist tendencies since the 1930s, gaining more power after 1980s; for, if Kashmir were not a Muslim-majority state, this problem would never have arisen.**

THE ADVENT OF ISLAMIC ASSERTION AND THE MISNOMER OF 'KASHMIRIAT'

It is a misnomer to think that the radical Islamic assertion in the Valley began only after the rigged elections of 1987. The process had started since the time of Sheikh Abdullah. From 1940s to the 1980s, when Sheikh Abdullah's influence reigned, there were merely undercurrents of a distinct Islamic assertion – the Kashmir issue was merely shown to be a problem about a distinct Kashmiri culture. In reality, under the garb of 'Kashmiriat' and a separate Kashmiri identity – which ostensibly bound both Hindus and Muslims – the agenda of Islamization and radicalization of the Valley has been consistently attempted.

Even Sheikh Abdullah started out with an original Islamic agenda. Indeed, when he first floated his own party, in 1930s, to oppose Maharaja Hari Singh, it catered exclusively to the Muslims. But its ambition to expand into wider Kashmiri politics and the realization that Indian state will have to be engaged made Abdullah rename his party to give it a falsely leading nationalist overtone. But his entire politics for decades had catered to Muslims alone. His short-term camaraderie with the Congress was to advance his party's (and his own) corrupt interests and to ensure that Muslims ruled the Valley.

This can be seen in the fact that after using the gullible Nehru-led government for signing the Instrument of Accession, Abdullah

immediately reversed his position on accession. He began to state that the accession took place under dubious conditions, putting in place controversial and exclusivist constitutional provisions in Kashmir, and began to treat India and Pakistan as equal parties in the dispute. The reason is not difficult to discern. While Islamic radicalism and resentment against Dogra rule always ran in Sheikh's blood, he never got along well with Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. It was only after Jinnah passed away and he had proclaimed himself the constitutional 'Prime Minister' of Kashmir that both he and Pakistan began to come close.

Like Sheikh Abdullah before, the other Kashmiri leaders of the present are living out the same principles – of fulfilling their selfish and corrupt interests by striking alliances with either Pakistan or the militants. Indeed, the National Conference – founded by Sheikh Abdullah – has been able to establish a family fiefdom in Kashmir over the decades.

It is important to recall these realities as we debate Kashmir's future today. **In our minds, we need to see that there is no such thing as *Kashmiriat* as far as the Muslim community is concerned.** Going back to the history and culture of Kashmir, let us recall that Hindus were the original inhabitants of Kashmir and that it was the brutal Muslim rule since the 13th century which virtually wiped them out, although the subsequent Sikh and the Dogra rule too was the epitome of selfish and corrupt administration that often allied with the British against the interests of the local population. However, **throughout history, Kashmiri Pandits, despite being in minority (in 1947, they formed just about 9% of the Kashmir Valley's population and by mid-1990s they were virtually wiped out) exercised immense influence on the culture of the state.**

They have always acted as a counter-balancing force to the always-existent separatism of the Muslims, thereby giving the misleading impression that the population of Kashmir was peace-loving and inspired by Sufi ideals. In reality, it was the Hindu community – which occupied all the major administrative and

political positions and had a dominant culture – **which formed the crux of a distinct identity of *Kashmiriat*, preventing it from being run over by Islamism. Otherwise, there was absolutely no basis on which the Muslims alone could have laid a claim to a Kashmiri identity first and foremost, since Muslim majoritarianism is, inherently and by its very nature, communal.**

As has been aptly pointed out, **“The secular façade, which Kashmir has worn all through the last forty-three years, has been provided mainly by Kashmiri Hindus. They have not reacted to Muslim communalism.”** This was exposed after 1989-90 with the rise of the terrorists in Kashmir and the brutal wipe-out of Kashmiri Hindus.

This raises questions about precisely what Kashmiri culture are these militants and civilians of today fighting for? They are neither the inheritors nor the contributors to any such culture, which has long been non-existent now. What has instead taken its place is unbridled Islamic terrorism to which the government needs to respond firmly.

WHAT SHOULD INDIA’S STAND BE?

It is well-known that an “independent country” of Kashmir surrounded by India and Pakistan can never be a viable reality, so all this talk of ‘self-determination’ and ‘*Kashmiriat*’ is a hoax to put India under pressure. And those Indians who actually subscribe to the latter view are either living in a fool’s paradise or have a similar subverted ‘secular’ agenda to make India lose Kashmir to Pakistan. This being understood, the question of ‘negotiation’ with militants and their sympathizers simply does not arise.

Time and again, our parties have partnered with the separatists and prevented a resolution of the Kashmir issue. It is therefore fortunate that the present BJP government is ready to assume the burden of hatred and unpopularity in order to find a permanent solution to the Kashmir conundrum. The fact that Mehbooba Mufti has decided to stick along, despite her own party, PDP’s opposition,

also shows **the directions towards which the fortunes of Time are slowly turning.**

Indeed, the big break marked by the ruling BJP government, in the Kashmir issue, has been their non-recognition of Kashmir as a dispute. They are simply not willing to concede that the Kashmiris' demand for greater autonomy – tantamount to breaking away from the country – is something that can be recognized. And that is why the government has flatly refused to recognize separatist groups like Hurriyat and JKLF and to talk to them.

On the other side, the Kashmir uprising by the people has intensified to proportions never seen before in history, surpassing even the 1990s wave of militancy and insurgency. **Even women are joining militant ranks and children are losing their humanity, joining ISI-funded stone-pelters and militants. There is no trace of Kashmiriat left in this population, which has, since the last four decades, been infiltrated by the enemy. And this time, the crisis is of such massive proportions that everyone, including the “population of Kashmir”, want a final closure once and for all because this time a war has been declared against the Indian state.** Therefore, the Indian state must abandon all delusions of softness or political obligation and strike out and fight against these insurgents head-on.

A recent positive step in this direction has already come from General Bipin Rawat, the Chief of Army Staff, when he gave an appreciative commendation to Major Gogoi, who used a Kashmiri civilian as a 'human shield' by tying him to his jeep. While the incident triggered a mini-national debate, several people, including Punjab's CM, Amarinder Singh, came out in support of the Major, arguing that it is high time that army is given an upper hand in dealing with such conflicts.

THE DIRECTION OF A SOLUTION

The direction of a solution to the Kashmir issue lies in recognizing, first of all, that India has made a mistake by appeasing

militants, separatists and the local Muslim population and corrupt politicians, and that this mistake she cannot afford to repeat. This soft policy, ironically, has not only made India look like a villain with its baggage of AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act) and PSA (Public Safety Act) but has also made it lose face globally due to its soft and uncertain stand. Consider this – will anyone dare to raise questions about China’s brutal and firm handling of Muslims in its backyard of Xinjiang, or the fact, that China recently launched a DNA profiling mission to keep track of Muslims?

India’s treatment of Kashmir has been entirely defensive and with bleeding-heart behind as compared to China’s treatment of Uighur Muslims, Myanmar’s treatment of Rohingya Muslims, Turkey’s treatment of Kurdish Muslims and Pakistan’s treatment of Shia majority in Gilgit-Baltistan. And yet, the fact that India is villainized shows just how much harm the false secularism has done to our national interest.

Thus, not only has the past experience proved appeasement and bleeding-heart to be futile, but it should also be recognized that India has nothing to lose and everything to gain by dealing with a firm hand. And if the government were to provide – as it should – modern defense equipment and technology to the soldiers, then India will have a far superior hand in facing the terrorists.

Naturally, many of the civilians may revolt and there may be a little destruction. But this will only reveal the true colours of Islamic intolerance and its quest to treat everything non-Islamic as an object of jihad. Therefore, the Indian state needs to accept the challenge of the war declared on it by the Kashmiri insurgents and meet them head-on.

Therefore, the solution to the Kashmir issue needs to encompass three steps:

First, recognize that the current conflict involved only two groups – army and the people infected by Islamic intolerance. Therefore, protecting its national interest, the government should fully empower

and upgrade the army and give it full control of Kashmir. We must not repeat the past follies of Nehru – Kashmir would have been undivided today had Nehru and Mountbatten not conspired, in 1947, to stop the advance of the army into Gilgit-Baltistan by insisting that the UN will resolve the issue and then further compromising the national interest by promulgating Article 370. As history showed, the Article was nothing but a way of giving immense powers to the Abdullah family and closeting Kashmir off from the rest of India. Therefore, to correct these historical wrongs, a strong beginning needs to be made.

Second, since Kashmir forms only about 10% of the area of Jammu and Kashmir and yet wields such immense power, this power needs to be curbed at once. The government should not hesitate to ruthlessly control the unrest within the Valley and should ensure that other parts of the state are well isolated from the Valley to check the spread of terrorists. For that, the government should no longer delay giving a Union Territory status to Ladakh and integrate Jammu firmly within the Union – this has been a long-standing demand of all communities in these regions, including the Shia Muslims of Ladakh.

Third, once Kashmir is firmly under India's control, the government can take the final step to permanently merge Kashmir by abrogating Article 370. India should abrogate the Article, change the regressive property and citizenship laws enshrined in the Article and ensure that all the Indians who care to can come to Kashmir and live there in safety as in any other part of India.

These solutions are completely opposed to the dominant misconception that has gained credence – the illusion of peace viz. something can be changed by 'engaging' in talks with a hostile, terrorist-infiltrated and alien population or with separatist groups who get funding from Pakistan's ISI, and, at their heart, have sympathies for outfits like ISIS whose core Islamic philosophy is to wage jihad and destroy all that is non-Islamic. The government needs to recognize and disperse this reality in the public. The only thing

left by the way of a solution, in the Kashmir crisis, is to display a strong political will, as all the answers and courses of action are already in front of us.

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1. Kaul, Utpal. 1995. “‘Kashmiriat’: A Hindu Heritage” p.725, IN *The Story of Kashmir: Yesterday and Today*, by Verinder (ed.) Grover, 722-726. New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications

THE ILLUSION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In the modern era Science and Progress has brought about an increasing concentration of man on his surface individual self which, as pointed out earlier, makes it impossible that individuals, in general, could be getting better in any real sense. Therefore, what is perceived as progress or development, in spite of the bewitching appearances to the contrary, must be really illusory as far as the real well-being is concerned. **It should be apparent to all who can look behind surface appearances that, as long as the present trend in the movement of human psychology continues, not only can there be no increase in real income and well-being, but, as a matter of fact, these things are bound to experience a steadily decline over time which, if not stopped by some divine intervention enabling humanity to change course, will lead humanity towards its extinction in the near future.**

Science, progress, government, society are simply instruments and mediums and not the godheads that this materialistic age has made of them. These are like a double-edged sword that can cut both ways and their value is dependent on the consciousness of those using them. Because of the narrowness of the goals and the egoistic spirit in which they have been pursued, the whole humanity seems to have come under the influence of the subtle vital beings – who are invisible but whose presence can be felt – of the life plane whose aim is always to enslave human beings through their unchastened desires and use them for their own satisfaction which lies in creating, as much as possible, confusion, disharmony, catastrophes and other forms of sufferings and passions which makes human beings throw out the kind of vital vibrations these beings cherish. To anyone who can really step-back and look at the present scenario it will be apparent that the present civilization is swiftly moving towards destruction of life on earth.^a One of the most

^aStephen Hawking, a renowned British scientist, has recently stated that by the end of this century the earth is likely to become uninhabitable and humanity must look for life on another planet if it is to survive.

important factors contributing to this movement is humanity's blind acceptance and seeking after the Mammon in the form of GDP.

The GDP of a country consists of the production or consumption of goods and services. While the production of goods can be measured in terms of volume, major services like education, health, justice, law and order and defence cannot be quantified and hence their volume is measured simply by the amount of money spent on them. The most important thing for a service is its quality which is often capable of being felt easily by the people involved but which cannot at all be measured objectively and hence an expense incurred on it is made to pass for its measure. If a doctor begins to charge Rs. 200 for the same examination for which earlier he charged Rs. 100, then for the purposes of economic calculations he would be considered to have provided two times more valuable service than before, even though in this case, in all probability, he may have inflicted not only a much greater financial drain but also (through his act) an adverse psychological impact on the consumer of his service. Thanks to the onslaught of the utilitarian spirit, an increasing proportion of the Health-Service sector's contribution to the GDP may be attributed to the motivated and positively harmful medical practices such as unnecessary and harmful surgeries, tests, costly medicines and treatments in the hospitals. The service sector which accounted for about one third of the world GDP in the 1950s, accounted for 66% of it in the year 2013 and in the case of an advanced economy like that of the U.S.A it is about 80% at present.

To fully illustrate our point of view, let us assume that an economy consists only of services. Now, in such an economy one person's expense will be another person's income and vice versa. If everyone were to start charging ten times (as much as before) for his/her service, this will lead to a tenfold increase in the GDP as currently measured. But will there be any increase in the real GDP if the quality of the service performed remains unchanged? The only way the real GDP can increase in such an economy is via an increase in the quality of service. If the quality of service keeps going down – as it has steadily been doing under the corrosive action of the ever

increasing utilitarianism in the modern societies – the real income of the people (at least as far as the services are concerned) will also keep going down regardless of the ever increasing figures for the (service sector) GDP. The real GDP figures are arrived at by deflating the nominal figures for price changes. But there is no provision for adjusting the GDP figures for changes in the quality of service which – as is felt by most – has been steadily declining over the years. The pace of this decline – thanks to the ever more powerful discoveries of science – has also been increasing, especially since the beginning of this century. So, in the face of these facts the figures for the real per capita GDP – even when an account is taken of the upward trend in the volume of services made available – must have been declining over the years – at least as far as the consumption of services (accounting for almost two-thirds of the total) is concerned.

In any service, particularly in the case of such services as education, health and justice, quality alone, without which quantity is almost superfluous, is really important for giving satisfaction to the people. Now, what has been happening in the service sector – the world over – is that while the quality of the services has been steadily going down over the years, the national accounts figures for the average real (constant price) per capita income of persons engaged in this sector has been going up. In India, the service sector accounted for 57 percent (it was 61.5% for 2015-16) of the GDP in 2013^a, but only 28.1 percent of the total employment. Thus the average income of a person employed in this sector was more than 3 times that of the non-service sector.

For the non-service sector (accounting for about one-third of the GDP) the story is basically not much different. Certainly, the apparent increases in this cannot be expected to make-up for the declining real value of the service sector in its contribution to the GDP. Even in this sector, the cost of a good is not a reliable indicator of its quality nor, obviously, is its attractive outer packing. Undeniably there has been an upward trend in both of these along with the volume (of the goods), but it has been, more often than not,

^a Economic Survey, 2014-15, p.107

accompanied by a declining trend in the quality of goods in general. At present the whole world economy is based on the principle of competition with an unbridled seeking after profits by all the players in the field. It has become apparent – especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early nineties of the last century – that in the psychology of the players in the competitive economic system there is a built-in tendency to cut costs by taking out of a good all in terms of quality that can be safely taken out to enable one to lower the price and thereby gain an additional competitive advantage in the market. If one producer begins using this trick, others will be forced to follow suit. This is what is meant by a dictum of the bad coin driving the good coin out of circulation in the market. And the above principle is the characteristic manner in which an economy begins to function under the utilitarian spirit which, if allowed to continue unabated, ultimately leads to its total dissolution.

In today's utilitarian society, more and more individuals are increasingly finding that the situation in their life and the field of work has become such that they must consent to the use of more and more unethical and degrading means to succeed or even to survive.

For example, let us assume that A and B are two competitors in a business and A resorts to the practice of avoiding paying of government taxes (whenever he can get away with it) and starts selling his articles a little cheaper. Even if B is a man of scruples, when he finds it increasingly difficult to stay in business he copies A. Now, to do better A decides to undercut his competitor by taking out of the product, in quality and substance, all that could be taken out 'safely' – without affecting the appearance, i.e. without the risk of the consumer finding out. This lowers the costs and enables A to further reduce his price. Now B must do something similar or if through his experience of so called 'realities of life', he gets exceedingly groomed in the commercial spirit he may even do better and discover novel ways of cheating customers and undercutting his competitors.

Thus the disease spontaneously percolates to deeper and deeper levels and most of the people – even those who begin with good intentions – working in any kind of business or economic activity

or profession are either thrown out if they do not yield or they begin sinking to ever lower levels in ethics and morality.

[This] utilitarian spirit...has already made deep inroads into the areas of services that practically must remain – as they traditionally have been – free from the commercial spirit if they are at all going to be able to perform their sacred task. Education, health and medicine, justice and not even philanthropy and religion are any longer immune from the corrosive action of this rust of the human soul...Close family ties and intimate personal relations have so far remained largely free from the grosser forms of this commercialism because India has a tradition of strong family ties and a spiritual culture. However, a turn towards it has already been made – particularly in the urban areas – and it may not be too long before it spreads and India begins to catch up with the Western gospel of each man for himself.

Thus it should be clear that in such a scenario, an increase in the real well-being – even when measured in the narrow terms of material well-being – is an impossibility because it depends crucially on the quality of the goods and services that became available and in this respect the declining trend in the quality of these cannot really be reversed unless people's selfish attitude towards each other – a byproduct of an increasing concentration on the surface being brought about by the materialistic outlook and pursuits – begins to undergo a basic qualitative improvement. Such an improvement can be brought about only when mankind begins increasingly to turn towards the first member and the base of the triangle of the triple godhead of Fraternity, Liberty and Equality brought into the forefront by the French Revolution. Fraternity is the base of the triangle and Liberty and Equality are the two sides which meet to make its apex. The triangle cannot stand on its apex – the futile and painful exclusive European pursuits of Liberty or Equality during the past one hundred years should have made that abundantly clear to all those who can look behind the surface appearances of things. The triangle can stand only on the base of true Fraternity which exists only in the soul and cannot be brought into prominence unless humanity begins to progressively turn inwards towards the soul.

A. THE TRIPLE GODHEAD OF FRATERNITY, LIBERTY AND EQUALITY AND THE PAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS' RECORD OF THE ATTEMPTS TO MOVE TOWARDS IT

The experience of past one hundred years clearly shows that the fundamental issue before us is not of the right form of the government – we have seen the working of every possible form of government (democratic, authoritarian or some form in between) – but of the spirit of governance, which means that those who would rule would not do so just formally in the name of the people using some outer machinery (elections, voting, parliaments) to sanctify their authority but would actually be very sensitive to the feelings of the common masses – not in appearance only (like in the modern democratic forms of government) but truly. And the time has come when people can no longer be fooled by the appearances or the talk of the sanctity of the sacred written documents (constitutions) or elected bodies (parliaments, assemblies, etc). A beginning in this direction seems to have been made in the consciousness of the people and the march towards this must commence. It may come across some detours but it will not be stopped or reverted because, at present, the future of humanity hangs in the balance and nature can no longer afford the luxury of one more round of partial victories followed by defeats. **Europe's failure in truly giving form to the triple godhead of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity – brought to the forefront of European consciousness by the French Revolution – is perhaps one of the most important causes that led to the last two World Wars** and fortunately the present state of defence technology is such that humanity can no longer afford a third one which may very well prove to be the last. **Fraternity is the only base on which both equality and liberty can be built and it is because of the absence of the true spirit of this godhead (which exists only in the soul) that all attempts steeped in the spirit of Western Culture and based on taking either equality (Communitic or Socialistic forms of authoritarianisms) or liberty (capitalistic democratic forms) as their starting point or base have failed to establish the triple-godhead.**

The basic reason behind this kind of difficult equation is simple. Men are created equal in the spirit but not in their outer nature and are endowed with varying assortment of abilities, capacities and qualities. **People who are endowed with a strong vital nature, and consequently a powerful will, have always been able to stamp their will on all those around them. Such people will always come to occupy positions of importance and authority in any walk of life – especially in the political and economic fields because of the special attraction these have for the human vital ego – regardless of the nature of the outer form of a government or society. The past experience of humanity amply bears it out and the European experience of the last century only confirms it beyond any shadow of doubt. The crux of the matter is that the wolves will always dominate the sheep no matter where and in what kind of physical arrangement or structure they are put together.** We all know how nature has put them together in humanity with a perfect similarity in the outer appearance and with no other distinguishable features. They differ only in capacities and force, the things which become visible only in action and manifestation and then who – except perhaps some other wolves who would have their own axe to grind – can stop them, certainly not the sheep. **The only approach that can possibly tame the human wolf is the approach through the heart – not from its surface parts but from its depths where the soul has its station and where all feel oneness. Once the deep and inherent feelings of Love and Brotherhood are awakened in human hearts, the discords automatically begin to dissolve and humanity can smoothly advance towards the triple-godhead because it is only Love that can prevent the misuse of Liberty and it is only Brotherhood which can make Equality tolerable.**

B. HOW SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARE INEFFECTIVE IN REDRESSING THE PERIL

In fact not only that they cannot redress but, mostly, they even speed up the process leading to the precipice. We should be under no illusion that there is an alternative to a change in consciousness. As gross human beings, we suppose that if technology, infrastructure

and equipment get better, then the service rendered is better. This is not true. Science and technology are double-edged swords whose use depends entirely on the consciousness that is using them. There are numerous examples all around us that prove this. For instance, at present things have reached such disgustingly low levels that one hears of big drug companies producing and having ready large stock of necessary medicine for containing an epidemic before they secretly disperse the microbes that would spread it. It is the same in other fields as well. It is quite commonplace to hear that big software companies not only create anti-virus programs for computers, but also create new viruses so that computers get infected and people are forced to buy upgraded and more expensive anti-virus programs. With technological advances, more and more sophisticated and expensive equipment is available to doctors, who in an effort to cover costs, or worse, to generate more income, create an atmosphere of fear and insecurity among their patients in order to make them undergo unnecessary but expensive tests and treatments.

How can one take such things as contributing to one's well-being? In fact, such things are clearly leading to a loss of real income and well-being as people have to spend more and more time, energy and material resources on alleviating artificial human-made ills like crime, pollution and progressive adulteration in food leading to poor health and costly treatment of illnesses resulting from this. As things stand at present, the loss of real well-being resulting from these ills requires greater and greater spending of money to partially mitigate these. All such spending (done to mitigate the evil effects of problems generated largely as a by-product of the process of development) is counted as addition to the GDP which, therefore, must invariably grow as spending on such things grows. In such a scenario a good proportion of the growing GDP may be contributed by the growing human deprivation.

C. THE MISPLACED EFFORTS OF MODERN ECONOMISTS FOR THE ALLEVIATION OF THE PROBLEM

The above issues have provoked some re-thinking among the welfare economists. They have reached a general consensus on why there is a lack of well-being. Unfortunately, their thinking is based

on the assumption that there is a problem only with the current 'measures' of national well-being, like the GDP and the GNP.

At a superficial level, the following general problems have been identified:

- GDP is simply based on quantitative addition and subtraction. It cannot capture the quality, the well-being or the real benefit to the people. There are numerous everyday examples around us that bring home this fact. For instance, if parents care for their children themselves, they are not contributing to the national income. But if they hire and pay a nanny to do so, they are contributing to the national income, even though the result is that they are becoming more selfish. To take other examples, traffic jams, incredibly, contribute to the GDP, because of the extra expense of vehicle fuel people have to bear, and, murderers contribute directly to the GDP by buying a knife or a gun and other equipment and indirectly by making it necessary to increase the size of the police force and the administrative machinery including the number of courts and judges.

Similarly, in the health sector, the rising number of diseases contributes more to the national income by increasing people's expenditure on medical services. But if people were to lead a healthy life, the GDP would effectively go down. In other words, **the modern society significantly contributes to the GDP both in creating and then in its attempts at solving the ills created by it.**

Although not amounting to much, still there are attempts that are being made in various countries to devise ways to objectively measure qualitative changes. Such attempts cannot get very far because of the fundamentally subjective and psychological nature of the real human well-being. Regardless of whether it grasps the problems with the way economic development is measured, the folly of the current economic thinking lies in its belief that it can actually find solution to these problems within the framework of the present system. This belief (and the reasoning based on it) is completely misplaced. **If we analyse deeply the causes of the lack of well-**

being, we will understand that, under present conditions, no matter what measure is used and what policy and institutional interventions are put in place, there can be no real increase in income and welfare. In fact, the way things are going, there will certainly be a fall in income as time passes, because this fall in income and welfare is related to something deeper than material deprivation and has psychological roots. It is the very crisis of the consciousness that is causing it.

HISTORY OF INDIA – THE VEDIC AGE (29)

XIII. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND THE HISTORICAL BASES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE VEDA

D. SRI AUROBINDO'S VIEW OF HIS WORK ON THE VEDA AND SOME SELECTIONS FROM HIS FURTHER WORK AIMED AT MAKING HIS PRIMA FACIE CASE ENTIRELY FIRM

The Vedic hymns are the symbolic gospel of the ancient Indian mystics and in the light of Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of these presented in the previous pages it is clear that a prima facie case has been established for the view that their true and deeper sense is spiritual and psychological. Sri Aurobindo felt that although a prima facie case has been established but "Still to make our case entirely firm it will be well to examine the other companion legend of Vritra and the waters which we have seen to be closely connected with that of the Angirases and the Light. In the first place Indra the Vritra-slayer is along with Agni one of the two chief gods of the Vedic Pantheon and if his character and functions can be properly established, we shall have the general type of the Aryan gods fixed firmly. Secondly, the Maruts, his companions, singers of the sacred chant, are the strongest point of the naturalistic theory of Vedic worship; they are undoubtedly storm-gods and no other of the greater Vedic deities, Agni or the Ashwins or Varuna and Mitra or Twashtri and the goddesses or even Surya the Sun or Usha the Dawn have such a pronounced physical character. If then these storm-gods can be shown to have a psychological character and symbolism, then there can be no farther doubt about the profounder sense of the Vedic religion and ritual. Finally, if Vritra and his associated demons, Shushna, Namuchi and the rest appear when closely scrutinised to be Dasyus in the spiritual sense and if the meaning of the heavenly waters he obstructs be more thoroughly investigated, then the consideration of the stories of the Rishis and the gods and demons as parables can be proceeded with from a sure starting-point and the symbolism of the Vedic worlds brought nearer to a satisfactory interpretation."¹

In the following pages, beginning with sub-section (i) we present some selections from the above mentioned most important additional work by Sri Aurobindo which he felt was sufficient for his purpose and remarked, "More we cannot at present attempt; for the Vedic symbolism as worked out in the hymns is too complex in its details, too numerous in its standpoints, presents too many obscurities and difficulties to the interpreter in its shades and side allusions and above all has been too much obscured by ages of oblivion and misunderstanding to be adequately dealt with in a single work. We can only at present seek out the leading clues and lay as securely as may be the right foundations."²

The Secret of the Veda was never published during Sri Aurobindo's life time. When the publication of *The Secret of the Veda* as a book was proposed in 1944, Sri Aurobindo dictated the following reply: "The publication of the Secret of the Veda as it is does not enter into my intention. It was published in a great hurry and at a time when I had not studied the Rig Veda as a whole as well as I have since done. Whole chapters will have to be rewritten or written otherwise and a considerable labour gone through; moreover it was never finished and considerable additions in order to make it complete are indispensable."³

The above may create a false impression in the minds of some that perhaps Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of the Veda went through some important revision after he studied the Rig Veda as a whole in his later years. Fortunately, to put all such impressions to rest, we have Sri Aurobindo's Foreword to the first edition of *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* (1946) where we find a concentrated final expression of his interpretation of the Veda. In the above mentioned Foreword he writes, "The interpretation I have put forward was set out at length in a series of articles with the title 'The Secret of the Veda' in the monthly philosophical magazine, *Arya*, some thirty years ago; written in serial form while still developing the theory and not quite complete in its scope or composed on a preconceived and well-ordered plan it was not published in book-form and is therefore not yet available to the reading public. It was accompanied by a number of renderings of the hymns of

the Rig Veda which were rather interpretations than translations..."⁴ Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of the Veda as briefly set out in the above mentioned Foreword is basically the same as it was set out at length in the series of articles entitled *The Secret of the Veda*.^a

The work under the above title was not considered sufficient by Sri Aurobindo to establish on a scholastic basis the conclusions of his hypothesis. For that, he felt, "...it would have been necessary to prepare an edition of the Rig Veda or of a large part of it with a word by word construing in Sanskrit and English, notes explanatory of important points in the text and justifying the interpretation both of separate words and of whole verses and also elaborate appendices to fix firmly the rendering of key-words like *ṛtam*, *śravas*, *kratu*, *ketu*, etc. essential to the esoteric interpretation. This also was planned, but meanwhile greater preoccupations of a permanent nature intervened and no time was left to proceed with such a considerable undertaking."⁵ The object of the translations published under the title *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* was not to be a scholastic work meant to justify a hypothesis, it was rather only to present these translations "...in a permanent form for disciples and those who are inclined to see more in the Vedas than a superficial liturgy and would be interested in knowing what might be the esoteric sense of this ancient Scripture."⁶

(i) *The Colloquy of Indra and Agastya*

"The governing idea of the hymn belongs to a stage of spiritual progress when the human soul wishes by the sheer force of Thought to hasten forward beyond in order to reach prematurely the source of all things without full development of the being in all its progressive stages of conscious activity. The effort is opposed by the Gods who preside over the universe of man and of the world and a violent struggle takes place in the human consciousness between the individual soul in its egoistic eagerness and the universal Powers which seek to fulfil the divine purpose of the Cosmos.

^a After Sri Aurobindo's passing in 1950, the series entitled *The Secret of the Veda* was published in a book form by Sri Aurobindo International University Centre in 1956 under the title *On the Veda*.

The seer Agastya at such a moment confronts in his inner experience Indra, Lord of Swar, the realm of pure intelligence, through which the ascending soul passes into the divine Truth.

Indra speaks first of that unknowable Source of things towards which Agastya is too impatiently striving. That is not to be found in Time. It does not exist in the actualities of the present, nor in the eventualities of the future. It neither is now nor becomes hereafter. Its being is beyond Space and Time and therefore in Itself cannot be known by that which is in Space and Time. It manifests Itself by Its forms and activities in the consciousness of that which is not Itself and through those activities it is meant that It should be realised. But if one tries to approach It and study It in Itself, It disappears from the thought that would seize It and is as if It were not.

Agastya still does not understand why he is so violently opposed in a pursuit which is the eventual aim of all being and which all his thoughts and feelings demand. The Maruts are the powers of Thought which by the strong and apparently destructive motion of their progress break down that which is established and help to the attainment of new formations. Indra, the Power of pure Intelligence, is their brother, kin to them in his nature although elder in being. He should by their means effect the perfection towards which Agastya is striving and not turn enemy nor slay his friend in this terrible struggle towards the goal.

Indra replies that Agastya is his friend and brother, – brother in the soul as children of one Supreme Being, friend as comrades in a common effort and one in the divine love that unites God and man, – and by this friendship and alliance has attained to the present stage in his progressive perfection; but now he treats Indra as an inferior Power and wishes to go beyond without fulfilling himself in the domain of the God. He seeks to divert his increased thought-powers towards his own object instead of delivering them up to the universal Intelligence so that it may enrich its realisations in humanity through Agastya and lead him forward by the way of the Truth. Let the egoistic endeavour cease, the great sacrifice be resumed, the

flame of the divine Force, Agni, be kindled in front as head of the sacrifice and leader of the march. Indra and Agastya together, the universal Power and the human soul, will extend in harmony the effective inner action on the plane of the pure Intelligence so that it may enrich itself there and attain beyond. For it is precisely by the progressive surrender of the lower being to the divine activities that the limited and egoistic consciousness of the mortal awakens to the infinite and immortal state which is its goal.

Agastya accepts the will of the God and submits. He agrees to perceive and fulfil the Supreme in the activities of Indra. From his own realm Indra is supreme lord over the substances of being as manifested through the triple world of mind, life and body and has therefore power to dispose of its formations towards the fulfilment, in the movement of Nature, of the divine Truth that expresses itself in the universe, – supreme lord over love and delight manifested in the same triple world and has therefore power to fix those formations harmoniously in the status of Nature. Agastya gives up all that is realised in him into the hands of Indra, as offerings of the sacrifice, to be held by him in the fixed parts of Agastya's consciousness and directed in the motional towards fresh formations. Indra is once more to enter into friendly parley with the upward aspiring powers of Agastya's being and to establish agreement between the seer's thoughts and the illumination that comes to us through the pure Intelligence. That power will then enjoy in Agastya the offerings of the sacrifice according to the right order of things as formulated and governed by the Truth which is beyond."⁷

References:

- 1. Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, Vol.15, p.246, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry**
- 2. Ibid, pp.246-47**
- 3. Ibid, p.603**
- 4. Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, Vol.16, p.21, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry**
- 5. Ibid, pp.21-22**
- 6. Ibid, p.22**
- 7. Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, Vol.15, pp.254-56, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry**

THE GREATNESS OF INDIA AND ITS CULTURE (29)

5. THE GREATNESS OF INDIAN LITERATURE

V. THE MAHABHARATA AND THE RAMAYANA: THE ITIHASAS

D. The Worth of the Western Criticism of the Great Epics

"Apart from minor defects and inequalities such as we find in all works set at this pitch and involving a considerable length of labour, the objections made by Western criticism are simply expressions of a difference of mentality and aesthetic taste. The vastness of the plan and the leisurely minuteness of detail are baffling and tiring to a Western mind accustomed to smaller limits, a more easily fatigued eye and imagination and a hastier pace of life, but they are congenial to the spaciousness of vision and intent curiosity of circumstance, characteristic of the Indian mind, that spring as I have pointed out in relation to architecture from the habit of the cosmic consciousness and its sight and imagination and activity of experience. Another difference is that the terrestrial life is not seen realistically just as it is to the physical mind but constantly in relation to the much that is behind it, the human action is surrounded and influenced by great powers and forces, Daivic, Asuric and Rakshasic, and the greater human figures are a kind of incarnation of these more cosmic personalities and powers. The objection that the individual thereby loses his individual interest and becomes a puppet of impersonal forces is not true either in reality or actually in the imaginative figures of this literature, for there we see that the personages gain by it in greatness and force of action and are only ennobled by an impersonality that raises and heightens the play of their personality. The mingling of terrestrial nature and supernature, not as a mere imagination but with an entire sincerity and naturalness, is due to the same conception of a greater reality in life, and it is as significant figures of this greater reality that we must regard much

to which the realistic critic objects with an absurdly misplaced violence, such as the powers gained by Tapasya, the use of divine weapons, the frequent indications of psychic action and influence. The complaint of exaggeration is equally invalid where the whole action is that of men raised beyond the usual human level, since we can only ask for proportions consonant with the truth of the stature of life conceived in the imagination of the poet and cannot insist on an unimaginative fidelity to the ordinary measures which would here be false because wholly out of place. The complaint of lifelessness and want of personality in the epic characters is equally unfounded: Rama and Sita, Arjuna and Yudhishthira, Bhishma and Duryodhana and Karna are intensely real and human and alive to the Indian mind. Only the main insistence, here as in Indian art, is not on the outward saliences of character, for these are only used secondarily as aids to the presentation, but on the soul life and the inner soul quality presented with as absolute a vividness and strength and purity of outline as possible. The idealism of characters like Rama and Sita is no pale and vapid unreality; they are vivid with the truth of the ideal life, of the greatness that man may be and does become when he gives his soul a chance and it is no sound objection that there is only a small allowance of the broken littleness of our ordinary nature.

These epics are therefore not a mere mass of untransmuted legend and folklore, as is ignorantly objected, but a highly artistic representation of intimate significances of life, the living presentment of a strong and noble thinking, a developed ethical and aesthetic mind and a high social and political ideal, the ensouled image of a great culture. As rich in freshness of life but immeasurably more profound and evolved in thought and substance than the Greek, as advanced in maturity of culture but more vigorous and vital and young in strength than the Latin epic poetry, the Indian epic poems were fashioned to serve a greater and completer national and cultural function and that they should have been received and absorbed by both the high and the low, the cultured and the masses and remained through twenty centuries an intimate and formative part of the life of the whole nation is of itself the

strongest possible evidence of the greatness and fineness of this ancient Indian culture.”¹

VI. KALIDAS

“THE CLASSICAL age of the ancient literature, the best known and appraised of all, covers a period of some ten centuries and possibly more, and it is marked off from the earlier writings by a considerable difference, not so much in substance, as in the moulding and the colour of its thought, temperament and language. The divine childhood, the heroic youth, the bright and strong early manhood of the people and its culture are over and there is instead a long and opulent maturity and as its sequence an equally opulent and richly coloured decline. The decline is not to death, for it is followed by a certain rejuvenescence, a fresh start and repeated beginning, of which the medium is no longer Sanskrit but the derived languages, the daughters of the dialects raised into literary instruments and developing as the grand and ancient tongue loses its last forces and inspiring life. The difference in spirit and mould between the epics and the speech of Bhartrihari and Kalidasa is already enormous and may possibly be explained by the early centuries of Buddhism when Sanskrit ceased to be the sole literary tongue understood and spoken by all educated men and Pali came up as its successful rival and the means of expression for at least a great part of the current of the national thought and life. **The language and movement of the epics have all the vigour, freedom, spontaneous force and appeal of a speech that leaps straight from the founts of life; the speech of Kalidasa is an accomplished art, an intellectual and aesthetic creation consummate, deliberate, finely ornate, carved like a statue, coloured like a painting, not yet artificial, though there is a masterly artifice and device, but still a careful work of art laboured by the intelligence. It is carefully natural, not with the spontaneous ease of a first, but the accomplished air of ease of a habitual second nature.** The elements of artifice and device increase and predominate in the later writers, their language is a laborious and deliberate though a powerful and beautiful construction and

appeals only to an erudite audience, a learned elite. The religious writings, Purana and Tantra, moving from a deeper, still intensely living source, aiming by their simplicity at a wider appeal, prolong for a time the tradition of the epics, but the simplicity and directness is willed rather than the earlier natural ease. In the end Sanskrit becomes the language of the Pundits and except for certain philosophical, religious and learned purposes no longer a first-hand expression of the life and mind of the people.

The alteration in the literary speech corresponds however, apart from all inducing circumstances, to a great change in the centre of mentality of the culture. It is still and always spiritual, philosophical, religious, ethical, but the inner austerer things seem to draw back a little and to stand in the background, acknowledged indeed and overshadowing the rest, but nevertheless a little detaching themselves from them and allowing them to act for their own enlargement and profit. The exterior powers that stand out in front are the curious intellect, the vital urge, the aesthetic, urbanely active and hedonistic sense life. It is the great period of logical philosophy, of science, of art and the developed crafts, law, politics, trade, colonisation, the great kingdoms and empires with their ordered and elaborate administrations, the minute rule of the Shastras in all departments of thought and life, an enjoyment of all that is brilliant, sensuous, agreeable, a discussion of all that could be thought and known, a fixing and systemising of all that could be brought into the compass of intelligence and practice, – the most splendid, sumptuous and imposing millennium of Indian culture.

The intellectuality that predominates is not in any way restless, sceptical or negative, but it is enormously inquiring and active, accepting the great lines of spiritual, religious, philosophical and social truth that had been discovered and laid down by the past, but eager too to develop, to complete, to know minutely and thoroughly and fix in perfectly established system and detail, to work out all possible branches and ramifications, to fill the intelligence, the sense and the life. The grand basic principles and lines of Indian religion, philosophy, society have already been found and built and the steps

of the culture move now in the magnitude and satisfying security of a great tradition; but there is still ample room for creation and discovery within these fields and a much wider province, great beginnings, strong developments of science and art and literature, the freedom of the purely intellectual and aesthetic activities, much scope too for the hedonisms of the vital and the refinements of the emotional being, a cultivation of the art and rhythmic practice of life. There is a highly intellectualised vital stress and a many-sided interest in living, an indulgence of an at once intellectual and vital and sensuous satisfaction extending even to a frankness of physical and sensual experience, but in the manner of the oriental mind with a certain decorousness and order, an element of aesthetic restraint and the observance of rule and measure even in indulgence that saves always from the unbridled licence to which less disciplined races are liable. The characteristic, the central action is the play of the intellectual mind and everywhere that predominates. In the earlier age the many strands of the Indian mind and life principle are unified and inseparable, a single wide movement set to a strong and abundant but simple music; here they seem to stand side by side related and harmonised, curious and complex, multiply one. The spontaneous unity of the intuitive mind is replaced by the artificial unity of the analysing and synthetising intelligence. Art and religion still continue the predominance of the spiritual and intuitive motive, but it is less to the front in literature. A division has been settled between religious and secular writing that did not exist to any appreciable extent in the previous ages. The great poets and writers are secular creators and their works have no chance of forming part of the intimate religious and ethical mind of the people as did the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The stream of religious poetry flows separately in Purana and Tantra.

The great representative poet of this age is Kalidasa. He establishes a type which was preparing before and endured after him with more or less of additional decoration, but substantially unchanged through the centuries. His poems are the perfect and harmoniously designed model of a kind and substance that others

cast always into similar forms but with a genius inferior in power or less rhythmically balanced, faultless and whole. The art of poetic speech in Kalidasa's period reaches an extraordinary perfection. Poetry itself had become a high craft, conscious of its means, meticulously conscientious in the use of its instruments, as alert and exact in its technique as architecture, painting and sculpture, vigilant to equate beauty and power of the form with nobility and richness of the conception, aim and spirit and the scrupulous completeness of its execution with fullness of aesthetic vision or of the emotional or sensuous appeal. There was established here as in the other arts and indeed during all this era in all human activities a Shastra, a well recognised and carefully practised science and art of poetics, critical and formulative of all that makes perfection of method and prescriptive of things to be avoided, curious of essentials and possibilities but under a regime of standards and limits conceived with the aim of excluding all fault of excess or of defect..."²

References:

- 1. Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo**, Vol.20, pp.352-53, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry
- 2. Ibid**, pp.354-57

“Governments, societies, kings, police, judges, institutions, churches, laws, customs, armies are temporary necessities imposed on us for a few groups of centuries because God has concealed His face from us. When it appears to us again in its truth & beauty, then in that light they will vanish.”

– Sri Aurobindo

(Complete works of Sri Aurobindo, 12, p.465)