

The Sunlit Path



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Editorial

My dear friends,

I am happy to bring to you the 15th June, 2016 issue of The Sunlit Path.

'Living Words' tell us *who we are not!*..

'Integral Education' provides meta-cognitive understanding about powers and processes of mental functions.

'Integral Life' provides correct perspective of various Yogic systems.

I do hope that you will find the contents truly inspiring.

Sincerely yours,

Dr Bhalendu Vaishnav

15 June, 2016





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 indefinably 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)



Powers of the Mind

Sri Aurobindo

THE INSTRUMENT of the educationist is the mind or antahkarana, which consists of four layers. The reservoir of past mental impressions, the citta or storehouse of memory, which must be distinguished from the specific act of memory, is the foundation on which all the other layers stand. All experience lies within us as passive or potential memory; active memory selects and takes what it requires from that storehouse. But the active memory is like a man searching among a great mass of locked-up material: sometimes he cannot find what he wants; often in his rapid search he stumbles across many things for which he has no immediate need; often too he blunders and thinks he has found the real thing when it is something else, irrelevant if not valueless, on which he has laid his hand. The passive memory or citta needs no training, it is automatic and naturally sufficient to its task; there is not the slightest object of knowledge coming within its field which is not secured, placed and faultlessly preserved in that admirable receptacle. It is the active memory, a higher but less perfectly developed function, which is in need of improvement.

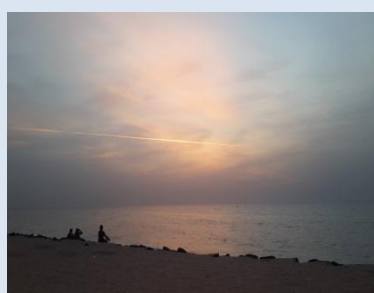
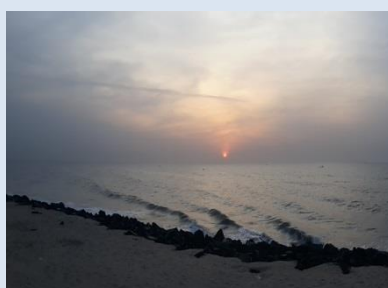
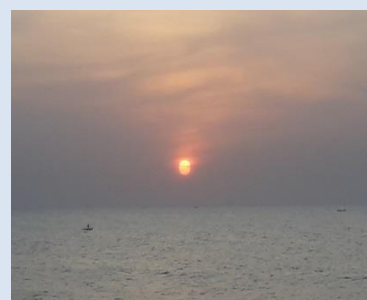
The second layer is the mind proper or manas, the sixth sense of our Indian psychology, in which all the others are gathered up. The function of the mind is to receive the images of things translated into sight, sound, smell, taste and touch by the five senses and translate these again into thought-sensations. It receives also images of its own direct grasping and forms them into mental impressions. These sensations and impressions are the material of thought, not thought itself; but it is exceedingly important that thought should work on sufficient and perfect material. It is therefore the first business of the educationist to develop in the child the right use of the six senses, to see that they are not stunted or injured by disuse, but trained by the child himself under the teacher's direction to that perfect accuracy and keen subtle sensitiveness of which they are capable. In addition, whatever assistance can be gained by the organs of

action, should be thoroughly employed. The hand, for instance, should be trained to reproduce what the eye sees and the mind senses. The speech should be trained to a perfect expression of the knowledge which the whole antahkarana possesses.

The third layer is the intellect or buddhi, which is the real instrument of thought and that which orders and disposes of the knowledge acquired by the other parts of the machine. For the purposes of the educationist this is infinitely the most important of the three I have named. The intellect is an organ composed of several groups of functions, divisible into two important classes, the functions and faculties of the right hand and the functions and faculties of the left hand. The faculties of the right hand are comprehensive, creative and synthetic; the faculties of the left hand critical and analytic. To the right hand belong Judgment, Imagination, Memory, Observation; to the left hand Comparison and Reasoning. The critical faculties distinguish, compare, classify, generalise, deduce, infer, conclude; they are the component parts of the logical reason. The right hand faculties comprehend, command, judge in their own right, grasp, hold and manipulate. The right-hand mind is the master of knowledge, the left-hand its servant. The left hand touches only the body of knowledge, the right hand penetrates its soul. The left hand limits itself to ascertained truth, the right hand grasps that which is still elusive or unascertained. Both are essential to the completeness of the human reason. These important functions of the machine have all to be raised to their highest and finest working-power, if the education of the child is not to be imperfect and one-sided.

There is a fourth layer of faculty which, not as yet entirely developed in man, is attaining gradually to a wider development and more perfect evolution. The powers peculiar to this highest stratum of knowledge are chiefly known to us from the phenomena of genius,—sovereign discernment, intuitive perception of truth, plenary inspiration of speech, direct vision of knowledge *to an extent often amounting to revelation, making a man a prophet of truth*. These powers are rare in their higher development, though many possess them imperfectly or by flashes. They are still greatly distrusted by the critical reason of mankind because of the admixture of error, caprice and a biased imagination

which obstructs and distorts their perfect workings. Yet it is clear that humanity could not have advanced to its present stage if it had not been for the help of these faculties, and it is a question with which educationists have not yet grappled, what is to be done with this mighty and baffling element, the element of genius in the pupil. The mere instructor does his best to discourage and stifle genius, the more liberal teacher welcomes it. Faculties so important to humanity cannot be left out of our consideration. It is foolish to neglect them, it is criminal to discourage them. Their imperfect development must be perfected, the admixture of error, caprice and biased fancifulness must be carefully and wisely removed. But the teacher cannot do it; he would eradicate the good corn as well as the tares if he interfered. Here, as in all educational operations, he can only put the growing soul into the way of its own perfection. (2)



Integral Life

YOGA

SRI AUROBINDO

PRINCIPLE of Yoga is the turning of one or of all powers of our human existence into a means of reaching divine Being. In an ordinary Yoga one main power of being or one group of its powers is made the means, vehicle, path. In a synthetic Yoga all powers will be combined and included in the transmuting instrumentation. In Hathayoga the instrument is the body and life. All the power of the body is stilled, collected, purified, heightened, concentrated to its utmost limits or beyond any limits by Asana and other physical processes; the power of the life too is similarly purified, heightened, concentrated by Asana and Pranayama.

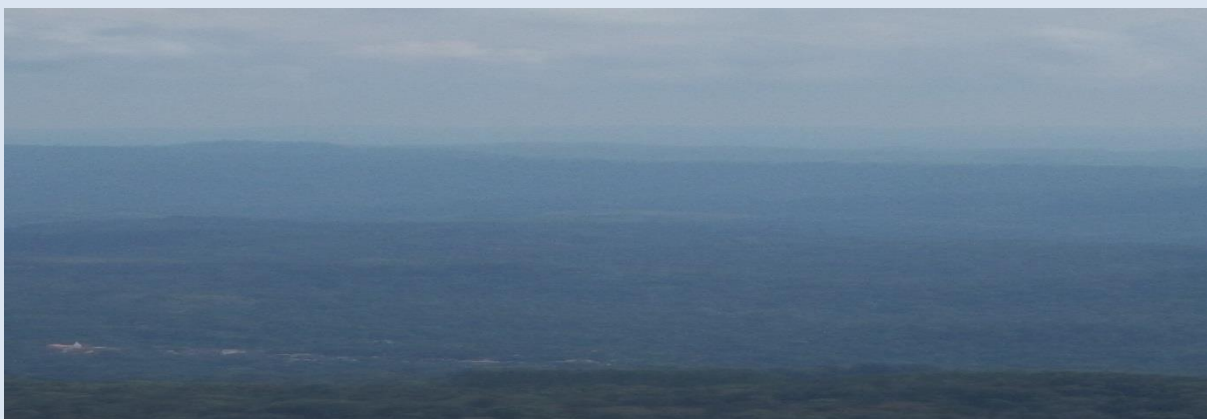
This concentration of powers is then directed towards that physical centre in which the divine consciousness sits concealed in the human body. The power of Life, Nature-power, coiled up with all its secret forces asleep in the lowest nervous plexus of the earth-being,—for only so much escapes into waking action in our normal operations as is sufficient for the limited uses of human life,—rises awakened through centre after centre and awakens, too, in its ascent and passage the forces of each successive nodus of our being, the nervous life, the heart of emotion and ordinary mentality, the speech, sight, will, the higher knowledge, till through and above the brain it meets with and it becomes one with the divine consciousness.

In Rajayoga the chosen instrument is the mind. Our ordinary mentality is first disciplined, purified and directed towards the divine Being, then by a summary process of Asana and Pranayama the physical force of our being is stilled and concentrated, the life-force released into a rhythmic movement capable of cessation and concentrated into a higher power of its upward action, the mind, supported and strengthened by this greater action and concentration of the body and life upon which it rests, is itself purified of all its unrest and emotion and its habitual thought-waves, liberated from distraction and dispersion, given its highest force of concentration, gathered up into a trance of absorption. Two objects, the one temporal, the other eternal, are gained by this discipline. Mind-power develops in another concentrated action abnormal capacities of knowledge, effective will, deep light of reception, powerful light of thought-radiation which are altogether beyond the narrow range of our normal mentality; it arrives at the Yogic or occult powers around which there has been woven so much quite dispensable and yet perhaps salutary mystery. But the one final end and the one all-important gain is that the mind, stilled and cast into a concentrated trance, can lose itself in the divine consciousness and the soul be made free to unite with the divine Being.

The triple way takes for its chosen instruments the three main powers of the mental soul-life of the human being. Knowledge selects the reason and the mental vision and it makes them by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of a God directed seeking its

means for the greatest knowledge and the greatest vision of all, God-knowledge and God-vision. Its aim is to see, know and be the Divine. Works, action selects for its instrument the will of the doer of works; it makes life an offering of sacrifice to the Godhead and by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of subjection to the divine Will a means for contact and increasing unity of the soul of man with the divine Master of the universe. Devotion selects the emotional and aesthetic powers of the soul and by turning them all Godward in a perfect purity, intensity, infinite passion of seeking makes them a means of God-possession in one or many relations of unity with the Divine Being. All aim in their own way at a union or unity of the human soul with the supreme Spirit.

Each Yoga in its process has the character of the instrument it uses; thus the Hathayogic process is psycho-physical, the Rajayogic mental and psychic, the way of knowledge is spiritual and cognitive, the way of devotion spiritual, emotional and aesthetic, the way of works spiritual and dynamic by action. Each is guided in the ways of its own characteristic power. But all power is in the end one, all power is really soul-power. (3)



Acknowledgements



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1. Sri Aurobindo, Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo (CWSA)18, 25-26
2. Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, 1, 386-88
3. Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, 24, 609-11

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