Some reminiscences ...  
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It was on a beautiful Parisian day in April 1984, that I announced to Guruji, just back from an interview, that I intended to go to the central post office on the rue du Louvre to pick up some dictionaries that my mother had sent me. The master insisted on accompanying me and became my guide: he led me through several small streets, from the rue de Rivoli to the post offfice on the rue du Louvre. Seeing my astonishment, he told me that he knew all these streets very well because during his first visit to Paris, at the invitation of Sir Yehudi Menuhin, he stayed not far from there, with the latter, at the Continental hotel. Every day, after teaching Yehudi Menuhin and practicing himself, he went out to walk for hours in the streets surrounding the hotel. This hotel, the Continental, had already hosted another famous son of India more than 50 years earlier, Swami Vivekananda. I had read a few years ago several research reports on some little-known periods in the life of the Swami and discovered, marveling at these coincidences of life, that he had also stayed at the same hotel. The Swami, we read, as a good Hindu, did not like to take a bath in a bathtub because he had to wash in running water. He therefore asked permission to bathe in the Seine. Obviously, the request was rejected by both the hotel management and by his disciples who received him in Paris. Guruji, curiously, after eight years of absence in the West, decided to return to Paris. As he was eager to stay with me, I began to make inquiries with senior teachers of that era, in the West, on how to receive him. One teacher told me, with a smile, that the master did not know how to use the tub to take a bath and that he had to put a bucket of water at his disposal so that he could pour water over his body.  
 I took my first course in Iyengar Yoga at the Institute in Pune in 1978, and from the first lesson I understood that this was the true yoga. After having practiced for over 25 years, studied with several famous masters and deciphered the ancient texts of yoga with Indian pandits, I already had an idea of ​​what yoga was supposed to be and what it brings, an idea which was confirmed from the first lesson. I only met Guruji three weeks later, during a session of extreme intensity that he directed, throughout, in Sirsasana (head-stand). After long sessions of study and practice with him (he had told me to follow him daily from 6:30 am until 8 pm, and flawlessly, if I did not want to expose myself to his wrath) I dared to ask him a few times to bless us with his presence in the West but the offer was always declined. During summer 1983, the monsoon in Pune was exceptionally intense and like all heavy rains, it sometimes gave way to sunny intervals. I went every day to open the windows of the yoga room of the Institute at 6:30 am, and the Master always arrived at 6:40 sharp. That morning, the room was bathed in light. I was doing warm-ups and rope work when he came to stand beside me and to practice. Suddenly, he turned his head toward me and said with a smile: "I’ll come" and I asked: "Where? "He laughed and said:" Your place. " " When ? "And he said," When you want. " Thus he resumed his visits to the Western world. They lasted until 1997 in Europe, where he gave his ultimate Teachers’ Training Course in Paris, 2005 in the US and 2009 in Russia. His last trip outside India was the course he gave to nearly 3000 participants in China in 2011.  
 I accompanied him everywhere along his travels, even in India when I was there, and I witnessed the extraordinary and unique personality of a man who possessed the incredible art of being able to lower himself to the level of others in order to raise them higher. In 1996, he undertook a grand tour in Europe which lasted almost three months. We traveled in a small Renault 5, through all the countries of Western Europe, almost city by city. He showed such simplicity and such a sense of friendship during that long trip, that on several occasions I asked him to forgive me if, by this proximity, I had inadvertently shown a lack of respect for him as a disciple. This was the period before he was offered first-class plane tickets or limousines when he arrived. The master traveled in economy class until 1987. Even in Paris and London, to avoid traffic jams, we often took public transportation. Moreover, it was not always without its share of funny incidents.  
 In 1985, Peter Brook had completed all three parts of his famous Mahabharata, in theatrical form. The entire play lasted almost ten hours and one Sunday afternoon we decided to take Guruji to see it, staged in the legendary neighborhood of the director, La Chapelle. During one of the intermissions, we went outside to cool off, but the only cafe next to the theater was so full and smoke-filled that it was impossible to enter. We had brought chai (Indian spiced tea) in large thermoses and so we installed Guruji on the bench of a bus stop and served him some tea. Some disciples passed by from a meditation school where Guruji, out of friendship for their late master, had delivered a speech two nights earlier. They did not hide their astonishment at seeing him drinking tea on the street in a bus shelter. Guruji, who had very quickly read their thoughts, said to them: "Tell me, would your master dare sit in the street and drink tea with his disciples? ".   
 One evening on the London Underground there sat before us a very serious gentleman who, before starting to read his newspaper, began to stretch his buttocks diagonally with his fingertips. Guruj itold me, "This man must practice my method." I nodded in approval. But when the master had an idea in mind, he went to the very end. He asked me to go and check if this man really practiced Iyengar yoga. Imagine the scene: I get up and I ask this gentleman absorbed in his newspaper if he practices yoga. After his answer in the affirmative I then ask if he practices Iyengar yoga, and before his suspicious and questioning expression, I say that Mr. Iyengar is sitting right in front of him!  
 Another time, the reverse situation occurred. Guruji was to give a lecture in the Netherlands. We had left London by car but were slowed by traffic jams, and by the time we arrived at Dover the ferry was already two meters away from the dock. Before its final departure, the ferry was to go by the industrial port. We were then informed that the only way to catch it would be to get on there, on the condition that we would be granted permission to board. Fortunately, our driver had not left yet and he quickly drove us to the industrial port. We ran through long, endless corridors, went up and down enormous elevators, eventually ending up at a small checkpoint. I passed in front, explaining to the man in charge that this gentleman was to deliver a speech the same evening, asking him to be kind enough to let us pass. The controller looked at us for a moment and replied with a sly smile: "This gentleman can pass, provided he signs me this book", as he took out a copy of “Light on Yoga” from his drawer.  
 A long-time disciple of Guruji had prepared us some food before our departure. The bag was heavy. As we ran to catch the ferry, Guruji reproached me for having accepted to take so much food. But once on board, surrounded by a group of Australian retirees who were visiting Europe, and delighted that they recognized him, Guruji asked me to unpack everything and invited them to share our breakfast. "Sharing" was his driving dynamic, to share everything. He shared with all those who came to him. One day when it was very cold and we were preparing coffee in the Black Forest in Germany, he invited a hiker to join us to taste the coffee, prepared in the style of South India. Another time, traveling from England to France, the ferry was smoky and smelled very bad. We decided to stay in the car in the parking lot to take our snack that had been prepared in London. A security guard was walking around. Guruji asked me to bring him some samosas (Indian vegetable fritters), but the man didn’t want any. Guruji said that he surely must have had lunch already and asked me to bring him some dried fruit. So I took him the box of cashews I had grilled that morning, but the offer was again declined. Guruji told me he would not say no to coffee and asked me to bring him a cup, but he persisted in his refusal. Guruji said that the apples we had were very nice and asked me to offer him one, as he could eat it later, when he wanted. In vain - the man refused everything. Guruji said nothing but as we were heading for the ferry, he looked at the man affectionately and said, "You do not know to share, right? ".  
 He had suffered enormously by what he called "spiritual greed" of his master, and so had opted for the opposite attitude. Those who had the chance to meet him these last years, while he hardly taught a class, remember how during his own practice he called the students to share with them his new discoveries and new visions. To teachers, he always said "Give more than you receive, and you will be ethical teachers."  
 It was this spirit of sharing that led him to invest everything in his native village and to transform, by himself, an extremely poor village into a model city where medical care is completely free, there is a school bus for children from neighboring villages, where the school dresses and healthily feeds children to create a model generation, raised and educated according to the ethical principles of Indian philosophy and the practice of yoga.  
 In his last letter that I received before his departure, he wrote to me: “If I recover, that's well and good, if not, I think I'm a happy man because I have realized everything I had to achieve in this life. So, if the Lord calls me, I will go to Him with joy, my hands joined before my chest “.