

The Sunlit Path



Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies

Sardar Patel University

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Sri Aurobindo



Thy peace, O Lord, a boon within to keep

Sri Aurobindo

And silently the woman's heart replied:

"Thy peace, O Lord, a boon within to keep

Amid the roar and ruin of wild Time

For the magnificent soul of man on earth.

Thy calm, O Lord, that bears thy hands of joy."

Limitless like ocean round a lonely isle

A second time the eternal cry arose:

"Wide open are the ineffable gates in front.

My spirit leans down to break the knot of earth,

Amorous of oneness without thought or sign

To cast down wall and fence, to strip heaven bare,

See with the large eye of infinity,

Unweave the stars and into silence pass."

In an immense and world-destroying pause

She heard a million creatures cry to her.

Through the tremendous stillness of her thoughts

Immeasurably the woman's nature spoke:

"Thy oneness, Lord, in many approaching hearts,

My sweet infinity of thy numberless souls."

Mightily retreating like a sea in ebb
A third time swelled the great admonishing call:
“I spread abroad the refuge of my wings.
Out of its incommunicable deeps
My power looks forth of mightiest splendour, stilled
Into its majesty of sleep, withdrawn
Above the dreadful whirlings of the world.”

A sob of things was answer to the voice,
And passionately the woman's heart replied:
“Thy energy, Lord, to seize on woman and man,
To take all things and creatures in their grief
And gather them into a mother's arms.”

Solemn and distant like a seraph's lyre
A last great time the warning sound was heard:
“I open the wide eye of solitude
To uncover the voiceless rapture of my bliss,
Where in a pure and exquisite hush it lies
Motionless in its slumber of ecstasy,
Resting from the sweet madness of the dance
Out of whose beat the throb of hearts was born.”

Breaking the Silence with appeal and cry

A hymn of adoration tireless climbed,

A music beat of winged uniting souls,

Then all the woman yearningly replied:

“Thy embrace which rends the living knot of pain,

Thy joy, O Lord, in which all creatures breathe,

Thy magic flowing waters of deep love,

Thy sweetness give to me for earth and men.” (1)



Supermind and Overmind

The Mother

Sri Aurobindo's work is a unique earth-transformation.

Above the mind there are several levels of conscious being, among which the really divine world is what Sri Aurobindo has called the Supermind, the world of the Truth. But in between is what he has distinguished as the Overmind, the world of the cosmic Gods. Now it is this Overmind that has up to the present governed our world: it is the highest that man has been able to attain in illumined consciousness. It has been taken for the Supreme Divine and all those who have reached it have never for a moment doubted that they have touched the true Spirit. For, its splendours are so great to the ordinary human consciousness that it is absolutely dazzled into believing that here at last is the crowning reality. And yet the fact is that the Overmind is far below the true Divine. It is not the authentic home of the Truth. It is only the domain of the formateurs, all those creative powers and deities to whom men have bowed down since the beginning of history. And the reason why the true Divine has not manifested and transformed the earth-nature is precisely that the Overmind has been mistaken for the Supermind. The cosmic Gods do not wholly live in the Truth-Consciousness: they are only in touch with it and represent, each of them, an aspect of its glories.

No doubt, the Supermind has also acted in the history of the world but always through the Overmind. It is the direct descent of the Supramental Consciousness and Power that alone can utterly re-create life in terms of the Spirit. For, in the Overmind there is already the play of possibilities which marks the beginning of this lower triple world of Mind, Life and Matter in which we have our existence. And whenever there is this play and not the spontaneous and infallible working of the innate Truth of the Spirit, there is the seed of distortion and ignorance. Not that the Overmind is a field of ignorance; but it is the borderline between the Higher and the Lower, for, the play of possibilities, of separate even if not yet divided choice, is likely to lead to deviation from the Truth of things. The Overmind, therefore, does not and cannot possess the power to transform humanity into divine nature.

For that, the Supramental is the sole effective agent. And what exactly differentiates our Yoga from attempts in the past to spiritualise life is that we know that the splendours of the Overmind are not the highest reality but only an intermediate step between the mind and the true Divine. (2)



Prayer



A prayer, a master act, a king idea
Can link man's strength to a transcendent Force.
Then miracle is made the common rule,
One mighty deed can change the course of things;
A lonely thought becomes omnipotent. (3)

Sri Aurobindo

Acknowledgements



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1. Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, 34, 696-97
2. The Mother. CWM 3, 173-74
3. Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, 33, 20

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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, Bhaikaka University, Karamsad 388325, Gujarat, India.
e mail: Sriaurobindochair@gmail.com