

The Sunlit Path



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Editorial

My dear friends,

I am happy while bringing to you the 15th April, 2014 issue of The Sunlit Path.

'Living Words' enlighten us for self-exploration.

'Integral Education' describes a wider paradigm to understand the world, a paradigm which exceeds science.

'Integral Life' compares and contrasts the knowledge of the scientist and the knowledge of the yogi.

Finally, there a beautiful anecdote characterising the contrast between partial and comprehensive knowledge, rather, from part to whole and whole to part!

I do hope that you will find the contents inspiring.

Sincerely yours,

Dr Bhalendu Vaishnav

15 April, 2014





Our True Identity Sri Aurobindo

Mind and body are not our real self; they are mutable formations or images which we go on constructing in the drive of Time as a result of the mass of our past energies. For although those energies seem to us to lie dead in the past because their history is behind us, yet are they still existent in their mass and always active in the present and the future.

Neither is the ego-function our real self. Ego is only a faculty put forward by the discriminative mind to centralise round itself the experiences of the sense-mind and to serve as a sort of lynchpin in the wheel which keeps together the movement. It is no more than an instrument, although it is true that so long as we are limited by our normal mentality, we are compelled by the nature of that mentality and the purpose of the instrument to mistake our ego-function for our very self.

Neither is it the memory that constitutes our real self. Memory is another instrument, a selective instrument for the practical management of our conscious activities. The ego-function uses it as a rest and support so as to preserve the sense of continuity without which our mental and vital activities could not be organised for a spacious enjoyment by the individual. But even our mental self comprises and is influenced in its being by a host of things which are not present to our memory, are subconscious and hardly grasped at all by our surface existence. Memory is essential to the continuity of the

ego-sense, but it is not the constituent of the ego-sense, still less of the being...

Neither is the totality of that mutable conscious becoming, although enriched by all that subconsciously underlies it, our real self. What we become is a fluent mass of life, a stream of experience pouring through time, a flux of Nature upon the crest of which our mentality rides.

What we are is the eternal essence of that life, the immutable consciousness that bears the experience, the immortal substance of Nature and mentality.

For behind all and dominating all that we become and experience, there is something that originates, uses, determines, enjoys, yet is not changed by its origination, not affected by its instruments, not determined by its determinations, not worked upon by its enjoyings.

What that is, we cannot know unless we go behind the veil of our mental being which knows only what is affected, what is determined, what is worked upon, what is changed. The mind can only be aware of that as something which we indefinitely are, not as something which it definably knows...

But behind the Mind is this other or Brahman-consciousness, Mind of our mind, Sense of our senses, Speech of our speech, Life of our life.

Arriving at that, we arrive at Self; we can draw back from mind the image into Brahman the Reality.... (1)



Paradigm Beyond Science Sri Aurobindo

*(Extract from a talk of Sri Aurobindo with a
French scientist-disciple in 1926)*

In the West the highest minds are turned not towards spiritual truth but towards material science. **The scope of science is very narrow, it touches only the most exterior part of the physical plane.**

And even there, what does science know really? It studies the functioning of the laws, builds theories ever renewed and each time held up as the last word of truth! We had recently the atomic theory, now comes the electronic.

There are, for instance, two statements of modern science that would stir up deeper ranges for an occultist:

1. Atoms are whirling systems like the solar system.
2. The atoms of all the elements are made out of the same constituents. Different arrangement is the only cause of different properties.

If these statements were considered under their true aspect, they could lead science to new discoveries of which there is no idea at present and in comparison with which the present knowledge is poor. According to the experience of ancient Yogis, sensible matter was made out of five elements, Bhutani: Prithivi, Apas, Agni (Tejas), Vayu, Akasha.

Agni is threefold:

1. Ordinary fire, Jada Agni,
2. Electric fire, Vaidyuta Agni,
3. Solar fire, Saura Agni.

Science has only entered upon the first and the second of these fires.

The fact that the atom is like the solar system could lead it to the knowledge of the third.

Beyond Agni is Vayu of which science knows nothing. It is the support of all contact and exchange, the cause of gravitation and of the fields (magnetic and electric). By it, the action of Agni, the formal element, the builder of forms, is made possible.

And beyond Vayu is the ether: Akasha.

But these five constitute only the grossest part of the physical plane. Immediately behind is the physical-vital, the element of life buried in matter. J. C. Bose is contacting this element in his experiments.

Beyond is the mind in matter. This mind has a far different form than the human mind, still it is a manifestation of the same principle of organisation. And deep below there are two more hidden layers....

That is the occult knowledge concerning the physical plane only.

Science is far behind this knowledge.

The Hindu Yogis who had realised these truths did not elaborate them and turn them into scientific knowledge. Other fields of action and knowledge having been open before them, they neglected what for them was the most exterior aspect of the manifestation.

There is a difference between the scientific mind and the cast of mind of an occultist. There is little doubt that one who could unite these two groups of faculties would lead science towards great progress.

(2)



Understanding The World: Knowledge of The Scientist and The Yogi The Mother

The climax of the ordinary consciousness is Science. For Science, what is upon the earth is true, simply because it is there.

What it calls Nature is for it the final reality, and its aim is to build up a theory to explain the workings of it. So it climbs as high as the physical mind can go and tries to find out the causes of what it assumes to be the true, the real world. But in fact it adapts “causes” to “effects”, for it has already taken that which is for the true, the real, and seeks only to explain it mentally.

For the yogic consciousness, however, this world is not the final reality.

Rising above the mind into the Overmind and then into the Supermind, it enters the divine world of first truths, and looking down from there sees what has happened to those truths here.

How distorted they have become, how completely falsified! So the so-called world of fact is for the Yogi a falsehood and not at all the only true reality. It is not what it ought to be, it is almost the very opposite; whereas for the scientist it is absolutely fundamental.

Our aim is to change things.

The scientist says that whatever is, is natural and cannot be changed at heart. But, really speaking, the laws of which he usually speaks are of his own mental making; and because he accepts Nature as it is as the very basis, things do not and cannot change for him in any complete sense. But, according to us, all this can be changed, because we know that there is something above, a divine truth seeking manifestation.

There are no fixed laws here; even Science in its undogmatic moments recognises that the laws are mere mental constructions. There are only cases, and if the mind could apply itself to all the circumstances it would find that no two cases are similar. Laws are for the mind's convenience, but the process of the supramental manifestation is different, we may even say it is the reverse of the mind. In the supramental realisation, each thing will carry in itself a truth which will manifest at each instant without being bound by what has been or what will follow. That elaborate linking of the past with the present, which gives things in Nature such an air of unchangeable determinism is altogether the mind's way of conceiving, and is no proof that all that exists is inevitable and cannot be otherwise.

The knowledge possessed by the Yogi is also an answer to the terrible theory that all that takes place is God's direct working. For once you rise to the Supermind you immediately perceive that the world is false and distorted. The supramental truth has not at all found manifestation. How then can the world be a genuine expression of the Divine? Only when the Supermind is established and rules here, then alone the Supreme Will may be said to have authentically manifested. At

the same time, we must steer clear of the dangerous exaggeration of the sense of the falsehood of the world, which comes to those who have risen to the higher consciousness.

What happened with Shankara and others like him was that they had a glimpse of the true consciousness, which threw the falsehood of this world into such sharp contrast that they declared the universe to be not only false but also a really non-existent illusion which should be entirely abandoned.

We, on the other hand, see its falsehood, but realise also that it has to be replaced and not abandoned as an illusion. Only, the truth has got mistranslated, something has stepped in to pervert the divine reality, but the world is in fact meant to express it. And to express it is indeed our Yoga. (3)

Companion for All

THE ONLY really important thing modern science has discovered

is that from the purely outer and physical point of view

things are not what they seem to be.

The Mother

Who made it!

Kirschner, the famous astronomer had a scientist friend visiting him. The friend professed disbelief in God.

One day, this friend was admiring a working model of the solar system that stood upon a table. By turning a handle, the planets it could be made to revolve in their respective orbits around the sun.

"Very ingenious indeed," he remarked. "Who made it? "

"Oh! Nobody in particular," replied Kirschner.

"No, really tell me, I want to know who made it."

"Nobody made it, it just made itself."

The friend began to see the point and was annoyed.

"I see you are trying to be funny"

"Is it not rather you are funny? You cannot believe that this little model made itself, and yet you believe that the real sun and moon and stars, the vast universe in fact, came into existence somehow without any maker!"

Acknowledgements



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1. Sri Aurobindo, Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, *CWSA Vol 18; 25-26*
2. Sri Aurobindo, *Extract from a talk of Sri Aurobindo with a French scientist-disciple*) CWM Vol.5, pp 66-7
3. The Mother, Collected Works of The Mother, CWM, Vol 3, 161-2

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Editor: Dr. Bhalendu S. Vaishnav, Chairperson, Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, 388120, Gujarat, India. **Contact:** Department of Medicine, Pramukhswami Medical College, Karamsad 388325, Gujarat, India.

e mail: Sriaurobindochair@gmail.com