Letters to Martin Kerr from Savitri Devi

Edited by R.G. Fowler

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A Bit of Ancient History—Segregationism . . . and War (for 20th century Americans)

“This is the Southern Frontier... No Negro is permitted to pass this boundary northwards, either by foot or by boat. . .”

Which awful segregationist has written these words? Shocking they sound! The Anti-Defamation League should look into the matter, surely!

It is [too] late, however, to change this. The words were written—cut into hard stone—over four thousand years ago. The Anti­Defamation League, or any equivalent of it, was not yet invented, and any attempt to bring the spirit of such a body into action would have been met with universal contempt on the part of the people and with the severest penalties on the part of the authorities in power. The quoted words are part of the inscription which can be seen to this day upon the boundary stone set up by the order of Pharaoh Senusret III, the fifth king of the Twelfth Egyptian dynasty (if I remember well) at Semneh (or Samnin), one of the two fortresses he had built upon the hills on each side of the Nile, some 30 miles above the Second Cataract, after his first military expedition into Nubia (the “Sudan” of today) in the eighth year of his reign. The expeditions of Senurset III followed those of his predecessors. Already under Senusret I—three generations before—the region of the third cataract was Egyptian and ruled by Hapzefa of Siut, who was buried at Kerma under a mound, with his slaves slain all around him (reference: Reisner: Boston Museum Bulletin, April 1914-December 1918).

The main incitation of the Twelfth dynasty pharaohs to conquer the Sudan (Nubia) was the wish to control the Nile more effectively and to be able to foresee more accurately the probable height of the yearly inundation on which the prosperity of Egypt depends. The regulation of the great river was looked upon as the highest duty of an Egyptian ruler—which it is, in fact, to this day. In addition to this, there was also the desire to acquire the gold with which the “Wadi Alaki” and other Nubian desert valleys were full.

The remainder of Senusret III’s inscription at Semneh is interesting: “No boat of the Negroes is to be allowed to pass northward forever. . .”

And a few years later,

Year 16, third month of Peret, His Majesty fixed the frontier of the South at Heh ... I advanced up-river beyond my forefathers; I added much thereto. What lay in my heart was brought to pass by my hand. I am vigorous in seizing, powerful in succeeding, never resting; one in whose heart there is a word which is unknown to the weak; one who arises against mercy; never showing clemency to the enemy who attacks him, but attacking he who attacks him. For to take no notice of a violent attack is to strengthen the heart of the enemy. Cowardice is vile. He is a coward who is vanquished on his own frontier, since the Negro will fall prostrate at a word: answer him and he retreats! If one is vigorous with him, he turns his back, even when on the way to attack. Behold! These people (the Negroes) have nothing terrible about them; they are feeble and insignificant; they have buttocks for hearts! I have seen it, even 1, the majesty, it is no lie! I have seized their women; I have carried off their folk; I have marched to their wells; I took their cattle; I destroyed their corn seed, I set fire to it. By my life and my father’s, I speak the truth!

Every son of mine who shall have preserved this frontier which My Majesty has made, is indeed my son and born of My Majesty, verily a son who avenges his father and preserves the boundary of him who begat him. But he who shall have abandoned it, he who shall not have fought for it, behold, he is no son of mine he is none born of me. Behold! My Majesty has set up an image of My Majesty upon this frontier, which My Majesty has made, not from the desire that ye should worship it, but from the desire that ye should fight for it! (Text in Lepsius, Denkmaler, ii,136,1)

In the days this was hewn out in granite by the scribes of Senusret III, our Aryan forefathers, from the far North that they had left on foot and in their bullock carts centuries before (for climactic reasons, most probably) were just pouring—or were about to pour—through the famous Khyber pass, into highly civilized India, technically far in advance of them.

They brought with them the war horse—unknown to old India as to the Sumerians, maybe racially akin to it, who used donkeys in their local wars—and . . . iron, iron more precious than gold, out of which deadly arrows could be made.

And they brought their beautiful hymns—many of which are still chanted to this day by the living Brahmins the hymns of the Rig Veda (in which there are references to . . . The Northern Lights, unknown to India; see Tilak’s The Arctic Home in the Vedas)—their beautiful hymns and their Sky Gods, the “Devas,” i.e., “The Shining Ones,” foremost Surya, the Sun.

Early in the morning as The Orb would rise, Sri Asit Krishna Mukherji, my husband—whose birthday it is today, by the way (was born 13 May 1904)—would stand facing the East, and recite, in Sanskrit, twelve of the main Sacred Names of the Sun: “Giver of Life,” “Father of Light,” “Great One of Effulgence,” . . . etc.—beautiful names.

He was as fair in complexion as a Southern European—many of whom, for instance a Spanish pupil of mine, are much darker than he was—and so proud of his Aryan origin. “You people in Europe,” he once told me, “have no caste system. So how can you be sure that not baptised Jews did not enter the succession of your ancestors, at some time or other, during the Middle Ages? We high caste Hindus know who we are!”

By the way: don’t call me “Mrs. Devi.” It means nothing. Devi (feminine of Deva, i.e., Goddess) is just a title that any Hindu woman of an alleged Aryan caste—a Brahmin or a Kshatriya—is, according to tradition, allowed to put after her individual name. Nowadays, with the propaganda of Democracy (a gift of the Christian missionaries and of the British education system) there are many Indian women and girls who call themselves So-and-so “Devi” without having any right to do so—already when I first came to India, but not so much so.

Regularly, a woman of any non-Aryan caste—i.e., the overwhelming majority of Indian women—should call herself So-and-so Dasi—the word “Dasi,” feminine of “das” (slave or servant). The old, honest, clean, and efficient maid we had when Mr. Mukherji and I lived under the same roof in Calcutta, was of the Maheshya caste (a peasant caste from West Bengal). She was Sindhubala Dasi—never would have dreamed of calling herself “Devi”!

The name Savitri (Solar Energy—the feminine of Savita, one of the names of Surya, the Sun) was given to me by the girls at the Shantiniketan University where I spent six months in 1935 brushing up my Bengali (that I had learnt alone) and reading Hindi. I then wrote a book in French, L’Etang aux Lotus (The Lotus Pond, impressions about India) and took “Savitri Devi” as an appropriate pen name. Then (1937 and 1939) I wrote two other books in English, A Warning to the Hindus and The Non-Hindu Indians and Indian Unity, and signed them “Savitri Devi.”

Mr. Mukherji I then did not know (till 9 January 1938). He gave me his name—we were co-fighters—at the outbreak of the war (September 1939) so that I should not be interned by the British as an undesirable foreigner (I had Greek nationality) well-known to be against the British war effort, i.e., on the German side, just as Mukherji himself was, but he was cleverer than I.1 They kept him two days, and he slipped out of their clutches . . . while continuing his activities on the sly.

So I am not “Mrs. Devi” but Mrs. Mukherji—or if you like, Savitri Devi Mukherji—or Savitri Devi—but not “Devi” alone. I did not add Mukherji to my pen name when I married (September 1939) as three books were already circulating under the name of Savitri Devi.

Sri Girija Kanta Goswami, the priest of the “Hindu Mission” (for which I used to lecture) married us according to Hindu rites, I in scarlet, he in white, before a fire—no Hindu ceremony without one!—with three swastikas, painted in red, against the wall—and “in presence of the Sun, Moon, and all the heavenly bodies, as witnesses,” at about 10 o’clock at night.

But strictly speaking, the marriage could not be regular as I was not a “rari Brahmin’s” daughter from Bengal—a girl of his own “sreni” or sub-caste. So, to be faithful to time-honoured tradition completely, we remained, both of us . . . just co-fighters without any more personal link. And [illegible] we (I, at least) never regretted not having ever experienced what, in his words, “all the living, including cockroaches, know.” I don’t think he ever regretted it either.

“My brothers have children,” he used to say, “so the family goes on. We have a different calling.” And shortly before his death, thinking of the fall of some of his own nephews (two of his sister’s sons, Communists, of all things!), he was glad to have lived as he had, indifferent to all but the call of Aryan tradition.

Hope this will not bore you.

With a hearty Heil Hitler!

Savitri Devi Mukherji

New Delhi

15 May 1979

Dear Comrade Kerr,

I hope I didn’t bore you with my “bit of ancient history.”

I was too crushed by the awful heat of Delhi’s summer (it is summer, here, since March) to go to the length of writing something of my own inspiration for White Power. I am not of those privileged ones who have air-conditioning in their lodgings. I have merely a fan above my bed, in my one room and kitchen tiny flat. And that fan—under which I am lying, whenever I am not forced to get up, either to go and get food for my cats, or to go and teach my few private pupils: earn my living and that of my animals, home ones and strays who depend on me—that fan, I say, does nothing more than agitate burning air (45 degrees centigrade in my room, under the fan, a few days back: hardly less than outdoors in the shade). Now you can imagine the furnace in the sun! And when one goes out on foot, be it to walk to the station where one can hire some conveyance, you can imagine what it feels like. I am exhausted when I come home from my lessons or from shopping, and the only thing I am fit for is to call back into my mind the little I once learnt about ancient times.

I have started writing a new book—don’t know yet whether it will be in English or in French. But have not got beyond the first pages . . . because of the heat. It is about Ironies and Paradoxes of history. One of the “stories” will be about Clara Hitler—our Fuhrer’s mother—in desperation upon her death bed (1907) at the idea, “What will my poor Adolf do in life, without a job, without any diploma fit to get him one?” He was then eighteen years old and had come from Vienna, to be with her.

I thought the story I gave you about pharaonic “segregationism” in Twelfth Dynasty Egypt (one of the high peaks of Egyptian prosperity and art) in those remote times, might interest (by comparison) both you—if you happen to like history—and a few of our comrades. If any of them would like more information from me about Antiquity—so much more in our spirit than the world of today!—I am ready to give them all I can, i.e., the little I know from lifelong studies in which history (and geography, my father’s great hobby) had a privileged place.

Excuse me if for just now I do not write any more. I intend to write about my late husband—Sri A.K. Mukherji—for the National Socialist World. He deserved it. But I must wait till I can be myself again—after this heat. End of June, beginning of July, the “monsoon rains” are expected. Hurray! That means on the first day a sudden fall in temperature of 25 degrees (centigrade) and a downpour, amidst thunder and lightning. Lovely!

Here rain is feasted, celebrated. A grand daughter of one of my husband’s brothers is called “Varhsa,” i.e., rain—and her sister “Megla,” i.e., cloudy weather.” I suppose one would not dream of giving such names to girls in the USA. But these are Bengali girls. And rain means life to Bengal—save when there is really too much of it.

In fact all names in Bengal, and all over India, have a meaning, as in Greece: There is “Peace” (Shanti), Full-Moon (Purnima), “Born in the water” = Lotus (Sarajivi), Immortal (Amriba, which is masculine or feminine, and is the name of my youngest brother in law, now over seventy).

But does this all interest you? Excuse me if it does not! I am too knocked out by the depressing heat to find something more thoughtful to tell you.

With my renewed greetings,

Heil Hitler!

Savitri Devi Mukherji