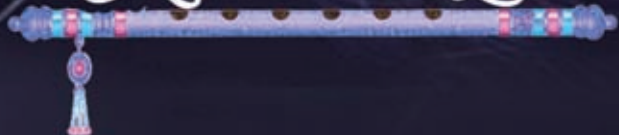


All India Magazine

November 2023

Krishna Lila



Cover page:

The flute is the call of the Divine.
The conch is the call to realisation.
A peacock is the symbol of spiritual victory.

Sri Aurobindo



Krishna's Ananda

Manifold, abundant and so full of charm.

(Spiritual significance and explanation of the flower given by the Mother)

Botanical name: Plumbago auriculata

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KRISHNA LILA

Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. — Sri Aurobindo



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Editorial name: The two names that have captivated the Indian mind and triggered its thought and imagination the most are Rama and Krishna, the Avatars of Treta and Dwapara Yuga respectively. In this issue we seek to understand the Lila of Sri Krishna through the eyes of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.



Arjuna and Krishna, this human and this divine, stand together not as seers in the peaceful hermitage of meditation, but as fighter and holder of the reins in the clamorous field, in the midst of the hurtling shafts, in the chariot of battle. The Teacher of the Gita is therefore not only the God in man who unveils himself in the word of knowledge, but the God in man who moves our whole world of action, by and for whom all our humanity exists and struggles and labours, towards whom all human life travels and progresses. He is the secret Master of works and sacrifice and the Friend of the human peoples.

CWSA 19: 19

Sri Aurobindo

Krishna's Play

The eternal child and universal Godhead

Krishna represents both the universal Godhead and the immanent Godhead, he whom one can meet within one's being and in all that constitutes the manifested world.

And do you want to know why he is always represented as a child? It is because he is in constant progression. To the extent that the world is perfected, his play is also perfected — what was the play of yesterday will no longer be the play of tomorrow; his play will become more and more harmonious, benign and joyful to the extent that the world becomes capable of responding to it and enjoying it with the Divine.

CWM 15: 14

The boy with the flute

The boy with the flute is Sri Krishna, the Lord descended into the world-play from the divine Ananda; his flute is the music of the call which seeks to transform the lower ignorant play of mortal life and bring into it and establish in its place the lila of his divine Ananda. It was the psychic being in you that heard the call and followed after it.

*

It is, I suppose, the image of Sri Krishna as Lord of the divine Love and Ananda — and his flute calls the physical being to awake out of the attachments of the physical world and turn to that Love and Ananda.

*

Krishna with Radha is the symbol of the Divine Love. The flute is the call of the Divine Love; the peacock is victory.

CWSA 30: 156-57

Sri Aurobindo

The mischievous Krishna

Only a few days ago, on the morning of the 29th, I had one of those experiences that mark one's life. It happened upstairs in my room. I was doing my japa, walking up and down with my eyes wide open, when suddenly Krishna came — a gold Krishna, all golden, in a golden light that filled the whole room. I was walking, but I could not even see the windows or the rug any longer, for this golden light was everywhere with Krishna at its center. And it must have lasted at least fifteen minutes. He was dressed in those same clothes in which he is normally portrayed when he dances. He was all light, all dancing: 'You see, I will be there this evening during the Darshan.' And suddenly, the chair I use for darshan came into the room! Krishna climbed up onto it, and his eyes twinkled mischievously, as if to say, 'I will be there, you see, and there'll be no room for you.'

When I came down that evening for distribution, at first I was annoyed. I had said that I didn't want anybody in the hall, precisely because I wanted to establish an atmosphere of concentration, the immobility of the Spirit — but there were at least thirty people in there, those who had decorated the hall, thirty of them stirring, stirring about, a mass of little vibrations. And before I could even say 'scat'—I had hardly taken my seat — someone put the tray of medals on my lap and they started filing past.

But what is surprising is that in a flash, no one was there any longer. No one, you understand — I was gone. Perhaps I was everywhere (but in fact I am always everywhere, I am always conscious of being everywhere at the same time), though normally there is the sense of the body, a physical center, but that evening there was no more center! Nothing, no one, not even the sense that there was no one — nothing. I was gone. There was indeed something handing out the medals which felt the joy of giving the medal, the joy of receiving it, the joy of mutually looking at each other. It was simply the joy of the action taking place, the joy of looking,

this joy everywhere, but me?— Nothing, no one, gone. Only later, afterwards, did I see what had happened, for everything had disappeared, even the higher mind that understands and organizes things (by 'understand' I mean contain, which 'contains' things). That also was gone. And this lasted the entire distribution. Only when that [the body] had gone back upstairs to the room did the consciousness of what is me return.

There is a line by Sri Aurobindo in *Savitri* which expresses this very well: to annul oneself so that only the Supreme Lord may be.

The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, March 3, 1960

The Lights of Krishna

The lights indicate the action of certain forces, usually indicated by the colour of the light. Whitish blue is known as Sri Aurobindo's light or sometimes Sri Krishna's light.

Whitish blue is Krishna's light or mine; deeper blues often indicate light from the higher consciousness.

There are two pale blues, one which is whitish blue and is known as Sri Aurobindo's light, the other quite blue which is that of the higher consciousness just above mind.

The meaning of blue light depends on the exact character of the colour, its shade and nature. A whitish blue like moonlight is known as Krishna's light or Sri Aurobindo's light — light blue is often that of the Illumined Mind — there is another deeper blue that is of the Higher Mind; another, near to purple, which is the light of a power in the vital.

There is one blue that is the higher mind, a deeper blue that belongs to the mind — Krishna's light in the mind.

There are different Krishna lights — pale diamond blue, lavender blue, deep blue etc. It depends on the plane in which it manifests.

Diamond blue is Krishna's light in the overmind — lavender blue in intuitive mind.

There is the whitish moonlight blue of Krishna's light — lavender blue of devotion, deep blue of the physical mind, sapphire blue of the higher mind and many others.

All blue is not Krishna's light.

Blue is also the Radha colour.

The violet is the light of the Divine grace and compassion.

"Violet" is the colour of benevolence or compassion, but also more vividly of the Divine Grace — represented in the vision as flowing from the heights of the spiritual consciousness down on the earth. The golden cup is I suppose the Truth consciousness.

Violet is indeed the colour or light of Divine Compassion, so also of Krishna's grace.

CWSA 30: 126-28

Sri Aurobindo

Krishna's play: a power of progress veiling itself behind appearances.

Krishna's play in Matter: beauty, love and joy are comrades; a play which widens and makes you progress.

Krishna's play in the physical: the rule of the Avatar upon earth, that is to say, the realisation of the new divine world.

*

Radha

Can you tell me whether Radha actually existed? Volumes are being written to prove that she did not.

Surely she has lived and is still living.

Radha's consciousness symbolises perfect attachment to the Divine.

CWM 15: 14-15

Blue Krishna

The green circular disc you saw round Venus must indeed have been the aura of Venus which is of that colour; but this was only an introduction, a first application of the suddenly developed power of vision. Afterwards what came, the blue and the violet,

were another kind of seeing more important for your Yoga; both are closely associated with Krishna. Blue is his especial and significant colour, the colour of his aura when he manifests, — that is why he is called Nil Krishna; the adjective does not mean that he was blue or dark in his physical body whether in Brindavan or Mathura or Dwarka! Violet is the radiance of Krishna's protection,— that was why, very naturally, it brought to you a sense of peace. The Mother says that she always saw it when she was in communion with Krishna and now too constantly sees it enveloping the Asram. That this should be the first thing shown when the power of vision broke through its state of latency is very significant; it proves that you are in contact, the touch already there in your inner being and this force of presence and protection is already around you or over you as an enviroing influence.

CWSA 30: 157

Divine dealings with humanity

Secondly, there is the typical, almost the symbolic significance of the human Krishna who stands behind the great action of the Mahabharata, not as its hero, but as its secret centre and hidden guide. That action is the action of a whole world of men and nations, some of whom have come as helpers of an effort and result by which they do not personally profit, and to these he is a leader, some as its opponents and to them he also is an opponent, the baffler of their designs and their slayer and he seems even to some of them an instigator of all evil and destroyer of their old order and familiar world and secure conventions of virtue and good; some are representatives of that which has to be fulfilled and to them he is counsellor, helper, friend. Where the action pursues its natural course or the doers of the work have to suffer at the hands of its enemies and undergo the ordeals which prepare them for mastery, the Avatar is unseen or appears only for occasional comfort and aid, but at every crisis his hand is felt, yet in such a way that all imagine themselves to be the protagonists and even Arjuna, his

nearest friend and chief instrument, does not perceive that he is an instrument and has to confess at last that all the while he did not really know his divine Friend. He has received counsel from his wisdom, help from his power, has loved and been loved, has even adored without understanding his divine nature; but he has been guided like all others through his own egoism and the counsel, help and direction have been given in the language and received by the thoughts of the Ignorance. Until the moment when all has been pushed to the terrible issue of the struggle on the field of Kurukshetra and the Avatar stands at last, still not as fighter, but as the charioteer in the battle-car which carries the destiny of the fight, he has not revealed Himself even to those whom he has chosen.

Thus the figure of Krishna becomes, as it were, the symbol of the divine dealings with humanity. Through our egoism and ignorance we are moved, thinking that we are the doers of the work, vaunting of ourselves as the real causes of the result, and that which moves us we see only occasionally as some vague or even some human and earthly fountain of knowledge, aspiration, force, some Principle or Light or Power which we acknowledge and adore without knowing what it is until the occasion arises that forces us to stand arrested before the Veil. And the action in which this divine figure moves is the whole wide action of man in life, not merely the inner life, but all this obscure course of the world which we can judge only by the twilight of the human reason as it opens up dimly before our uncertain advance the little span in front. This is the distinguishing feature of the Gita that it is the culmination of such an action which gives rise to its teaching and assigns that prominence and bold relief to the gospel of works which it enunciates with an emphasis and force we do not find in other Indian Scriptures. Not only in the Gita, but in other passages of the Mahabharata we meet with Krishna declaring emphatically the necessity of action, but it is here that he reveals its secret and the divinity behind our works.

CWSA 19: 17-19

Sri Krishna as the Lilmaya

But the crowning realisation of this yoga is when you become aware of the whole world as the expression, play or Lila of an infinite divine personality, when you see in all, not the impersonal Sad Atman which is the basis of manifest existence, — although you do not lose that knowledge,—but Sri Krishna who at once is, bases and transcends all manifest and unmanifest existence, *avyakto 'vyaktāt paraḥ*. For behind the Sad Atman is the silence of the Asat which the Buddhist Nihilists realised as the *sūnyam* and beyond that silence is the Paratpara Purusha (*puruṣo vareṇya ādityavarṇas tamasaḥ parastāt*). It is he who has made this world out of his being and is immanent in and sustains it as the infinite-finite *Ishwara*, *ananta* and *sānta*, Shiva and Narayana, Sri Krishna the Lilmaya who draws all of us to him by his love, compels all of us by his masteries and plays his eternal play of joy and strength and beauty in the manifold world.

The world is only a play of his being, knowledge and delight, *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. Matter itself, you will one day realise, is not material, it is not substance but form of consciousness, *guṇa*, the result of quality of being perceived by sense-knowledge. Solidity itself is only a combination of the *guṇas*, *samhati* and *dhṛti*, cohesion and permanence, a state of conscious being, nothing else. Matter, life, mind and what is beyond mind, it is all Sri Krishna the Ananta-guna Brahman playing in the world as the Sachchidananda. When we have this realisation, when we dwell in it securely and permanently, all possibilities of grief and sin, fear, delusion, internal strife and pain are driven puissantly from our being We realise in our experience the truth of the Upanishads,

"He who possesses the delight of the Brahman has no fear from anything in the world," and that other in the Isha Upanishad. ...

CWSA 13: 76-77

Sri Aurobindo

Sri Krishna, the Incarnate Godhead

The historicity of Krishna

The historicity of Krishna is of less spiritual importance and is not essential, but it has still a considerable value. It does not seem to me that there can be any reasonable doubt that Krishna the man was not a legend or a poetic invention but actually existed upon earth and played a part in the Indian past. Two facts emerge clearly, that he was regarded as an important spiritual figure, one whose spiritual illumination was recorded in one of the Upanishads, and that he was traditionally regarded as a divine man, one worshipped after his death as a deity; this is apart from the story in the Mahabharata and the Puranas. There is no reason to suppose that the connection of his name with the development of the Bhagavata religion, an important current in the stream of Indian spirituality, was founded on a mere legend or poetic invention. The Mahabharata is a poem and not history, but it is clearly a poem founded on a great historical event, traditionally preserved in memory; some of the figures connected with it, Dhritarashtra, Parikshit, for instance, certainly existed and the story of the part played by Krishna as leader, warrior and statesman can be accepted as probable in itself and to all appearance founded on a tradition which can be given a historical value and has not the air of a myth or a sheer poetical invention. That is as much as can be positively said from the point of view of the theoretical reason as to the historical figure of the man Krishna; but in my view there is much more than that in it and I have always regarded the incarnation as a fact and accepted the historicity of Krishna as I accept the historicity of Christ.

The story of Brindavan

The story of Brindavan is another matter; it does not enter into the main story of the Mahabharata and has a Puranic origin

and it could be maintained that it was intended all along to have a symbolic character. At one time I accepted that explanation, but I had to abandon it afterwards; there is nothing in the Puranas that betrays any such intention. It seems to me that it is related as something that actually occurred or occurs somewhere; the Gopis are to them realities and not symbols. It was for them at the least an occult truth, and occult and symbolic are not the same thing; the symbol may be only a significant mental construction or only a fanciful invention, but the occult is a reality which is actual somewhere, behind the material scene as it were and can have its truth for the terrestrial life and its influence upon it, may even embody itself there. The lila of the Gopis seems to be conceived as something which is always going on in a divine Gokul and which projected itself in an earthly Brindavan and can always be realised and its meaning made actual in the soul. It is to be presumed that the writers of the Puranas took it as having been actually projected on earth in the life of the incarnate Krishna and it has always been so accepted by the religious mind of India.

These questions and the speculations to which they have given rise have no indispensable connection with the spiritual life. There what matters is the contact with Krishna and the growth towards the Krishna consciousness, the presence, the spiritual relation, the union in the soul and, till that is reached, the aspiration, the growth in bhakti and whatever illumination one can get on the way. To one who has had these things, lived in the presence, heard the voice, known Krishna as Friend or Lover, Guide, Teacher, Master or, still more, has had his whole consciousness changed by the contact, or felt the presence within him, all such questions have only an outer and superficial interest. So also, to one who has had contact with the inner Brindavan and the lila of the Gopis, made the surrender and undergone the spell of the joy and the beauty or even only turned to the sound of the flute, the rest hardly matters. But from another point of view, if one can accept the histori-

cal reality of the incarnation, there is this great spiritual gain that one has a *point d'appui* for a more concrete realisation in the conviction that once at least the Divine has visibly touched the earth, made the complete manifestation possible, made it possible for the divine supernature to descend into this evolving but still very imperfect terrestrial nature.

CWSA 28: 482-84

Stories of Sri Krishna

The answer to the question [*whether the Krishna of Brindavan and the stories of his lila are literally true or merely symbols of deep spiritual realities*] depends on what value one attaches to spiritual experience and to mystic and occult experience, that is to say, to the data of other planes of consciousness than the physical, as also on the nature of the relations between the cosmic consciousness and the individual and collective consciousness of man. From the point of view of spiritual and occult Truth, what takes shape in the consciousness of man is a reflection and particular kind of formation, in a difficult medium, of things much greater in their light, power and beauty or in their force and range which come to it from the cosmic consciousness of which man is a limited and, in his present state of evolution, a still ignorant part. All this explanation about the genius of the race, of the consciousness of a nation creating the Gods and their forms is a very partial, somewhat superficial and in itself a misleading truth. Man's mind is not an original creator, it is an intermediary; to start creating it must receive an initiating "inspiration", a transmission or a suggestion from the cosmic consciousness, and with that it does what it can. God is, but man's conceptions of God are reflections in his own mentality, sometimes of the Divine, sometimes of other Beings and Powers and they are what his mentality can make of the suggestions that come to him, generally very partial and imperfect so long as they are still mental, so long as he has not arrived at

a higher and truer, a spiritual or mystic knowledge. The Gods already exist, they are not created by man even though he does seem to conceive them in his own image; fundamentally, he formulates as best he can what truth about them he receives from the cosmic Reality. An artist or a bhakta may have a vision of the Gods and it may get stabilised and generalised in the consciousness of the race and in that sense it may be true that man gives their forms to the Gods; but he does not invent these forms, he records what he sees; the forms that he gives are given to him. In the "conventional" form of Krishna men have embodied what they could see of his eternal beauty and what they have seen may be true as well as beautiful, it conveys something of the form, but it is fairly certain that if there is an eternal form of that eternal beauty it is a thousand times more beautiful than what man had as yet been able to see of it. Mother India is not a piece of earth; she is a Power, a Godhead, for all nations have such a Devi supporting their separate existence and keeping it in being. Such Beings are as real and more permanently real than the men they influence, but they belong to a higher plane, are part of the cosmic consciousness and being and act here on earth by shaping the human consciousness on which they exercise their influence. It is natural for man who only sees his own consciousness individual, national or racial at work and does not see what works upon it and shapes it, to think that all is created by him and there is nothing cosmic and greater behind it. The Krishna consciousness is a reality, but if there were no Krishna, there could be no Krishna consciousness: except in arbitrary metaphysical abstractions there can be no consciousness without a Being who is conscious. It is the person who gives value and reality to the personality, he expresses himself in it and is not constituted by it. Krishna is a being, a person and it is as the Divine Person that we meet him, hear his voice, speak with him and feel his presence. To speak of the consciousness of Krishna as something separate from Krishna is an error of the mind, which is

always separating the inseparable and which also tends to regard the impersonal, because it is abstract, as greater, more real and more enduring than the person. Such divisions may be useful to the mind for its own purposes, but it is not the real truth; in the real truth the being or person and its impersonality or state of being are one reality.

CWSA 28: 481-82

Stories of the lila as symbols

Then as to the Avatar and the symbols. There is, it seems to me, a cardinal error in the modern insistence on the biographical and historical, that is to say, the external factuality of the Avatar, the incidents of his outward life. What matters is the spiritual Reality, the Power, the Influence that came with him or that he brought down by his action and his existence. First of all what matters in a spiritual man's life is not what he did or what he was outside to the view of the men of his time (that is what historicity or biography comes to, does it not?) but what he was and did within; it is only that that gives any value to his outer life at all. It is the inner life that gives to the outer any power it may have, and the inner life of a spiritual man is something vast and full and, at least in the great figures, so crowded and teeming with significant things that no biographer or historian could ever hope to seize it all or tell it. Whatever is significant in the outward life is so because it is a symbol of what has been realised within himself and one may go on and say that the inner life also is only significant as an expression, a living representation of the movement of the Divinity behind it. That is why we need not enquire whether the stories about Krishna were transcripts, however loose, of his acts on earth or are symbol-representations of what Krishna was and is for men, of the Divinity expressing itself in the figure of Krishna. Buddha's renunciation, his temptation by Mara, his enlightenment under the Bo-Tree are such symbols, so too the virgin birth, the temptation in the desert, the crucifixion of Christ are such sym-

bols true by what they signify, even if they are not scrupulously recorded historical events. The outward facts as related of Christ or Buddha come to not much more than what has happened in many other lives — what is it that gives Buddha or Christ their enormous place in the spiritual world? It was because something manifested through them that was more than any outward event or any teaching. The verifiable historicity gives us very little of that, yet it is that only that matters.

CWSA 28: 478-79

The Speaker of the Gita

In order to understand the meaning and object of the Gita, it is at first necessary to consider the Speaker, the listener and the time and circumstance. The Speaker is Lord Sri Krishna; the listener is His friend Arjuna, the most heroic of men; the circumstance is the prelude to the terrible slaughter of Kurukshetra.

There are many who say that the Mahabharata is only a symbol; Sri Krishna is God, Arjuna the human soul, the sons of Dhritarashtra the inner enemies of the soul's progress, the Pandava army represents the forces that help towards liberation. This is to relegate the Mahabharata to a low position in the world of letters and at the same time to minimise and bring to nought the deep seriousness of the Gita, its utility for the life of the man of action and its high teaching that makes for the progress of mankind. The war of Kurukshetra is not simply a frame for the Gita picture; it is the prime motive and the best occasion for carrying out the law given in the Gita. To accept a symbolic meaning for the great war of Kurukshetra is to reduce the law of the Gita to a law of ascetic quietism inapplicable to life in this world, not a law of the heroic man, a law to be followed in life.

Sri Krishna is the Speaker. The scriptures say that Sri Krishna is God Himself. In the Gita too, Sri Krishna has proclaimed Himself as God. It has there been declared, on the basis of the Avatara doctrine in the fourth chapter and the theory of the Vibhuti in the

tenth, that God dwells hidden in the bodies of all creatures, shows Himself to a certain extent through the manifestations of power in some particular beings, and is fully incarnated in the person of Sri Krishna. According to many, Sri Krishna, Arjuna and Kurukshetra are mere metaphors, and in order to recover the true meaning of the Gita these metaphors are to be ignored. But we cannot reject this part of the teaching. If the Avatara doctrine is there, why should Sri Krishna be ignored? Therefore, God Himself is the proponent of this knowledge and the teaching.

Bengali Writings: 92-93

Sri Krishna as the Avatar

Sri Krishna is an Avatara. He has accepted in human form the law of man's body and mind and spirit and has played his game, *līla*, accordingly. If we can grasp the obvious and the occult meaning of that play, we shall be able to grasp the meaning, the aim and the method of this world-game. The main feature of this great game was action impelled by total knowledge. What was the knowledge underlying that action and that play has been revealed in the Gita.

Sri Krishna of the Mahabharata is a hero of action, a great yogin, a great man of the world, a founder of empire, statesman and warrior, a knower of *brahman* in the body of a Kshatriya. In his life we see an incomparable manifestation and mysterious play of the Supreme Power, *mahāśakti*. Of that mystery, the Gita is an explanation.

Sri Krishna is Lord of the worlds, universal Vasudeva; and yet, by shrouding His greatness he has entered into play by establishing with men relations like those of father and son, brother and husband, intimate associate and friend and enemy. In His life is implied the supreme secret of the Aryan knowledge and the highest meaning of the way of devotion. Their essential principles are also part of the Gita's teaching.

Sri Krishna's incarnation is at the juncture of the Dwapara and

the Kali age. In each of the evolutionary cycles, *kalpa*, God incarnates in full at such junctures. The Kali age is the worst as well as the best among the four epochs. This age is the reign period of Kali, the impeller of sin and the principal enemy of man's progress; the utmost degradation and downfall of man occur during Kali's reign. But there is a gain in strength by fighting against obstacles and new creation comes through destruction of the old; this process is seen in the Kali age too. The elements of evil that are going to be destroyed in the course of the world's evolution are precisely the ones that are eliminated through an inordinate growth; on the other hand, seeds of new creation are sown and sprout, these seeds become trees in the Satya age that follows. Moreover, as in astrology all the planets enjoy their sub-periods in the period of a particular planet, so, in the period of Kali, each of the four ages, Satya, Treta, Dwapara and Kali repeatedly enjoys its sub-period. Through this cyclic movement, there is in the Kali age a great downfall followed by an upward trend, another great downfall and again an upward surge; these serve the purposes of God. At the juncture of Dwapara and Kali, God through His incarnation allows an inordinate growth of evil, destroys the evil, sows the seeds of good and prepares favourable conditions for their sprouting; then begins the period of Kali. Sri Krishna has left in the Gita the secret knowledge and the method of work that would be useful for bringing in the age of Truth, *satyayuga*. When the time comes for the Satya subperiod of Kali, the world-wide propagation of the law of the Gita is inevitable. That time is now come, that is why the recognition of the Gita, instead of being confined to a few men of wisdom and learning, is spreading among the generality of men and in foreign lands.

Therefore it is not possible to distinguish Sri Krishna the Speaker from His Word, the Gita. Sri Krishna is implied in the Gita, the Gita is Sri Krishna in His form of the Word.

Bengali Writings: 94-95

The Yogayogeswar

The recipient of the knowledge given in the Gita is the mighty hero, Arjuna, son of the great god Indra and the best of the Pandavas. Just as it is difficult to discover the aim of the Gita and its hidden meaning by ignoring the Speaker, similarly that meaning would suffer by ignoring the listener.

Arjuna is Sri Krishna's intimate associate. Those who are Sri Krishna's contemporaries and have come down to the same field of work establish various kinds of relations with the Supreme Purushottama in human form, in accordance with their respective capacity and previous acts. Uddhava is Sri Krishna's devotee, Satyaki is a faithful follower and companion, king Yudhishthira is a relative and friend who is moved by His counsel, but none could establish with Sri Krishna a relation as intimate as Arjuna. All the close and endearing relations possible between two men of the same age were present in the case of Sri Krishna and Arjuna. Arjuna is Sri Krishna's brother, His closest friend, and husband of His sister Subhadra dear to Him as His own heart. In the fourth chapter the Lord has pointed to this intimacy as the reason for choosing Arjuna as the one person fit to hear the supreme secret of the Gita:

sa evāyam mayā te'dya yogaḥ brokataḥ purātanaḥ
bhakto'si me sakhā ceti rahasyam hyetaduttamam (4. 03)

“I have revealed this old and forgotten yoga to you this day, because you are my intimate friend and devotee; for this yoga is the best and the ultimate secret of the world.” In chapter eighteen too, there has been a repetition of this statement while explaining the keynote of Karmayoga which is as if the pivotal point of the Gita:

sarvaguhyatamam bhūyaḥ śṛṇu me paramam vacaḥ
iṣṭo'si me dṛḍhamiti tato vaksyāmi te hitam (18. 64)

“Once again you listen to my supreme Word, the most secret of all. You are extremely dear to me, therefore I shall speak to you about this, the best of all paths.”

Bengali Writings: 95-96

Sri Krishna as Friend and Lover

God chose Arjuna because he embodied in himself both devotee and friend. There are many kinds of devotees. Normally, a devotee brings to mind a teacher-disciple relationship. Love is no doubt there behind such devotion, but ordinarily obedience, respect and a blind devotedness are its special characteristics. But friend does not show respect to friend. They joke and play and have fun together, use endearing terms; for the sake of the play they may taunt and even show disrespect, use abusive language, make undue demands on each other. Friend is not always obedient to friend; and even though one may act according to a friend's advice out of admiration for his deep wisdom and sincere goodwill, that is not done blindly. One argues with him, expresses doubts, at times even protests against his views. The first lesson in the relation of friends is the giving up of all fear; to give up all outward show of respect is its second lesson; love is its first and last word. He is the fit recipient of the knowledge given in the Gita who understands this world-movement as a sweet and mysterious game full of love and bliss, elects God as his playmate and can bind Him to himself in a tie of friendship. He is the fit recipient of the knowledge given in the Gita who realises the greatness and the power of God, the depth of His wisdom and even His awfulness, and yet is not overwhelmed and plays with Him without fear and with a smiling face.

The relationship of friendship may include as part of the game all other kinds of relationship. The teacher-disciple relation — if based on friendship becomes a very sweet one; such precisely was the relation which Arjuna established with Sri Krishna at the commencement of the Gita's discourse. “You are my best well-wisher

and friend, in whom else shall I take refuge? I have lost my power of thought, I am frightened by the weight of responsibility, I am swayed by doubts as to what I should do, overwhelmed by acute sorrow. You save me, give me advice. I leave in your hands all responsibility for my weal in this world and beyond.” In this spirit did Arjuna approach the Friend and Helper of mankind with the object of receiving knowledge. The relation of mother and child too becomes part of friendship. One older in age and superior in wisdom loves a younger and less enlightened friend as a mother does, gives him protection and care, always holds him in his lap and saves him from danger and evil. Sri Krishna manifests his side of motherly love as well to one who establishes friendship with Him. Friendship may bring with it not only the depths of motherly love but also the keenness and acute joy of married love. Friends crave each other's companionship always, pine at separation, are delighted at the endearing touch, and feel a joy in even giving up one's life for the other's sake. The relation of service too becomes very sweet when it forms part of friendship. As has been said above, the more the endearing relationships one can establish with the Supreme Godhead, the more does the friendship blossom, the more does one gain in capacity to receive the knowledge of the Gita.

Arjuna, the friend of Krishna, is the principal actor in the Mahabharata; in the Gita the teaching about the yoga of works is the primary teaching. Knowledge, devotion and works, these three paths are not mutually contradictory. In the path of works, to do works founded on knowledge and in the power given by devotion, to act for the purpose of God, at His bidding and in union with Him, this is the teaching of the Gita. Those who are frightened by the sorrows of the world, tormented by the distaste for life, *vairāgya*, those who have lost interest in this play of God, are desirous of hiding themselves in the lap of Infinity and leave this play, theirs is a different path. No such feeling or desire was there in Arjuna,

the mighty warrior and the bravest of heroic men. Sri Krishna has not revealed this supreme secret to a quiet ascetic or wise philosopher, has not elected any Brahmin vowed to non-violence as the recipient of this teaching; a Kshatriya warrior of tremendous might and prowess was considered to be the fit receptacle for obtaining this incomparable knowledge. He alone is capable of entry into the deepest secrets of this teaching who can remain undisturbed by victories or defeats in the battle of life. This Self is not to be won by one who lacks in strength: *nāyam-ātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ*. He alone who cherishes an aspiration to find God in preference to a desire for liberation, *mumukṣutva*, can have a taste of the proximity of God, realise himself as eternally free in his true nature, and will be capable of rejecting the desire for liberation as being the last resort of the Ignorance. He alone is capable of passing beyond the modes of Nature, *gunātīta*, who after rejecting the tamasic and rajasic forms of egoism is unwilling to remain bound even by an egoism of the sattwic type. Arjuna has fulfilled his rajasic propensities by following the law of the Kshatriya, and has, at the same time, given the power of *rajas* a turn towards *satva*, by accepting the sattwic ideal. Such a person is an excellent receptacle for the Gita's teaching.

Bengali Writings: 97-99

The human-divine Krishna

In seeking the kernel of the thought of the Gita we need, therefore, only concern ourselves with the spiritual significance of the human-divine Krishna of the Mahabharata who is presented to us as the teacher of Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukshetra. The historical Krishna, no doubt, existed. We meet the name first in the Chhandogya Upanishad where all we can gather about him is that he was well known in spiritual tradition as a knower of the Brahman, so well known indeed in his personality and the circumstances of his life that it was sufficient to refer to him by the name of his mother as Krishna son of Devaki for all to understand who

was meant. In the same Upanishad we find mention of King Dhritarashtra son of Vichitravirya, and since tradition associated the two together so closely that they are both of them leading personages in the action of the Mahabharata, we may fairly conclude that they were actually contemporaries and that the epic is to a great extent dealing with historical characters and in the war of Kurukshetra with a historical occurrence imprinted firmly on the memory of the race. We know too that Krishna and Arjuna were the object of religious worship in the pre-Christian centuries; and there is some reason to suppose that they were so in connection with a religious and philosophical tradition from which the Gita may have gathered many of its elements and even the foundation of its synthesis of knowledge, devotion and works, and perhaps also that the human Krishna was the founder, restorer or at the least one of the early teachers of this school. The Gita may well in spite of its later form represent the outcome in Indian thought of the teaching of Krishna and the connection of that teaching with the historical Krishna, with Arjuna and with the war of Kurukshetra may be something more than a dramatic fiction. In the Mahabharata Krishna is represented both as the historical character and the Avatar; his worship and Avatarhood must therefore have been well established by the time — apparently from the fifth to the first centuries B.C.—when the old story and poem or epic tradition of the Bharatas took its present form. There is a hint also in the poem of the story or legend of the Avatar's early life in Vrindavan which, as developed by the Puranas into an intense and powerful spiritual symbol, has exercised so profound an influence on the religious mind of India. We have also in the Harivansha an account of the life of Krishna, very evidently full of legends, which perhaps formed the basis of the Puranic accounts. ...

CWSA 19: 15-16

Krishna

(Cretics)

O immense Light and thou, O spirit-wide boundless Space,
Whom have you clasped and hid, deathless limbs, gloried face?
Vainly lie Space and Time, "Void are we, there is none."
Vainly strive Self and World crying "I, I alone."
One is there, Self of self, Soul of Space, Fount of Time,
Heart of hearts, Mind of minds, He alone sits, sublime.
Oh no void Absolute self-absorbed, splendid, mute,
Hands that clasp hold and red lips that kiss blow His flute.
All He loves, all He moves, all are His, all are He;
Many limbs sate His whims, bear His sweet ecstasy.
Two in One, Two who know difference rich in sense,
Two to clasp, One to be, this His strange mystery.

CWSA 2: 637

All He loves, all he moves

Beyond conventions

Only by rising above mind can one really get beyond conventions — Krishna was able to do it because he was not a mental human being but an overmental godhead acting freely out of a greater consciousness than man's. Rama was not that, he was the Avatar of the sattwic human mind — mental, emotional, moral — and he followed the Dharma of the age and race. That may make him temperamentally congenial to Gandhi and the reverse to you; but just as Gandhi's temperamental recoil from Krishna does not prove Krishna to be no Avatar, so your temperamental recoil from Rama does not establish that he was not an Avatar. However, my main point will be that Avatarhood does not depend upon these questions at all, but has another basis, meaning and purpose.

No time for a full answer to your renewed remarks on Rama tonight. You are intrigued only because you stick to the standard

modern measuring rods of moral and spiritual perfection (introduced by Seeley and Bankim) for the Avatar — while I start from another standpoint altogether and resolutely refuse these standard human measures. The ancient Avatars except Buddha were not either standards of perfection or spiritual teachers — in spite of the Gita which was spoken, says Krishna, in a moment of supernormal consciousness which he lost immediately afterwards. They were, if I may say so, representative cosmic men who were instruments of a divine Intervention for fixing certain things in the evolution of the earth-race. I stick to that and refuse to submit myself in this argument to any other standard whatever.

CWSA 28: 494

Krishna as the Overmind Godhead

Krishna is not the supramental light. The descent of Krishna would mean the descent of the Overmind Godhead preparing, though not itself actually bringing, the descent of Supermind and Ananda. Krishna is the Anandamaya, he supports the evolution through the Overmind leading it towards his Ananda.

What Krishna worked for was the Overmind consciousness acting in the mind and vital.

What was said was that Krishna as a manifestation on earth opened the possibility of the Overmind consciousness here to men and stood for that, as Rama was the incarnation in mental Man. If Krishna was an overmind "God", that means he was not an Incarnation, not the Divine, but somebody else who claimed to be the Divine — i.e. he was a god who somehow thought he was God.

I suppose very few recognised him [*Krishna*] as an Avatar; certainly it was not at all a general recognition. Among the few those nearest him do not seem to have counted — it was less prominent people like Vidura etc.

Those who were with Krishna were in all appearance men like other men. They spoke and acted with each other as men with

men and were not thought of by those around them as gods. Krishna himself was known by most as a man — only a few worshipped him as the Divine.

Yuge yuge may be used in a general sense, as in English "from age to age" and not refer technically to the yuga proper according to the Puranic computation. But the *bahūni* has an air of referring to very numerous lives especially when coupled with *tava ca*. In that case all these many births could not be full incarnations,— many may have been merely Vibhuti births carrying on the thread from incarnation to incarnation. About Arjuna's accompanying him in each and every birth, nothing is said, but it would not be likely — many, of course.

CWSA 28: 499-500



Krishna's Light in the Overmind

The Overmind ready to be Divinised.

(Significance and explanation of the flower given by the Mother)

Botanical name: *Salvia farinacea*

Small lavender blue bilabiate flower with a broadly extended lower lip marked with a white patch in the centre and light grey blue calyces; borne in whorls in erect terminal spikes.

Radha and Krishna

The desire of the soul for God is there thrown into symbolic figure in the lyrical love cycle of Radha and Krishna, the Nature soul in man seeking for the Divine Soul through love, seized and mastered by his beauty, attracted by his magical flute, abandoning human cares and duties for this one overpowering passion and in the cadence of its phases passing through first desire to the bliss of union, the pangs of separation, the eternal longing and reunion, the lila of the love of the human spirit for God. There is a settled frame and sequence, a subtly simple lyrical rhythm, a traditional diction of appealing directness and often of intense beauty. This accomplished lyrical form springs at once to perfect birth from the genius of the first two poets who used the Bengali tongue, Vidyapati, a consummate artist of word and line, and the inspired singer Chandidas in whose name stand some of the sweetest and most poignant and exquisite love-lyrics in any tongue. The symbol here is sustained in its most external figure of human passion and so consistently that it is now supposed by many to mean nothing else, but this is quite negated by the use of the same figures by the devout poets of the religion of Chaitanya. All the spiritual experience that lay behind the symbol was embodied in that inspired prophet and incarnation of the ecstasy of divine love and its spiritual philosophy put into clear form in his teaching. His followers continued the poetic tradition of the earlier singers and though they fall below them in genius, yet left behind a great mass of this kind of poetry always beautiful in form and often deep and moving in substance. Another type is created in the perfect lyrics of the Rajput queen Mirabai, in which the images of the Krishna symbol are more directly turned into a song of the love and pursuit of the divine Lover by the soul of the singer. In the Bengal poetry the expression preferred is the symbolic figure impersonal to the poet: here a personal note gives the peculiar intensity to the emotion. This is given a still more direct turn by a southern

poetess in the image of herself as the bride of Krishna. The peculiar power of this kind of Vaishnava religion and poetry is in the turning of all the human emotions Godward, the passion of love being preferred as the intensest and most absorbing of them all, and though the idea recurs wherever there has been a strong development of devotional religion, it has nowhere been used with so much power and sincerity as in the work of the Indian poets.

CWSA 20: 379-80

Krishna & Kali

It is not as the slow process of Time that Sri Krishna manifests himself; it is as the Zeitgeist consummating in a moment the work carefully prepared for decades that He appears to Arjuna. All have been moving inevitably towards the catastrophe of Kurukshetra. Men did not know it: those who would have done everything possible to avert the calamity, helped its coming by their action or inaction; those who had a glimpse of it strove in vain to stop the wheels of Fate; Sri Krishna himself as the niṣkāma karmayogin who does his duty without regard to results, went on that hopeless embassy to Hastinapura; but the Zeitgeist overbore all. It was only afterwards that men saw how like rivers speeding towards the sea, like moths winging towards the lighted flame all that splendid, powerful and arrogant Indian world with its clans of Kings and its weapons and its chariots and its gigantic armies were rushing towards the open mouths of the destroyer to be lost in His mighty jaws, to be mangled between His gnashing teeth. In the lila of the Eternal there are movements that are terrible as well as movements that are sweet and beautiful. The dance of Brindaban is not complete without the death-dance of Kurukshetra; for each is a part of that great harmonic movement of the world which progresses from discord to accord, from hatred and strife to love and brotherhood, from evil to the fulfilment of the evolution by the transformation of suffering and sin into beauty, bliss and good, śivam, śāntam, śuddham, ānandam.

Who could resist the purpose of the Zeitgeist? There were strong men in India then by the hundred, great philosophers and Yogins, subtle statesmen, leaders of men, kings of thought and action, the efflorescence of a mighty intellectual civilisation at its height. A little turning to the right instead of to the left on the part of a few of these would, it might seem, have averted the whole catastrophe. So Arjuna thought when he flung aside his bow. He was the whole hope of the Pandavas and without him their victory must seem a mere dream and to fight an act of madness. Yet it is to him that the Zeitgeist proclaims the utter helplessness of the mightiest and the sure fulfilment of God's decree. "Even without thee all they shall not be, the men of war who stand arrayed in the opposing squadrons." For these men are only alive in the body; in that which stands behind and fulfils itself they are dead men. Whom God protects who shall slay? Whom God has slain who shall protect? The man who slays is only the occasion, the instrument by which the thing done behind the veil becomes the thing done on this side of it. That which was true of the great slaying at Kurukshetra is true of all things that are done in this world, of all the creation, destruction and preservation that make up the lila.

CWSA 13: 30-31

The Form and the Formless

God is bound neither by His form nor by His formlessness; He reveals Himself in a form to the seeker. God is there in His fullness in that form, yet at the same time pervades the whole universe. For God is beyond time and space, unattainable by any argument; time and space are His toys. He is playing with all beings caught in his net of time and space. But we shall never be able to catch Him in that net. Every time we try to achieve this impossibility with logic and philosophical argument, the Jester eludes the net and stands smiling in front of us, behind us, near us and far from us, spreads out his World Form, and the Form beyond the universe,

defeating the intellect. He who says, "I know Him," knows nothing. He who says, "I know Him yet I do not know Him," has true knowledge.

Bengali Writings: 88

The Cosmic Dance

Two measures are there of the cosmic dance.
Always we hear the tread of Kali's feet
Measuring in rhythms of pain and grief and chance
Life's game of hazard terrible and sweet.

The ordeal of the veiled Initiate,
The hero soul at play with Death's embrace,
Wrestler in the dread gymnasium of Fate
And sacrifice a lonely path to Grace,

Man's sorrows made a key to the Mysteries,
Truth's narrow road out of Time's wastes of dream,
The soul's seven doors from Matter's tomb to rise,
Are the common motives of her tragic theme.

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

CWSA 2: 590

Vision of the World-Spirit

The vision of the World Spirit is a very necessary element of the Gita. Sri Krishna dispersed the doubt and the hesitation that rose in the mind of Arjuna with logic and words pregnant with knowledge. But the foundation of the knowledge derived from logic and good counsel is not solid. It is only when the knowledge is realised that it becomes firmly established. For this reason, invisibly impelled by the Divine within, Arjuna expressed his desire to see the World Spirit. Once he had this vision of the World Spirit,

his doubt vanished for ever. His mind then became cleansed and purified, worthy to receive the supreme secret of the Gita. The knowledge described in the Gita prior to the vision of the World Spirit is the external form of knowledge useful to any spiritual seeker. But the knowledge unfolded after the vision is the most hidden Truth, the supreme secret, the eternal precept. If we characterise the description of the vision as a poetical metaphor, then the truth, the depth and solemnity of the Gita are destroyed and the most profound instructions obtained by Yoga are reduced to a few philosophical views and a collection of poetical fancies. The vision of the World Spirit is neither a fiction nor a poetical metaphor but truth; it is not even a supernatural truth. The universe being included in Nature, the World Form cannot be a supernatural phenomenon. The World Spirit is a truth of the causal world, and the forms of the causal world are visible to the eye of Yoga. Arjuna endowed with the eye of Yoga saw the form of the Universal Spirit in the causal world.

Bengali Writings: 86-87

The World Form

Whatever is decided in the causal world is reflected in the subtle world beyond our time and space and partially enacted in the physical world according to the laws of the physical world. Sri Krishna told Arjuna, “The sons of Dhritarashtra are already slain by me,” yet there they were on the battlefield, standing in front of him, alive and engaged in fighting. The words of the Godhead are neither a false statement nor a metaphor. He has already slain them in the causal world, otherwise it is impossible to slay them in this world. Our real life is in the causal world; only a shadow of it falls on the physical world. But the laws, time and space, name and form are different on the causal plane. The World Spirit is a form of the causal world which became visible in the physical world to the eye of Yoga.

Bengali Writings: 89-90



Krishna

At last I find a meaning of soul's birth
 Into this universe terrible and sweet,
I who have felt the hungry heart of earth
 Aspiring beyond heaven to Krishna's feet.

I have seen the beauty of immortal eyes,
 And heard the passion of the Lover's flute,
And known a deathless ecstasy's surprise
 And sorrow in my heart for ever mute.

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

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

CWSA 2: 608

Sri Aurobindo

The Teachings of Sri Krishna

The teachings of Sri Aurobindo

Arjuna asked, "If desireless Intelligence, founded in Yoga, is greater than karma, then why do you engage me in this terrible work of slaying my elders?" Many have repeated the question of Arjuna, some even have not hesitated to call him the worst answer, Sri Krishna has explained that renunciation is greater than asceticism, to remember God and do one's appointed work without desire is far greater than freedom to do as one likes. Renunciation means renunciation of desire, renunciation of selfishness. And to learn that renunciation one need not take refuge in solitude. That lesson has to be learnt through work in the field of work; work is the means to climb upon the path of yoga. This world of varied play has been created for the purpose of bringing delight to its creatures. It is not God's purpose that this game of delight should cease. He wants the creatures to become his comrades and playmates, to flood the world with delight. We are in the darkness of ignorance; that is because, for the sake of the play the Lord has kept himself aloof and thus surrounded himself with obscurity. Many are the ways fixed by him which, if followed would take one out of the darkness, bring him into God's company. If any one is not interested in the play and desires rest, God will fulfil his desire. But if one follows His way for His sake, then God chooses him, in this world or elsewhere as His fit playmate. Arjuna was Krishna's dearest comrade and playmate, therefore he received the teaching of the Gita's supreme secret. *Bengali Writings: 83-84*

The path of works

The Divine said to Arjuna, "It is harmful to the world to give up work, to give up work is the spirit of asceticism. And an asceticism without renunciation is meaningless. What one gains by asceticism one gains also by renunciation, that is to say, the freedom from ignorance, equanimity, power, delight, union with

Sri Krishna. Whatever the man worshipped by all does, people take that as the ideal and follow it. Therefore, if you give up work through asceticism, all will follow that path and bring about the confusion of social values, and the reign of the wrong law. If you give up the desire for the fruit of action and pursue man's normal law of life, inspire men to follow each his own line of activity, then you will unite with my Law of life and become my intimate friend". Sri Krishna explains furthermore that the rule is to follow the right path through works and finally at the end of the path attain quietude, that is to say, renounce all sense of being the doer. But this is not renunciation of work through asceticism, this is to give up all vital urge to action involving immense labour and effort through the rejection of egoism and through union with the Divine — and transcending all gunas, to do works as an instrument impelled by His force. In that state it is the permanent consciousness of the soul that he is not the doer, he is the witness, part of the Divine; it is the Divine Power that works through his body created for action by his own inner law of being. The soul is the witness and enjoyer, Nature is the doer, the Divine is the giver of sanction. The being so illumined does not seek to help or hinder any work that the Divine Power undertakes. Submitted to the Shakti, the body and mind and intellect engage themselves in the work appointed by God. Even a terrible massacre like that of Kurukshetra cannot stain a soul with sin if it is sanctioned by God, if it occurs in the course of the fulfilment of one's own dharma (Inner Law), but only a few can attain to this knowledge and this goal. It cannot be the law of life for the common man. What then is the duty for the common wayfarers? Even for them the knowledge that "He is the Lord, I am the instrument" is to a certain extent within their reach. Through this knowledge to remember always the Divine and follow one's inner law of life is the direction that has been given. "Better is one's own law of works, swadharma though in itself faulty, than an alien law well wrought out; death in one's own law of being is better, perilous is it to follow an alien law." Bengali Writings: 84-85



An interesting anecdote

Radha's Prayer

The Mother originally wrote "Radha's Prayer" in English on 12 January 1932 and rendered it into French the following day. Sri Aurobindo then translated the French version into English.

The Mother wrote this prayer for a disciple who was preparing to perform a dance about Radha. In a letter to the disciple the Mother wrote:

To complete what I told you yesterday about Radha's dance I have noted this down as an indication of the thought and feeling Radha must have within her when she stands at the end in front of Krishna:

"Every thought of my mind, every emotion of my heart, every movement of my being, every feeling and every sensation, each cell of my body, each drop of my blood, all, all is yours, yours absolutely, yours without reserve. You can decide my life or my death, my happiness or my sorrow, my pleasure or my pain; whatever you do with me, whatever comes to me from you will lead me to the Divine Rapture." (CWM 15: 209)

CWSA 32: 662

Sri Aurobindo

Aphorisms on Sri Krishna

God is a great and cruel Torturer because He loves. You do not understand this, because you have not seen and played with Krishna.

What does "to play with Krishna" mean? What does "God is a great and cruel Torturer" mean?

Krishna is the immanent Divine, the Divine Presence in everyone and in all things. He is also, sovereignly, the aspect of Delight and Love of the Supreme; he is the smiling tenderness and the playful gaiety; he is at once the player, the play and all his play-mates. And as both the game and its results are wholly known, conceived, willed, organised and played consciously in their entirety, there can be room for nothing but the delight of the play. Thus to see Krishna means to find the inner Godhead, to play with Krishna means to be identified with the inner Godhead and to share in his consciousness. When you achieve this state, you enter immediately into the bliss of the divine play; and the more complete the identification, the more perfect the state.

But if some corner of the consciousness keeps the ordinary perception, the ordinary understanding, the ordinary sensation, then you see the suffering of others, you find the play that causes so much suffering very cruel and you conclude that the God who takes pleasure in such a play must be a terrible Torturer; but on the other hand, when you have had the experience of identification with the Divine, you cannot forget the immense, the wonderful love which he puts into his play, and you understand that it is the limitation of our vision that makes us judge in this way, and that far from being a voluntary Torturer, he is the great beneficent love that guides the world and men, by the quickest routes, in

their progressive march towards perfection, a perfection which, moreover, is always relative and is always being surpassed.

But a day will come when this apparent suffering will no longer be required to stimulate the advance and when progress can be made more and more in harmony and delight.

CWM 10: 51-52

Lila includes the idea of Maya and exceeds it; nor has it that association of the vanity of all things, useless to you who have elected to remain and play with Sri Krishna in Mathura and Brindavan.

CWSA 13: 89

Sri Aurobindo

When will the world change into the model of heaven? When all mankind becomes boys and girls together with God revealed as Krishna and Kali, the happiest boy and strongest girl of the crowd, playing together in the gardens of Paradise. The Semitic Eden was well enough, but Adam and Eve were too grown up and its God Himself too old and stern and solemn for the offer of the Serpent to be resisted.

The Semites have afflicted mankind with the conception of a God who is a stern and dignified king and solemn judge and knows not mirth. But we who have seen Krishna, know Him for a boy fond of play and a child full of mischief and happy laughter.

CWSA 12: 490

When I first met Krishna, I loved Him as a friend and playmate till He deceived me; then I was indignant and could not forgive Him. Afterwards I loved Him as a lover and He still deceived me; I was again and much more indignant, but this time I had to pardon.

CWSA 12: 484

The Bhagavat

Some say Krishna never lived, he is a myth. They mean on earth; for if Brindavan existed nowhere, the Bhagavat (The story of Krishna, as related in the Bhagavat purana) could not have been written.

Does Brindavan exist anywhere else than on earth?

The whole earth and everything it contains is a kind of concentration, a condensation of something which exists in other worlds invisible to the material eye. Each thing manifested here has its principle, idea or essence somewhere in the subtler regions. This is an indispensable condition for the manifestation. And the importance of the manifestation will always depend on the origin of the thing manifested. In the world of the gods there is an ideal and harmonious Brindavan of which the earthly Brindavan is but a deformation and a caricature.

Those who are developed inwardly, either in their senses or in their minds, perceive these realities which are invisible (to the ordinary man) and receive their inspiration from them. So the writer or writers of the Bhagavat were certainly in contact with a whole inner world that is well and truly real and existent, where they saw and experienced everything they have described or revealed.

Whether Krishna existed or not in a human form, living on earth, is only of very secondary importance (except perhaps from an exclusively historical point of view), for Krishna is a real, living and active being; and his influence has been one of the great factors in the progress and transformation of the earth.

CWM 10: 60-61

The Mother

To love God, excluding the world, is to give Him an intense but imperfect adoration.

*

Is love only a daughter or handmaid of jealousy? If Krishna loves Chandrabali, why should I not love her also?

CWSA 12: 486

There are four very great events in history, the siege of Troy, the life and crucifixion of Christ, the exile of Krishna in Brindavan and the colloquy with Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra. The siege of Troy created Hellas, the exile in Brindavan created devotional religion (for before there was only meditation and worship), Christ from his cross humanised Europe, the colloquy at Kurukshetra will yet liberate humanity. Yet it is said that none of these four events ever happened.

CWSA 12: 427

Sri Aurobindo

If Krishna be alone on one side and the armed & organised world with its hosts and its shrapnel and its Maxims on the other, yet prefer thy divine solitude. Care not if the world passes over thy body and its shrapnel tear thee to pieces and its cavalry trample thy limbs into shapeless mire by the wayside; for the mind was always a simulacrum and the body a carcass. The spirit liberated from its casings ranges and triumphs.

CWSA 12: 457

The seeker after divine knowledge finds in the description of Krishna stealing the robes of the Gopis one of the deepest parables of God's ways with the soul, the devotee a perfect rendering in divine act of his heart's mystic experiences, the prurient and the Puritan (two faces of one temperament) only a lustful story. Men bring what they have in themselves and see it reflected in the Scripture.

CWSA 10: 345

Sri Aurobindo



God gives Himself to His whole creation;
no one religion holds the
monopoly of His Grace.

CWM 15: 27

The Mother



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