



गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः।
गुरुः साक्षात् परंब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥

Guru is Brahma (the Creator), Guru is Vishnu (the Preserver), and Guru is the god Maheshwara (the Destroyer). Unto that Guru who is truly the manifest Parabrahman, I bow down with reverence.

Realization

Vol. 10, No. 3

March 2021

An e-magazine of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch

दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः।
अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः॥२॥

He, the divine, the formless Spirit, even he is the outward and the inward and he the Unborn; he is beyond life, beyond mind, luminous, Supreme beyond the immutable.

– *Mundak Upanishad 2-1-2*

Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch

Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016

011-2656 7863; www.sriurobindoashram.net

Ongoing & Forthcoming Events

March 2021

Meditation & Satsang venue : Meditation Hall

Monday – Saturday

7 – 7:30 pm

Collective Meditation

Sunday Meditation & Discourses 10:00 – 11:30 am

Mar 07	<i>Hamare Prashn Sri Maa ke Uttar</i> Musical offering	Dr. Aparna Roy Mr. Aditya Prakash & Ms. Arunima Pathak
Mar 14	Concentration, Meditation and Spiritual Progress Musical offering	Dr. Ramesh Bijlani Ms. Premecheela
Mar 21	Corona Worship Musical Offering	Dr. Tarun Baveja Dr. Maitreyee Karak
Mar 28	Perfect Contemplation (Based on the Mother's <i>Prayers & Meditations</i> , prayers of 2-4 May 1914) Musical offering	Dr. Mithu Pal Dr. Mithu Pal

ONLINE CLASSES by Shri Prashant Khanna on FREE CONFERENCE CALL PLATFORM

Thursdays: 04,11,18,25	11:30 am–12:30 pm	Bhagvad Gita To join, please contact Dr. Sonia Gupta (98103 05078)
Saturdays: 06,13,20,27	11:00 am – 12 noon	Sri Aurobindo's Sonnets To join, please contact Sri Satya Prakash (88007 61046)

Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch's SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

YouTube	:	https://youtube.com/sriurobindoashramdelhibranch
Facebook	:	http://facebook.com/sriurobindoashramdelhibranch
Instagram	:	https://www.instagram.com/sriurobindoashramdelhibranch
Twitter	:	https://twitter.com/sadelhibranch
Website	:	http://sriurobindoashram.net/
Micro Website	:	http://sriurobindoashram.net/Mirra100/

Ashram Library (Knowledge)

Tuesday to Sunday Timings : 10:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

(Monday closed)

Contact : 2656 7863

Sri Smriti

(Memorabilia of the Mother)

Open: Tuesday to Sunday

Timing: 10 am – 12 noon

(Monday Closed)

Contact : 2656 7863



Important Notice

Precautions to minimize the spread of coronavirus to be observed

Matri Kala Mandir (MKM) CLASSES

Corona Virus (COVID-19) outbreak has forced all Matri Kala Mandir classes in abeyance. Please make a status-check on the Ashram website, www.sriaurobindoashram.net.

The Mother's Integral Health Centre Activities

Phone 011-2685 8563, Sanjeeb: 88005 52685, Mrs. Bhatia: 93122 65447 ; <tmihc2000@gmail.com>

Ongoing activities venue: ONLY on SKYPE (ID: tmihc2000)

Monday	4:00-4:45 pm	Vivekachoodamani	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Tue/Thu	4:00-4:45 pm	Aparoksanubhuti	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Wed/Fri	4:00-4:45 pm	Vidyas in the Upanishads	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Saturday	4:00-4:45 pm	Bhagvad Gita <i>Sadhana</i>	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Sunday	4:00-4:45 pm	<i>Satsang</i>	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja

Contact: 011-2685 8563; Ms. Swati Kohli <swatikohli3@gmail.com>

Corona Virus (COVID-19) outbreak has forced other Health Centre activities in abeyance. Please make a status-check on the Ashram website, www.sriaurobindoashram.net.

Important Days in the Ashram

29 March 107th Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo and Mother's first meeting



This world is a chaos in which darkness and light, falsehood and truth, death and life, ugliness and beauty, hate and love are so closely intertwined that it is almost impossible to distinguish one from the other, still more impossible to disentangle them and put an end to an embrace which has the horror of a pitiless struggle, all the more keen because veiled, especially in human consciousness where the conflict changes into an anguish for knowledge, for power, for conquest,—a combat obscure and painful, all the more atrocious be-

cause it seems to be without issue, but capable of a solution on a level above the sensations and feelings and ideas, beyond the domain of the mind—in the Divine Consciousness.

29 March 1934

— The Mother

The Philosophy of the Upanishads

Discovery of the Absolute Brahman (2)

Such were the gorges of endless speculation in which the old Aryan thinkers, tossed and perplexed, sought for some firm standing-ground, some definite clue which might save them from being beaten about like stumbling blind men led by a guide as blind. They sought at first to liberate themselves from the tyranny of appearances by the method which Kapila, the ancient prehistoric Master of Thought, had laid down for mankind, the method called Sankhya or the law of Enumeration. The method of Kapila consisted in guidance by pure discriminative reason and it took its name from one of its principal rules, the law of enumeration and generalisation. They enumerated first the immediate Truths-in-Things which they could distinguish or deduce from things obviously phenomenal, and from these by generalisation they arrived at a much smaller number of ulterior Truths-in-Things of which the immediate were merely aspects. And then having enumerated these ulterior Truths-in-Things, they were able by generalisation to reduce them to a very small number of ultimate Truths-in-Things, the Tattwas (literally Thenesses) of the developed Sankhya philosophy. And these Tattwas once enumerated with some approach to certainty, was it not possible to generalise yet one step farther? The Sankhya did so generalise and by this supreme and final generalisation arrived at the very last step on which, in its own unaided strength, it could take safe footing. This was the great principle of Prakriti, the single eternal indestructible principle and origin of Matter which by perpetual evolution rolls out through aeons and aeons the unending panorama of things.* And for whose benefit? Surely for those conscious knowing and perceiving Egos, the army of witnesses, who, each in his private space of reasoning and perceiving Mind partitioned off by an enveloping medium of gross matter, sit for ever as spectators in the theatre of the Universe! For ever, thought the Sankhyas, since the Egos, though their partitions are being continually broken down and built anew and the spaces occupied never remain permanently identical, yet seem themselves to be no less eternal and indestructible than Prakriti.

This then was the wide fixed lake of ascertained philosophical knowledge into which the method of Sankhya, pure intellectual reasoning on definite principles, led in the mind of ancient India. Branchings off, artificial canals from the reservoir were not, indeed, wanting. Some by resolving that army of witnesses into a single Witness, arrived at the dual conception of God and Nature, Purusha & Prakriti, Spirit and Matter, Ego and Nonego. Others, more radical, perceived Prakriti as the creation, shadow or aspect of Purusha, so that God alone remained, the spiritual or ideal factor eliminating by inclusion the material or real. Solutions were also attempted on the opposite side; for some eliminated the conscious Egos themselves as mere seemings; not a few seem to have thought that each ego is only a series of successive shocks of consciousness and the persistent sense of identity no more than an illusion due to the unbroken continuity of the shocks. If these shocks of consciousness are borne in on the brain from the changes of Prakriti in the multitudinous stir of evolution, then is consciousness one out of the many terms of Prakriti itself, so that Prakriti alone remains as the one reality, the material or real factor eliminating by inclusion the spiritual or ideal. But if we deny, as many did, that Prakriti is an ultimate reality

apart from the perceptions of Purushas and yet apply the theory of a false notion of identity created by successive waves of sensation, we arrive at the impossible & sophistic position of the old Indian Nihilists whose reason by a singular suicide landed itself in Nothingness as the cradle & bourne, nay, the very stuff and reality of all existence. And there was a third direction in which thought tended and which led it to the very threshold of Vedanta; for this also was a possible speculation that Prakriti & Purusha might both be quite real & yet not ultimately different aspects or sides of each other and so, after all, of a Oneness higher than either. But these speculations, plausible or imperfect, logical or sophistic, were yet mere speculations; they had no basis either in observed fact or in reliable experience. Two certainties seemed to have been arrived at, Prakriti was testified to by a close analysis of phenomenal existence; it was the basis of the phenomenal world which without a substratum of original matter could not be accounted for and without a fundamental oneness and indestructibility in that substratum could not be, what observation showed it to be, subject, namely, to fixed laws & evidently invariable in its sum and substance. On the other hand Purushas were testified to by the eternal persistence of the sense of individuality and identity whether during life or after death* and by the necessity of a perceiving cause for the activity of Prakriti; they were the receptive and contemplative Egos within the sphere of whose consciousness Prakriti, stirred to creative activity by their presence, performed her long drama of phenomenal Evolution.

But meanwhile the seers of ancient India had, in their experiments and efforts at spiritual training and the conquest of the body, perfected a discovery which in its importance to the future of human knowledge dwarfs the divinations of Newton and Galileo; even the discovery of the inductive and experimental method in Science was not more momentous; for they discovered down to its ultimate processes the method of Yoga and by the method of Yoga they rose to three crowning realisations. They realised first as a fact the existence under the flux and multitudinousness of things of that supreme Unity and immutable Stability which had hitherto been posited only as a necessary theory, an inevitable generalisation. They came to know that It is the one reality and all phenomena merely its seemings and appearances, that It is the true Self of all things and phenomena are merely its clothes and trappings. They learned that It is absolute and transcendent and, because absolute and transcendent, therefore eternal, immutable, imminuable and indivisible. And looking back on the past progress of speculation they perceived that this also was the goal to which pure intellectual reasoning would have led them. For that which is in Time must be born and perish; but the Unity and Stability of things is eternal and must therefore transcend Time. That which is in Space must increase & diminish, have parts & relations, but the Unity and Stability of things is imminuable, not augmentable, independent of the changefulness of its parts and untouched by the shifting of their relations, and must therefore transcend Space;—and if it transcends Space, cannot really have parts, since Space is the condition of material divisibility; divisibility therefore must be, like death, a seeming and not a reality. Finally that which is subject to Causality, is necessarily subject to Change; but the Unity and Stability of things is immutable, the same now as it was aeons ago and will be aeons hereafter, and must therefore transcend Causality.

This then was the first realisation through Yoga, NITYO 'NITYÂNÂM, the One Eternal in many transient.

At the same time they realised one truth more,—a surprising truth; they found that the transcendent absolute Self of things was also the Self of living beings, the Self too of man, that highest of the beings living in the material plane on earth. The Purusha or conscious Ego in man which had perplexed and baffled the Sankhyas, turned out to be precisely the same in his ultimate being as Prakriti the apparently non-conscious source of things; the non-consciousness of Prakriti, like so much else, was proved a seeming and no reality, since behind the inanimate form a conscious Intelligence at work is to the eyes of the Yogin luminously self-evident.

This then was the second realisation through Yoga, CHÉTANAŞ CHÉTANÂNÂM, the One Consciousness in many Consciousnesses.

Finally at the base of these two realisations was a third, the most important of all to our race,—that the Transcendent Self in individual man is as complete *because identically the same* as the Transcendent Self in the Universe; for the Transcendent is indivisible and the sense of separate individuality is only one of the fundamental seemings on which the manifestation of phenomenal existence perpetually depends. In this way the Absolute which would otherwise be beyond knowledge, becomes knowable; and the man who knows his whole Self knows the whole Universe. This stupendous truth is enshrined to us in the two famous formulae of Vedanta, SO 'HAM, He am I, and AHAM BRAHM' ÂSMI, I am Brahman the Eternal.

Based on these four grand truths, NITYO 'NITYÂNÂM, CHÉTANAŞ CHÉTANÂNÂM, SO 'HAM, AHAM BRAHM' ÂSMI, as upon four mighty pillars the lofty philosophy of the Upanishads raises its front among the distant stars.

— Sri Aurobindo

Ashram Activities

91ST BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF LATE SHRI ANIL JAUHAR, 20 JANUARY 2021

Shri Anil Kumar Jauhar led the Ashram and its associated institutions for almost three decades as Chairman till he left his body in 2014. The Mother's International School (MIS) organized a virtual Special Assembly on the morning of 20 January 2021, which was followed by a talk delivered by Dr. Pulkit Sharma on the theme of "Giving Wings to your Dreams." In keeping with Anil ji's love for sports, "Khelo MIS", an Online Sports Training Workshop, was organized for the students



of classes VI to IX by the Physical Education Department of MIS.

In the late afternoon, all the workers were served refreshments by the Ashram. Basketball and Football matches were held for Ashram residents in which youngsters participated with great enthusiasm.

During the evening Meditation, soulful music by the Ashram Choir in the Meditation Hall was followed by a reading by Tara Didi.



REPUBLIC DAY & KARUNA DIDI'S PUNYATITHI, 26 JANUARY 2021

On this day, in the morning there was a special open-air program anchored in chaste and sweet Hindi by Dr. Aparna Roy. The program included a large number of patriotic songs and devotional songs offered by the Ashram community as well as other devotees. The climax was an ode to Karuna Didi, written, composed and sung by Dr. Mithu Pal. The program ended with an open-air lunch.



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During the evening meditation, a devotional song in Punjabi on the ephemeral and evanescent nature of the phenomenal world in Karuna Didi's voice was played. That was followed by a reading of Sri Aurobindo's poem, 'The Mother of Dreams' by Tara Didi. The poem was a favourite of Karuna Didi.



MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF CULTURE ON 29 JANUARY 2021

Representatives of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch met with honorable Minister of Culture, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel regarding the celebrations for the forthcoming 150th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo which coincides with the

75th anniversary of India's Independence on 15th August 2022. As a matter of fact, Sri Aurobindo did not take this association as mere coincidence and, in his message on the eve of Independence broadcast on All India Radio, he averred, " August 15th is my own birthday and it is naturally gratifying to me that it should have assumed this vast significance. I take this coincidence, not as a fortuitous accident, but as the sanction and seal of the Divine Force that guides my steps on the work with which I began life..."

The team shared the Ashram's vision and plan for spreading the teachings of Sri Aurobindo: To walk on the path of Sri Aurobindo's vision that makes education a means to build the powers in the Human Mind and Spirit and, to inspire and encourage Youth for the evolution of higher humanity and channel their talents, enthusiasm and energies in building the new future.

The meeting was felt to be very encouraging in support of the Ashram's vision.



MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ON 2 FEBRUARY 2021

Representatives of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch met with honorable



Minister of Education, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal to discuss the vision and role of Integral Education as propounded by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in building the youth for an enlightened nation. With an objective to realize this vision, Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch is keen to share its knowledge and ex-

perience in the philosophy, methodology and experience in the fields of Integral Education, Free Progress System, and Project Based Learning skills with the schools and teachers of rural regions of the country quite in line with the New Education Policy of India.

These initiatives are especially meant to be a part of the forthcoming 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Sri Aurobindo in 2022. The honorable minister was very supportive towards the initiatives carried out by Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch and suggested ways to further the aims.

ASHRAM'S FOUNDATION DAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2021

The auspicious day began with invocation for the divine Presence by Km. Srila Basu in the morning. Later in the forenoon, a havan was conducted in the central courtyard with chanting of Sri Aurobindo's Gayatri Mantra '*Om tatsavitur varam roopam jyotih parasya dhi mahi yannah satyen deepite.*' At 10.30 am, an exhibition 'The Divine Signature', consisting of a large num-





ber of originals with the Mother's signature, was inaugurated by Ms. Nirupama Kotru, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. Exhibition also has a display of pictures tracing the life of the Mother from childhood onwards and, a collection of art & handicrafts created by Ashram youngsters under the guidance of Naval Barot. Ms. Nirupama Kotru in her appreciative note, wrote in the Visitors' Book, "It is my honour and privilege to be here on this auspicious occasion of Foundation Day of the Ashram. Absolutely delighted by the variety of creative products made by Ashram inmates as well as children. Feeling blessed!"

The exhibition will remain open till 24th April 2021. A virtual tour of the exhibition has been uploaded on the Ashram's YouTube channel in the form of a 6-minute video. Please visit:

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82j3r90QNNU>>

In the afternoon, Ashram community gathered on the field for photographs. In the evening, lights of aspiration were kindled at Sri Aurobindo's Shrine and the Samadhi of Chacha ji (Shri Surendra Nath Jauhar, the founder of the Delhi Branch). Later, subsequent to devotional music by the Ashram Choir, Tara Didi read passages from Chacha ji's autobiography on the beginning of the Delhi Ashram, and the Messages sent to the Delhi Ashram by the Mother, including the benediction for the Foundation Day, 12th February 1956:



12-2-56
*Opening of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram
 Delhi branch*
*Let this place be worthy
 of its name and manifest
 the true spirit of Sri Aurobindo's
 teaching and message to
 the world.*
With my blessings

12.2.56
**Opening of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram
 Delhi Branch**
**Let this place be worthy
 of its name and manifest
 the true spirit of Sri Aurobindo's
 teaching and message to
 the world.**
With my blessings
The Mother

ASHRAM'S FOUNDATION DAY, 12 FEBRUARY, AT VAN NIWAS, NAINITAL
**The Ashram's Foundation Day was celebrated at Van Niwas,
 Nainital, with devotional songs by Siddhant.**

NEW YOUTUBE POSTINGS : During this period following were posted on :
 <<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcmF6JzAOsBMdqJjZbnmyng>>

- * Reading from the Mother's *The Great Adventure* by Tara Didi
- * Videos on Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*, incorporating paintings by Italian artist Aghni
- * Devotional songs by Km. Karunamayee and other artistes
- * Talks by Dr. Aparna Roy, Dr. Alok Pandey, and Dr. Ramesh Bijlani

Editor's Note

“Serialization of *The Message of the Gita* in ‘Realization’ began from February 2017. The book was compiled by Shri Anil Baran and first published in 1938 by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Commentary text in the book derived from *Essays on the Gita* was no intellectual undertaking by Sri Aurobindo but rather “... whatever spiritualisation and divinisation it [his own intellect] attained was through the descent of a higher supra-intellectual knowledge into that silence. The book, *Essays on the Gita*, itself was written in that silence of the mind, without intellectual effort and by a free activity of this knowledge from above.”

Text has been rearranged to suit the magazine format, and phonetic rendering of Sanskrit text in Roman Script has been incorporated.

* * * * *

Sri Aurobindo considers the message of the Gita to be the basis of the great spiritual movement which has led and will lead humanity more and more to its liberation... escape from falsehood and ignorance... From the time of its first appearance, the Gita has had an immense spiritual action; but with the new interpretation [*Essays on the Gita*] that Sri Aurobindo has given to it, its influence has increased considerably and has become decisive.

– *The Mother*

* * * * *

The world abounds with scriptures sacred and profane, with revelations and half-revelations, with religions and philosophies, sects and schools and systems. To these the many minds of a half-ripe knowledge or no knowledge at all attach themselves with exclusiveness and passion and will have it that this or the other book is alone the eternal Word of God... It may therefore be useful in approaching an ancient Scripture, such as the... Gita, to indicate precisely the spirit in which we approach it and what exactly we think we may derive from it that is of value to humanity and its future... In the Gita there is very little that is merely local or temporal and its spirit is so large, profound and universal that even this little can easily be universalised without the sense of the teaching suffering any diminution or violation; rather by giving an ampler scope to it than belonged to the country and epoch, the teaching gains in depth, truth and power. Often indeed the Gita itself suggests the wider scope that can in this way be given to an idea in itself local or limited... the principal ideas suggestive and penetrating which are woven into its complex harmony, are eternally valuable and valid; for they are not merely the luminous ideas or striking speculations of a philosophic intellect, but rather enduring truths of spiritual experience, verifiable facts of our highest psychological possibilities...

We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future. A mass of new material is flowing into us; we have not only to assimilate the influences of the great theistic religions of India and of the world... but to take full account of the potent though limited revelations of modern knowledge and seeking... All this points to a new, a very rich, a very vast synthesis; a fresh and widely embracing harmonisation of our gains is both an intellectual and a spiritual necessity of the future. But just as the past syntheses have taken those which preceded them for their starting-point, so also must that of the future... proceed from what the great bodies of realised spiritual thought and experience in the past have given. Among them the Gita takes a most important place.

– Sri Aurobindo in *Essays on the Gita*

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Preface to *THE MESSAGE OF THE GITA*

The Gita is a great synthesis of Aryan spiritual culture and Sri Aurobindo's luminous exposition of it, as contained in his *Essays on the Gita*, sets out its inner significances in a way that brings them home to the modern mind. I have prepared this commentary summarising its substance with the permission of Sri Aurobindo. The notes have been entirely compiled from the *Essays on the Gita* and arranged under the slokas in the manner of the Sanskrit commentators.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram,
Pondicherry, 21st February, 1938

– ANILBARAN, Editor

THE MESSAGE OF THE GITA

With Text, Translation and Notes AS INTERPRETED BY

SRI AUROBINDO

Edited by **ANILBARAN ROY**

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EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER (CONTD.)

श्रीभगवानुवाच -

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु॥१८-४५॥

Swe swe karmanyabhiratah samsiddhim labhate narah;
Swakarmaniratah siddhim yathaa vindati tacchrinu. 18-45

A man who is intent on his own natural work attains perfection. Listen thou how perfection is won by him who is intent on his own natural work.

यतः प्रवित्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम्।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः॥१८-४६॥

Yatah pravrittirbhootaanaam yena sarvamidam tatam;
Swakarmanaa tamabhyarchya siddhim vindati maanavah. 18-46

He* from whom all beings originate, by whom all this universe is pervaded, by worshipping Him by his own work, a man reacheth perfection.

* The Gita's philosophy of life and works is that all proceeds from the Divine Existence, the transcendent and universal Spirit. All is a veiled manifestation of the Godhead, Vasudeva, *yatah pravrittir bhutānām yena sarvam idam tatam*, and to unveil the Immortal within and in the world, to dwell in unity with the Soul of the universe, to rise in consciousness, knowledge, will, love, spiritual delight to oneness with the supreme Godhead, to live in the highest spiritual nature with the individual and natural being delivered from shortcoming and ignorance and made a conscious instrument for the works of the divine Shakti is the perfection of which humanity is capable and the condition of immortality and freedom. But how is this possible when in fact we are enveloped in natural ignorance, the soul shut up in the prison of ego, overcome, beset, hampered and moulded by the environment, mastered by the mechanism of Nature, cut off from our hold on the reality of our own secret spiritual force? The answer is that all this natural action, however now enveloped in a veiled and contrary working, still contains the principle of its own evolving freedom and perfection. A Godhead is seated in the heart of every man and is the Lord of this mysterious action of Nature. And though this Spirit of the universe, this One who is all, seems to be turning us on the wheel of the world as if mounted on a machine by the force of Maya, shaping us in our ignorance as the potter shapes a pot, as the weaver a fabric, by some skilful mechanical principle, yet is this spirit our own greatest self and it is according to the real idea, the truth of ourselves, that which is growing in us and finding always new and more adequate forms in birth after birth, in our animal and human and divine life, in that which we were, that which we are, that which we shall be,—it is in accordance with this inner soul-truth that, as our opened eyes will discover, we are progressively shaped by this spirit within us in its all-wise omnipotence. This machinery of ego, this tangled complexity of the three gunas, mind, body, life, emotion, desire, struggle, thought, aspiration, endeavour, this locked interaction of pain and pleasure, sin and virtue, striving and success and failure, soul and environment, myself and others, is only the outward imperfect form taken by a higher spiritual Force in me which pursues through its vicissitudes the progressive self-expression of the divine reality and greatness I am secretly in spirit and shall overtly become in nature. This action contains in itself the principle of its own success, the principle of the *Swabhāva* and *Swadharmā*.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात्।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम्॥१८-४७॥
Shreyaanswadharmo vigunah paradharmaat swanushthitaat;
Swabhaavaniyatam karma kurvannaapnoti kilbisham. 18-47

Better is one's own law of works, though in itself faulty, than an alien law well wrought out. One does not incur sin when one acts in agreement with the law of one's own nature.*

* The Jiva is in self-expression a portion of the Purushottama. He represents in Nature the power of the supreme Spirit, he is in his personality that Power; he brings out in an individual existence the potentialities of the Soul of the universe. This Jiva itself is spirit and not the natural ego; the spirit and not the form of ego is our reality and inner soul principle. The true force of what we are and can be is there in that higher spiritual Power and the mechanical Maya of the three gunas is not the inmost and fundamental truth of its movements; it is only a present executive energy, an apparatus of lower convenience, a scheme of outward exercise and practice. The spiritual Nature which has become this multiple personality in the universe, *para prakritir jivabhuta*, is the basic stuff of our existence: all the rest is lower derivation and outer formation from a highest hidden activity of the spirit. And in Nature each of us has a principle and will of our own becoming; each soul is a force of self-consciousness that formulates an idea of the Divine in it and guides by that its action and evolution, its progressive self-finding, its constant varying self expression, its apparently uncertain but secretly inevitable growth to fulness. That is our Swabhāva, our own real nature; that is our truth of being which is finding now only a constant partial expression in our various becoming in the world. The law of action determined by this Swabhāva is our right law of self-shaping, function, working, our Swadharma.

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत्।
सर्वाग्भ्रा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः॥१८-४८॥

Sahajam karma kaunteya sadoshamapi na tyajet;
Sarvaarambhaa hi doshena dhoomenaagnirivaavritaah. 18-48

The inborn* work, O son of Kunti, though defective, ought not to be abandoned. All actions (in the three gunas) indeed are clouded by defects as fire by smoke.

* The practical basis in ancient times came to be the hereditary principle. A man's social function and position were no doubt determined originally, as they are still in freer, less closely ordered communities by environment, occasion, birth and capacity; but as their set in a more fixed stratification, his rank came practically to be regulated by birth mainly or alone and in the later system of caste birth came to be the sole rule of status. The son of a Brahmin is always a Brahmin in status, though he may have nothing of the typical Brahmin qualities or character, no intellectual training or spiritual experience or religious worth or knowledge, no connection whatever with the right function of his class, no Brahminhood in his work and no Brahminhood in his nature.

This was an inevitable evolution, because the external signs are the only ones which are easily and conveniently determinable and birth was the most handy and manageable in an increasingly mechanised, complex and conventional social order. For a time the possible disparity between the hereditary function and the individual's real inborn character and capacity was made up or minimised by education and training; but eventually this effort ceased to be sustained and the hereditary convention held absolute rule. The ancient lawgivers, while recognising the hereditary practice, insisted that quality, character and capacity were the one sound and real basis and that without them the hereditary social status became an unspiritual falsehood because it had lost its true significance. The Gita too, as always, founds its thought on the inner significance. It speaks indeed in one verse of the work born with a man, *sahajam karma*; but this does not in itself imply a hereditary basis. According to the Indian theory of rebirth, which the Gita recognises, a man's inborn nature and course of life are essentially determined by his own past lives, are the self-development already effected by his past actions and mental and spiritual evolution and cannot depend solely on the material factor of his ancestry, parentage, physical birth, which can only be of subordinate moment, one effective sign perhaps, but not the dominant principle. The word *sahaja* means that which is born with us, whatever is natural, inborn, innate; its equivalent in all other passages is *swabhavajā*. The work or function of a man is determined by his qualities, *karma* is determined by *guna*; it is the work born of his Swabhāva, *swabhāvajam karma*, and regulated by his Swabhāva, *swabhāva-niyatam karma*. This emphasis on an inner quality and spirit which finds expression in work, function and action is the whole sense of the Gita's idea of

Karma. And from this emphasis on the inner truth and not on the outer form arises the spiritual significance and power which the Gita assigns to the following of the Swadharma. That is the really important bearing of the passage.

It is true that in this birth men fall very largely into one of four types, the man of knowledge, the man of power, the productive vital man, the man of rude labour and service. These are not fundamental divisions, but stages of self-development in our manhood. There is always in human nature something of all these four personalities developed or undeveloped, wide or narrow, suppressed or rising to the surface, but in most men one or the other tends to predominate and seems to take up sometimes the whole space of action in the nature. And in any society we should have all four types,—even, for an example, if we could create a purely productive and commercial society such as modern times have attempted, or for that matter a Shudra society of labour, of the proletariat such as attracts the most modern mind and is now being attempted in one part of Europe and advocated in others. There would still be the thinkers moved to find the law and truth and guiding rule of the whole matter, the captains and leaders of industry who would make all this productive activity an excuse for the satisfaction of their need of adventure and battle and leadership and dominance, the many typical purely productive and wealth-getting men, the average workers satisfied with a modicum of labour and the reward of their labour. But these are quite outward things, and if that were all, this economy of human type would have no spiritual significance. Or it would mean at most, as has been sometimes held in India, that we have to go through these stages of development in our births; for we must perforce proceed progressively through the *tāmasic*, the *rajaso-tāmasic*, the *rājasic* or *rājaso-sāttwic* to the *sāttwic* nature, ascend and fix ourselves in an inner Brahminhood, *brahmanya*, and then seek salvation from that basis. But in that case there would be no logical room for the Gita's assertion that even the Shudra or *Chāndāla* can by turning his life Godwards climb straight to spiritual liberty and perfection.

The fundamental truth is not this outward thing, but a force of our inner being in movement, the truth of the fourfold active power of the spiritual nature. Each Jiva possesses in his spiritual nature these four sides, is a soul of knowledge, a soul of strength and of power, a soul of mutuality and interchange, a soul of works and service, but one side or other predominates in the action and expressive spirit and tinges the dealings of the soul with its embodied nature; it leads and gives its stamp to the other powers and uses them for the principal strain of action, tendency, experience. The Swabhāva then follows, not crudely and rigidly as put in the social demarcation, but subtly and flexibly the law of this strain and develops in developing it the other three powers. Thus the pursuit of the impulse of works and service rightly done develops knowledge, increases power, trains closeness or balance of mutuality and skill and order of relation. Each front of the fourfold godhead moves through the enlargement of its own dominant principle of nature and enrichment by the other three towards a total perfection. This development undergoes the law of the three gunas. There is possible a *tāmasic* and *rājasic* way of following even the dharma of the soul of knowledge, a brute *tāmasic* and a high *sāttwic* way of following the dharma of power, a forceful *rājasic* or a beautiful and noble *sāttwic* way of following the dharma of works and service. To arrive at the *sāttwic* way of the inner individual Swadharma and of the works to which it moves us on the ways of life is a preliminary condition of perfection. And it may be noted that the inner Swadharma is not bound to any outward social or other form of action, occupation or function. The soul of works that is satisfied to serve or that element in us can, for example, make the life of the pursuit of knowledge, the life of struggle and power or the life of mutuality, production and interchange a means of satisfying its divine impulse to labour and to service.

And in the end to arrive at the divinest figure and most dynamic soul-power of this fourfold activity is a wide doorway to swiftest and largest reality of the most high spiritual perfection. This we can do if we turn the action of the Swadharma into a worship of the inner Godhead, the universal Spirit, the transcendent Purushottama and, eventually, surrender the whole action into his hands, *mayi sannyasya karmani*. Then as we get beyond the limitation of the three gunas, so also do we get beyond the division of the fourfold law and beyond the limitation of all distinctive dharmas, *sarvadharmān parityajya*. The Spirit takes up the individual into the universal Swabhava, perfects and unifies the fourfold soul of nature in us and does its self-determined works according to the divine will and the accomplished power of the godhead in the creature.

– To be continued

In him the architect of the visible world,
At once the art and artist of his works,
Spirit and seer and thinker of things seen,
Virat, who lights his camp-fires in the suns
And the star-entangled ether is his hold,
Expressed himself with Matter for his speech:
Objects are his letters, forces are his words,
Events are the crowded history of his life,
And sea and land are the pages for his tale.
Matter is his means and his spiritual sign;
He hangs the thought upon a lash's lift,
In the current of the blood makes flow the soul.
His is the dumb will of atom and of clod;
A Will that without sense or motive acts,
An Intelligence needing not to think or plan,
The world creates itself invincibly;
For its body is the body of the Lord
And in its heart stands Virat, King of Kings.
– Sri Aurobindo

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