

Letters from kari

Email exchanges with kari edwards (2006)

Aryanil Mukherjee



Kari edwards reading from her book *obedience* in 2006
(courtesy of Philly Sound Poet PhillySound)

Just about a decade ago, Charles Bernstein put me in touch with kari edwards in the spring of 2006, when the latter was planning to visit and explore India for possible emigration. I had not known kari before, although we might have had some brief interaction in the *Poetics listserv*, a widely known mailing list dedicated to the discussion of poetry and poetics. During a year-long exchange of hearts, little did either of us realize that a flame was going out somewhere. We interacted almost on a weekly basis, beginning with casual familiarization to passionate exchanges of literary beliefs and (her) life-experiments. What initiated as a reintroduction to our literatures, philosophies, elite cultural histories and social struggles in a spatially-inverted manner, since we were both living, at least in part, in our newer hemispheres which happened to be the ex-hemisphere of the other, soon got ourselves into the bottomless vortex of gender politics and its associated eddies.

I had not been able to save all of our exchanges, but the remains not only bear testimony to a fast growing epistolary cross-literary-cultural camaraderie, but more importantly as an index to kari's inner and outer movements in the very last year of her life.

kari edwards (1954–2006) was an experimental poet, artist and gender activist who wrote *post/(pink)* (2000), a diary of lies (2002), a day in the life of p (2002), *iduna* (2003), *obedience* (2005), and *Bharat jiva* (posthumously, Belladonna Books, 2009). kari received the Small Press Traffic's book of the year award in 2004.

[NOTE: Much of the textual format including the use of abbreviations and letter casing in the body of the emails is retained with only minor alterations made to fix typographical errors.]

Friday, March 10, 2006 7:36 PM

>> ----- Original Message -----
>> From: "Charles Bernstein" <xxx@xx.xxx>
>> To: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
>> Cc: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
>> Sent: Friday, March 10, 2006 7:36 PM
>> Subject: your trip
>>
>>

kari,

Aryanil, now in the US, would be a very good person to orient you to the Indian poetry context. He is a poet and editor in touch with many "innovative" poets, esp. Bengali.

Charles

Sunday, March 11, 2006

On 3/11/06, Aryanil Mukherjee <xxx@xxx.com> wrote:

Kari

Thanks for your rather nice and long mail. It was educative for me too. Myself and my wife have a secret desire to end up in a place like that after retirement....but Tamil is not the language I write in....so, to stay unconnected from Bangla, for me, is like living in prison.

Yes...I too like you, hate living in the mid-west. But I have a stable job here. Although I am a regular Bangla poet, like most Indian poets, my profession is far divorced from arts.

Yes, Rishi Aurobindo is indeed a great soul. So is his wife Sri Maa. I have members in my family who follow his teachings.

I'd like to talk to you a bit more about a poets village in West Bengal called Bhalopahar. Please visit the place if you get a chance. I could arrange it for you. In the POETICS e-group everyone seems to be talking about changes poetry can bring. BHALOPAHAR is a place where this change is happening as we speak...

.....

.....

I'll write to you again.

Aryanil

BTW, (plz excuse my ignorance) is "Kari" a male name ?

Sunday, March 11, 2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2006 09:22 AM
> Subject: Re: your trip
>

Dear Aryanil

Will write to you soon.

Are you in the NYC / Philly area. I am reading there next week... and when do you go back to India and where are you stationed?

kari

Sunday, March 12, 2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2006 10:17 AM
> Subject: Re: your trip
>

Aryanil,

Cincinnati... land of the midwest... I have lived mostly in east coast and west coast, except a stay in Boulder, CO, when I was at Naropa for writing. I have tried my best to avoid the midwest.

Yes, you are right, living in Auroville is not like living in India....not like living many places... it was associated with the *ashram*¹ back in the 1970's but has split, and is no longer connected. We had traveled in India the year before last, and spend a short time in AV², and then last year traveled for 2 months throughout India and spent 3 months in Auroville and decided to move. We had gone with the intention of moving there, but wanted to check it out first and it has it pluses and minuses like anywhere else.

¹ ashram – a (predominantly Hindu) place of religious retreat

² AV – Auroville, a small township of community living and meditation for human unity in diversity in South India

I think Auroville is about 40% Indian, and the rest international community, the total population is about 2000, and it is surrounded by about 30-40,000 folks from different villages. Every day AV employees, schools, teaches or works with about 4-5000, local village people. So, though I was only 5 months in India, I can say it is not like most of India, and there are many parts that are; there are some who do not see it as India, but it does not seem like it could be in any other country. And I think it depends on what one does there or who one works with how Indian it feels.

I mainly worked in a kitchen that feeds about 400- 600 folks a day and there were 3 Europeans out of 50 folks (both village folks and Aurovillians combined). So my experience tended toward more of a Tamil feel than a European feel.

And yes, I agree, Tamil (language) is very uncharacteristic, and very difficult. While we were there both of us were taking Tamil language classes, I left India knowing about 10-15 words, I think I am down to about 5 now, but learning Tamil is a necessity for me, some do not think it is important, but that just seems wrong, I would like to learn Hindi, but, one language at a time for right now.

While we traveled I consumed poetry books and one anthology I picked up, a rather big one, was Poetry after Tagore, or something like that, Bengal poetry to the 1980. It was wonderful and I was very aware of the social commentary that came from the poetry especially from Kolkata, which was an amazing city to spend time in. I think every American should spend a week there.

And yes, I knew Sri Aurobindo was from Bengal, I have read a fair amount about him, his history and his writing. One of the reasons we chose AV, over other international communities in the globe, was a combination of factors - spiritual, environmental, and cultural. There is a strong arts community there, but I did not get there until this time. I also realized how much of their poetic style was imbibed from the canonical poetry of Sri Aurobindo. It was a little disconcerting too. And like you say, many in the area see that style as the only style.

Realizing this has not deferred me, I feel I can no longer live here, if in the long run I end up in India, so be it, right now we are returning for a year or so. Personally I don't see myself in need to live here to get a wider world view, I am hoping to connect with other poets in India.. and in the broader region..... I think that is the biggest thing I need help with. I feel like I am fairly connected in the States, but need to broaden myself to see the world.. so, if you have any works that would be good to connect with I would be grateful.

I would write more but am getting over a cold and am wearing out a bit. Please send me your address and I will send you my new book.

Thank you so much for your time.

kari

Monday, March 13, 2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2006 04:45 PM
> Subject: Re: your trip
>

Dear Aryanil

I do apologize for not getting back to you sooner, but I let some things fall by the way side getting reading to do a mini reading tour in NYC³ and Philly⁴. Got back last night... though it was fun, three readings in three days was a bit exhausting.

I totally understand that need to be connected to you mother tongue...with the huge international community there, it seems English gets reduced to a very limited vocabulary and hand gestures... it is interesting and at times frustrating. That is why I would like to learn both Tamil and French, so I can at least begin to communicate with some folks. In the mean time, books become a main source of my connection to English.

I did check out Bhalopahar on line, it looks wonderful. Yes, would very much love to visit, maybe a while after I get settled, but would very much like to connect with other artist and writers and that seemed like an ideal place.

It is funny I had discovered www.kaurab.com while I was in India. I spend some time searching for online poetry zines in India and came across one of you interviews. I guess it is a pretty small world since I did not think I would be corresponding with you.

My book (obedience) is on the way. You should get it in a little while; hope you enjoy it...and by the way, "kari" is female...

best

kari

03/21/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2006 09:19 PM
> Subject: Re:Poetries in comparison

³ NYC – New Your City

⁴ Philly – Philadelphia

>

Aryanil,

thank you for your note... we are planning on leaving April 2.. arrive in Chennai on the 4th..

and thank you for the link to the interview w/ Chris⁵ ... I love his work and he is such a sweetheart..

I love the idea of poetry camps... for some reasons here folks have gotten the romantic idea of writing in isolation, but it takes a community... I remember Anne Waldman saying poetry takes place in groups, and I agree... it is my may worry being the India . . . I will be missing my group.. but hopefully I will find my own group over there as well..

hope you enjoy my book, and would love to hear any thoughts you have on it..

I promise to stay in touch while in India, and please keep me posted as well...

again thank you for your support and dialogue

kari

03/23/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2006 10:47 PM
> Subject: Re:Poetries in comparison

Aryanil..

I hope you do not mind if I respond to your note. it could be I am somewhat jumping the gun .. and it feels a little like there is an ever expectant conjunction waiting in the wings.. but that could be my read so.. if I am writing in advance of something and missing the point I do apologize...

as you said:

"Most serious Bangla poets have a fair amount exposure to Western Poetry, at least laudably more than most American poets (most of whom choose to stay ignorant and remarkably silent about poetry from Africa or the Oriental). However, our insight into American poetry, especially contemporary, is quite limited. For me, it is somewhat better as I have lived in this country for about a decade now and have been deep into international poetry from a very young age. Anyway, that's handicap no. 1."

⁵ Chris Stroffolino – American poet and musician

I agree, most poets, including myself have a rather limited view of poetry including world poetry, I know my limits are vast. it seems each day my eyes are open further to the past and the world around.. my handicap is I was an artist before I was a poet, and I was a therapist before being a poet, and I was an activist before being a poet... so my entry into the world of poetry late in life has been a game of catch up ever since 2000, when I received my mfa⁶... I think there are many poets who know a lot about poetry especially living san Francisco....

you said:

"poets do not walk out of out poetry workshops or university fine arts buildings like here. They come from all walks of life - a lot of them, like me, from the area of science and technology. I graduated as a Mechanical Engineer, did a PhD in Aerospace Engineering, work in the area of Engineering Mathematics - have never been to any poetry workshop whatsoever. That's handicap no. 2. But, I also think that is strength."

for the most part, other than popular music or during the punk music period... most of the arts comes from academia.. which I agree is not like many other place in the world... but I think this maybe a part of modernity, artist, writers and musician attend school...artist like Ghulam Santosh and Vasundhara Tewari and others in India went to university settings as well and developed a modern (contemporary) Indian style of art.... this maybe a part of modernity...

you said:

"In the US, while it is wonderful to see the concept of poetry or creative writing-workshop gathering momentum and workshops growing like mushrooms on college campuses (and actually making money at places); while it is a blessing to have dedicated poetry schools like JKSDP⁷, Naropa, academia continues to safe-haven poetry. It is no wonder, that poetry has been reduced to a sub-culture. "

it is a subculture Aryanil, and within that there are subcultures of subculture.. in amerika the arts have always been for the most part regulated as a subculture, unlike different parts of the world where as you say the art and and aesthetic approach to living is an integral part of life... Even in South America there is a tradition of the art being more important, and some of that comes form the colonial practice of the Spanish requiring there artisan to spend a year in the "new world." which in the USA... artist started out with no tradition, but that all changed with WWII and opening of education to GI's and the opening of education to the many... I myself receive money from serving in the army... I would not have gone if I did not receive veterans benefits..

so that is both a handicap and an advantage.. since I did not receive any education to speak of of poetry, literature or the arts growing up in rural amerika....

you:

⁶ mfa –Master of Fine Arts

⁷ JKSDP – Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics

"19 out of 20 American poets I have known, either teach in all sorts of schools or work in a press, magazine, library or an arts funding org. I'm yet to meet an American factory worker/ engineer/ doctor/ CPA/ gym coach/ ad-person."

well, I am one of the those who did not work in academia... I was a crisis councilor for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender population in san Francisco.

Listen I grew up in a small rural middle amerika, not far from where you are.. and NO one, listened to classical music, liked modern art, read books much, went to dance concert... the only music I remember going to when I grew up was a German drinking band. when my grandmother heard I was in college to be an artist she said "I did not think anyone did that anymore"... so I think the difficulty of class, mass culture and so on has created huge division, and subcultures.. it is very problematic... I agree..

I hope I did not jump the gun to much... but I am not writing for everyone...I would not know how... I am attempting something, that in all honesty could fail.. and that is fine..... but as far as attempting to not be a subculture, I already am... I am trying to carry on a discourse with those who read my books..or poetry...

kari

03/26/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, March 26, 2006 10:11 AM
> Subject: Re:Notes

Aryanil..

About your poetry, there is a way that the personal shifts from the the writer to me, shifts lovely , placing language experience on my flesh . . . I become the questioner asking the questions . . . making the statements. There is a wonderful familiarity I feel, or ease in entry of the language and poetic space. I am in the thought process of saneness, wonder, joy, questioning of arrival to a point.

I am in positioned in a place of here and there, in between this and that, female or if not female, the subject "female" being spoken of . . . at this same time, there is a reference to place that places the writer in a position allowing me to glimpses another in a many discourses, in a place of different lands...

I wish I had more to say... I am moved by your work, each poem produces its own quiet place and I am not sure how you take that but for me, they are moments of repose.. I appreciate being given that as an offering

so, thank you for sharing your work, I wish I had more to say, but always feel rather inept commenting on others work's I only hope it makes sense...

thank you for the honor

kari

03/27/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2006 8:41 AM
> Subject: Re:Notes

Aryanil,

yes, packing, last minute this and that... and thank you for the dialogue.. I wish I could have said more about your work, I was very moved.. but feel rather distracted these days...

kari

05/04/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, May 04, 2006 4:34 AM
> Subject: books

Aryanil

I agree, I wish it was a two way street as well... there is been too much of a American-only club, that may extend to other English speaking clubs.. but it is pretty exclusive... I have to admit my own limitations in one language only category.. and it looks like it would take me years to speak and read Tamil..

thank you for being a go between with Swapan⁸ (Roy), ... I look forward to the time, when I get a Little more settle here and feel like I can travel and meet some of these wonderful poets...

again thank you..

kari

⁸ Swapan Roy – Bengali poet and co-editor, *Natun Kabita (New Poetry)*

06/21/2006

Dear Aryanil, and C A Conrad,

have missed most of this conversation.. and//but..

CA, I have to disagree when you say...

- > In the
- > middle of one of the fastest growing economies of "western"
- > technologies they (India) also have *hijras*, a community of men who are
- > eunuchs of self-inflicted wounds,

I think this is a rather gender-centric perspective or western appropriation.. to call them men or even to consider them male is to do harm.. I have never meet one, or corresponded with a hijras that does not deal with similar issues as western transgendered folks..in other words a penis or clitoris does not make a gendered person...

and the self-inflicted wound you talk about., i.e. castration is illegal, and many are going for western reassignment surgery, and true there maybe some who go though ritual castration, The ones I have corresponded with have either not had surgery or gone to Medical Doctors..

Aryanil I agree with you..

- > *Hijras* are not considered "auspicious" in marriage ceremonies
- > in many parts of India.

yes only in select areas and in many areas, the word *Hijras* is not even used. this could be due to the many different languages and dialects spoken in India... the only universal is on Indian pass ports where they can choose a third gender or "eunuch".

but mostly they are reduced to begging and prostitution...

- > It (a long poem written in my mid-20s) was an attempt to look at the world with "asexual"
- >(unindoctrinated) eyes.

Aryanil, this is where I have to digress a bit from the "asexual" label that may have been put on *Hijras* or India's "legal eunuchs." India is a heterosexual economy and like most heterosexual economies, the role one takes on is usually within this paradigm.. for this reason, many "legal eunuchs" get married, have dreams of heterosexual relationships, date.. so on and so on. since they see themselves as female... and the sexual economy here is rather limited.. so, these are the options open to them..

just to clarify a bit...

kari

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transSubmutation

<http://transdada3.blogspot.com/>

NEW!!!

obedience

Poetry

Factory School. 2005. 86 pages, perfect bound, 6.5x9.

ISBN: 1-60001-044-X

\$12 / \$10 direct order

Description: obedience, the fourth book by kari edwards, offers a rhythmic disruption of the relative real, a progressive troubling of the phenomenal world, from gross material to the infinitesimal. The book's intention is a transformative mantric dismantling of being.

<http://www.factoryschool.org/pubs/heretical/index.html>

<http://www.spdbooks.org/SearchResults.asp?AuthorTitle=edwards%2C+kari>

07/14/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, July 14, 2006 11:43 AM
> Subject:

I am returning to San Francisco from India with my partner beginning of Aug. looking for house sitting possibilities or a short term, long term sublet..

please let me know if you know of anything.

thank you..

kari

07/15/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, July 15, 2006 10:21 PM
> Subject:

Aryanil...

> How has your stay been so far ?

well I am leaving.. many complications . . . some a lack of psychological development of many of the individuals.. European and not.. I have run into bigotry like I have not since I left my parents home in 1973.... that is not to say that some of the folks here are not wonderful they are..but I have a problem when every solution has a theistic resonance.

before I came here last Oct.. I would say I have a fairly good practice going.. fasting from every other day to once a week.. yoga, meditation, making all of our own food.. not going to restaurants.. on and on.. and after 4 months here I have had to deconstruct that haze though various post modern modalities to see the artifice of it.. or at least most of it..

> How's your poetry?

I have attached a section for you...on a MS⁹ I am trying to finish before I leave..

> I think

> experimental poets should try their hands at experimental prose on poetry.

I have not done much of that, except a review of Rachel Levitsky's in *Sentence*.. but have attached a text I did for an anthology... I have always attempted to push the boundaries of text.. instead of falling back on a linear tradition.. which makes little or no sense or maybe is an act of bad faith ...any ways hope you enjoy..

> Are you coming back for good ?

yes, no.. who knows.. I am fairly certain what this is here now...

kari

⁹ MS – manuscript

08/06/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, Aug 06, 2006 10:12 AM
> Subject: Here now

Aryanil,

right now I am in a B&B¹⁰ in SF¹¹ looking for housing, and I looking for something temp, furnished... I do not want to get bogged down.. and at a moments notice have the option to head back to India...

no hurry on the work...

peace
kari

08/07/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, Aug 07, 2006 9:07 AM
> Subject:

dear . . .

since I have come back I have started to think I do not belong to "a" community, but shared singularities, with over tones of parasitism . . . and it is true, some of this could be very different with time when the real glue of relationships are formed, and it is true with relationships, possibilities happen, real human potential, till then it is an undulating sea of grasping, isolation and neurotic responses. So, it seems I am up against a wall again in an environment filled with capitalistic consumption creating micro time, demarcated by segmented space, gridded out to areas of fluctuating hot zones. Death's potential is replaced by meaningless purchasable options, that have value with logo aestheticism or some sort of blank political act...so again.. where is there here or there.. where there, relationship exist in post colonial blindness, massive historical assumptions and collective denial held together by touching each others flesh, or a in a place where there is an objective goal to strive for at all cost till the flesh is discarded..

love

--

¹⁰ B&B – Bed & Breakfast

¹¹ SF/SFO – San Francisco

transSubmutation
<http://transdada3.blogspot.com/>

NEW!!!

obedience
Poetry

09/09/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2006 10:22 AM
> Subject: Return

Aryanil

I have decided to go back to India and live there for good.

kari

09/20/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2006 9:35 PM
> Subject: Return return

Dear Aryanil,

I am back in the states.. and I think I am ready to go back to Auroville, even though I struggled there, it seems more to the point than being here.. so, here I am in SF, getting ready to start a full

time job so I can make enough money to leave again...any ways... I have a poetry manuscript, *Bharat Jiva a dialogue/* documentation of my 9 months in India and I getting ready to send it out to some publishers.. Just thought I would see if you have any thoughts of where to send it...

thank you

kari

09/23/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, September 23, 2006 11:26 PM
> Subject: New book

Aryanil...

not a problem for taking time getting back to me...I know you are an empathic ear knowing many of the aspects I am dealing with and offer me a safe harbor to speak to/in... so time is never an issue

I did return to the states.. and though I am here in SF.. city of literature.. not only do I horribly miss the space of that was in auroville.. but find it hard to enter the scene here...almost assaultive and you asked my main reason go going to India.. and there are many layers to that question...

first.. it was always on my mind... could have been a bit of orientalism, always there as early as I can remember... my practice of Buddhism for the past 20 some years had something to do with it, and in connection to auroville, seeking a different way to live.. and there is a part of what Sri Aurobino writes in *Life Divine* that I find wonderful.. The Mother, I am not sure.. but that is another story...

and true on my first trip to India, there was a total and complete sense of tourism, no matter how hard I tried not to... and even the second time when I traveled in Rajasthan and Gujarat... but, not so much in Auroville..

I went to Auroville to find a different way of living.. one maybe I was not ready for... and it is not that I was not inspired by Indian Philosophy or practices.. what I found there was a subtext going on

around me, in and out of AV (Auroville) I did not understand or have a way to articulate.. . so while there I read a fair amount of post colonial and political writings.. trying to understand this India, that AV..

that I had only know from the spiritual/philosophy side..and though some of what I read concerned me... what concerned me more was no one in AV was looking at those issues.. what did it mean to be

there and be Europeans/amerikan....? what did it mean that some of the structures of AV was set up by a somewhat non-Indian person... many questions, many, including class issues, gender issues.. and the vast heterosexual assumption issue...

so on some level I had to turn away from the spiritual to have a multilevel view... and it was both my downfall and my strength...

and by time I left Auroville I was aware I was leaving a quagmire...but one that was steeped in humanity..... and for some reason i felt called back here to the usa.... maybe to see what was here.. if I would have been able to feel what i feel now I would not have come back..

so now I am back in the usa... working full time to make the money I need to go back to India... and trying to get my MS published..

with gratitude.

kari

09/24/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, September 24, 2006 10:43 PM
> Subject: Re:New book

Aryanil

Interesting you should mention Manu¹², after reading sections of the Vedas, Bhagavad-Gita, Ramakrishna, Sri Aurobindo, and many other text, I came across Manu... and in reading it... it seemed like a problematic text.. ...there was also a very familiar formation of rules within the catholic church about the same time.

> I am sure you are also aware that Rishi
> Aurobindo (Aurobindo Ghosh) was a Bengali. In his younger days he was an armed revolutionary
> against the British.

yes, very aware..

> While Life Divine and the lives and teachings of Sri Aurobindo
> and Sree Maa could show us a light we haven't seen before,

¹² Manu – Author of Manusmriti and proprietor of modern ritual-based Hindu religion

- > as you mentioned, an "Auroville" like society, founded and
- > run by people, who have only known Aurobindo from far, could
- > create many bottlenecks for an artist like you, as you have already
- > realized.

yes, I thought it was interesting that production of things was recognized as contributing to the structure of AV, but not poetry...in other words as long as you are producing profits for AV it is fine..and it is not that I deny the need for monetary exchange, especially given the state of AV now, rather dependent on outside income for support... but it seemed against the Idea of AV, especially what the Mother said..

- > Your decision to go back is welcome, but I would urge you to move
- > on and out and explore the social diversity that is India. How did you like Rajasthan ?

Oh, I plan on it...some of the most joyous times I had was traveling and meeting people... and I loved Rajasthan, want to go back, especially the less touristy areas.

- > And for once, please visit Kolkata. You don't have to expect a *City of Joy*
- > there, but for a poet, to have visited India but not Kolkata, is like an Indian poet
- > to have visited USA and not been to Greenwich Village.

but I did, spent 5 days in Kolkata...would go back again... I know someone there with a flat.. and know some *Hijiras* there as well.. it was pretty overwhelming...

- > You said the lit scene in SFO has been tough on you, to the point of being assaultive.

Maybe it is after being at AV.. but it is such a scene, I find it so hard to enter.. and maybe there is a little shame associated with failing in India.... but it very cliquish and I had a similar feeling before I left for India, I had all but stopped going to readings... I am not in the competitive mode.. when I first got here 5 years ago.. I was going to many reading....

- > Please tell me more about the problems you are facing in SFO. How about City Lights ?

> And my good old papa-friend ? Do you know how is he doing ? How open
> is he to young writers these days ?

I take it you are talking about Larry¹³... I read there a couple times and just sent my MS - *Bharat jiva* to him.... but since I got back do not know much..

kari

09/25/2006

> From: "kari edwards" <xxx@xxx.com>
> To: "Aryanil Mukherjee" <xxx@xxx.com>
> Sent: Sunday, September 25, 2006 8:45 AM
> Subject: Re:New book

Aryanil

you said-

>"*The Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, Puranas etc. and the Kamasutra too are books of poems to me.*"

I agree, some of the most moving / inspiring work I have ever read...I was particularly moved by the beginning of the Upanishads... it was also interesting, how many times I came across translations of The Vedas by Sri Aurobindo...

>that's very sad kari. Aurobindo and Maa, both wrote spiritual poetry.

>I recently came across a picture of Tagore visiting an ailing Aurobindo

>in Pondicherry. They discussed poetry sometimes.

Interesting you should mention Tagore... though I knew his poetry.. I did not know the person until I spend time in India..and learning about him has opened total appreciation of him as a true

¹³ Larry – Lawrence Ferlinghetti

modernist..someone the west has seemed to have misjudged and over looked.. but that could be said about all of India or for that matter all of non-Europe / amerika...

>Did you go to College Street ?

I am not sure of the name of the street, but it was near the college at the Indian Coffee house... there where publishers in the same building..

>Ferlinghetti ?

Yes... Ferlinghetti.. Anne Waldman introduced him to me...

>Kari, do you want me to speak to this Indian publisher on your behalf ? Just

>tap on her door and she if she would be keen....let me know.

I would be honored..the entire MS of Bharat jiva was written over a two year period from my first trip to India. to just before I returned this time..I could send you a sample or entire MS.. The writing I sent you earlier was an unedited section of final MS... but it feel more connected to India, than here, during one section of it for about six months, we practice a somewhat modified lay person practice of the Jain's... it was a very powerful time....the rest was writing in AV or on travels...

again thanks for being there..

kari

01/01/2007

Dear Aryanil,

I need to let you know that kari edwards, my partner, died on 12/2/06 in San Francisco. She likely had a pulmonary embolism. I am in the process of becoming the legal Literary Executor for her writing and as such I am trying to keep up with inquiries and correspondence. I would appreciate it if you could send me the email contact for Barnali Roy at *WordCraft* (of Oregon?). Has she seen the manuscript?

A blog search will enable you to see some of the tributes that have been posted about kari...

Thanks,

Fran Blau

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