



ध्यान मूलं गुरोर्मूर्तिः पूजामूलं गुरोः पदम् ।
मंत्रमूलं गुरोर्वाक्यं मोक्ष मूलं गुरोः कृपा ॥

*The focal point of meditation is Guru's form, the core of worship are Guru's feet,
the soul of mantra is Guru's utterance, the source of salvation is Guru's grace.*

Realization

Vol. 5, No. 6

June 2016

An e-magazine of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch

तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गूहरेष्टं पुराणम् ।
अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति ॥

Realising God by attainment to Him through spiritual Yoga, even the Ancient of Days who hath entered deep into that which is hidden and is hard to see, for he is established in our secret being and lodged in the cavern heart of things, the wise and steadfast man casts far from him joy and sorrow.

– Katha Upanishad 1-2-12

Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch

Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016

011-2656 7863; www.sriurobindoashram.net

Ongoing & Forthcoming Events

June 2016

Meditation & *Satsang* venue: Meditation Hall

Monday – Saturday

7 –7:30 pm

Collective Meditation

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

June 05	Never Get Discouraged (Based on <i>The Great Adventure</i> , p 124)	Dr. Ramesh Bijlani
June 12	<i>Satya</i> and <i>Ahimsa</i>	Acharya Navneet
June 19	“ <i>Nirvana</i> ”, A Sonnet by Sri Aurobindo	Shri Prashant Khanna
June 26	Letting Go of Adult Children	Suman Maheshwari

Ongoing Classes venue: Meditation Hall

Wednesday	11:30 am–12:30 pm	Bhagvad Gita	Shri Prashant Khanna
Sunday (Except 19th)	11:30 am–12:30 pm	Savitri	Shri Prashant Khanna

Contact: 011-2656 7863; 2651 7426

Other Programs venue: Meditation Hall

June 04	6:30–7:30 pm	<i>Bhajan Sandhya</i>	Dr. Maitreyee Karak
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Contact: 011-2656 7863; contact@aurobindoonline.in

The Mother's Integral Health Centre Activities

(Phone 011-2685 8563 ; <tmihc2000@yahoo.co.in>; Mrs. Bhatia (93122 65447))

General O.P.D. Daily 8:30–9:30 am 2:30–3:30 pm

Speciality Clinics – By Appointment Only

Tue/Thu/Sat	Ayurveda		
Mon/Tue/Wed/Fri	Clinical Psychology	Mon-Sat (11am-1pm)	Physiotherapy
Tue/Thu	Gynaecology	Mon/Fri	Homeopathy
Daily	Mind Body Medicine	Tue	Orthopaedics
Thursday	Ophthalmology (Eye)	Tue/Thu/Sat	Naturopathy
Tue/Thu	Dental		

Integrated Health Services : Tailor-made packages of 4 hrs./day (Tu/Th/Sa)

Includes: Ayurveda, Naturopathy, *Yogasana*, *Pranayama*, Accupressure, Eye Exercise, Integral Health Consultation

June 05 & 19 6–7 am *Mahamrityunjaya Havan & Gita Paath*

Tue/Fri Contentment Building Month for Individual/Family Ms. Neha Bhimwal

June 11-16 8:30 am Integral Eye Exercise Camp

June 18-23 8:30 am Integral Eye Exercise Camp

Contact: 011-2685 8563; Madhu 92683 84794

Ongoing Classes venue: The Mother's Integral Health Centre Rm 15J

Monday	3:30-4:30 pm	<i>Vivekachoodamani</i>	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Wed/Fri	3:30-4:30 pm	<i>Chhandogya Upanishad</i>	Dr. Tarun Baveja

Contact: 011-2656 8563; Aradhana <aradhana.archer@gmail.com>

Matri Kala Mandir

NOTE : **NO CLASSES IN JUNE**

2016 Camps in the Kumaon Himalayas

Venue: Madhuban, Ramgarh

June 01-05	Spiritual Retreat		Art of Living, Haldwani
June 01-07	Indian Classical Music Retreat		Pt. Shantanu Bhattacharya
June 07-13	Upanishad & Ayurveda Camp	English/Hindi	Dr. Tarun Baveja, Dr. Surinder Katoch
June 13-17	Spiritual Retreat, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan	English	Dr. Ramesh Bijlani
June 18-24	Kriya Yoga Retreat	English	Per H. Wibe
June 24-30	Kriya Yoga Retreat	English	Per H. Wibe

Venue: Van Niwas, Nainital

June 01-07	Ayurveda Retreat	Hindi	Dr. Surinder Katoch
June 08-14	Anger & Stress Management	Bengali	Anurag Banerjee
June 15-21	Sri Arvind aur Bhagvad Gita	Hindi	Dr. J.P. Singh
June 22-28	Sri Aurobindo's Yog and method	Marathi	Dr. Vanashri Waghmare
June 28-July 04	Study Camp	English	Kaivalya Smart

June 13-21	Adventure Youth Camp	Sri Aurobindo College, Ludhiana
June 23-29	Adventure Youth Camp	Arya Vidya Mandir

Contact: 011-2656 7863; 2652 4810; <aurocamps@aurobindoonline.in>

Yoga (2)

The assertion of a higher than the mental life is the whole foundation of Indian philosophy and its acquisition and organisation is the veritable object served by the methods of Yoga. Mind is not the last term of evolution, not an ultimate aim, but, like body, an instrument. It is even so termed in the language of Yoga, the inner instrument (*antahkarana*).

We perceive.. three steps in Nature, a bodily life which is the basis of our existence here in the material world, a mental life into which we emerge and by which we raise the bodily to higher uses and enlarge it into a greater completeness, and a divine existence which is at once the goal of the other two and returns upon them to liberate them into their highest possibilities. Regarding none of them as either beyond our reach or below our nature and the destruction of none of them as essential to the ultimate attainment, we accept this liberation and fulfilment as part at least and a large and important part of the aim of Yoga

Spirit is the crown of universal existence; Matter is its basis; Mind is the link between the two. Spirit is that which is eternal; Mind and Matter are its workings. Spirit is that which is concealed and has to be revealed; mind and body are the means by which it seeks to reveal itself. Spirit is the image of the Lord of the Yoga; mind and body are the means He has provided for reproducing that image in phenomenal existence. All Nature is an attempt at a progressive revelation of the concealed Truth, a more and more successful reproduction of the divine image.

But what Nature aims at for the mass in a slow evolution, Yoga effects for the individual by a rapid revolution. It works by a quickening of all her energies, a sublimation of all her faculties. While she develops the spiritual life with difficulty and has constantly to fall back from it for the sake of her lower realisations, the sublimated force, the concentrated method of Yoga can attain directly and carry with it the perfection of the mind and even, if she will, the perfection of the body. Nature seeks the Divine in her own symbols: Yoga goes beyond Nature to the Lord of Nature, beyond universe to the Transcendent and can return with the transcendent light and power, with the fiat of the Omnipotent.

But their aim is one in the end. The generalisation of Yoga in humanity must be the last victory of Nature over her own delays and concealments. Even as now by the progressive mind in Science she seeks to make all mankind fit for the full development of the mental life, so by Yoga must she inevitably seek to make all mankind fit for the higher evolution, the second birth, the spiritual existence. And as the mental life uses and perfects the material, so will the spiritual use and perfect the material and the mental existence as the instruments of a divine self-expression. The ages when that is accomplished, are the legendary *Satya* (Truth) or *Krita* (effected or completed) Yugas, the ages of the Truth manifested in the

symbol, of the great work done when Nature in mankind, illumined, satisfied and blissful, rests in the culmination of her endeavour.

It is for man to know her meaning, no longer misunderstanding, vilifying or misusing the universal Mother, and to aspire always by her mightiest means to her highest ideal.

Yoga is not a modern invention of the human mind, but our ancient and prehistoric possession. The Veda is our oldest extant human document and the Veda, from one point of view, is a great compilation of practical hints about Yoga. All religion is a flower of which Yoga is the root; all philosophy, poetry & the works of genius use it, consciously or unconsciously, as an instrument. We believe that God created the world by Yoga and by Yoga He will draw it into Himself again. *Yogah prabhavapyayau*, Yoga is the birth and passing away of things. When Sri Krishna reveals to Arjuna the greatness of His creation and the manner in which He has built it out of His being by a reconciliation of logical opposites, he says “*Pasya me yogam aishwaram*”, Behold my divine Yoga. We usually attach a more limited sense to the word; when we use or hear it, we think of the details of Patanjali’s system, of rhythmic breathing, of peculiar ways of sitting, of concentration of mind, of the trance of the adept. But these are merely details of particular systems. The systems are not the thing itself, any more than the water of an irrigation canal is the river Ganges. Yoga may be done without the least thought for the breathing, in any posture or no posture, without any insistence on concentration, in the full waking condition, while walking, working, eating, drinking, talking with others, in any occupation, in sleep, in dream, in states of unconsciousness, semiconsciousness, double-consciousness. It is no nostrum or system or fixed practice, but an eternal fact of process based on the very nature of the Universe.

Yoga is that which embraces rather than selects.

Nevertheless in practice the name may be limited to certain applications of this general process for specific and definite ends. Yoga stands essentially on the fact that in this world we are everywhere one, yet divided; one yet divided in our being, one with yet divided from our fellow creatures of all kinds, one with yet divided from the infinite existence which we call God, Nature or Brahman. Yoga, generally, is the power which the soul in one body has of entering into effective relation with other souls, with parts of itself which are behind the waking consciousness, with forces of Nature and objects in Nature, with the Supreme Intelligence, Power & Bliss which governs the world either for the sake of that union in itself or for the purpose of increasing or modifying our manifest being, knowledge, faculty, force or delight. Any system which organises our inner being & our outer frame for these ends may be called a system of Yoga.

– Sri Aurobindo

Activities during April 16, 2016 – May 15, 2016

MATRI KALA MANDIR FUNCTION : Forty-ninth anniversary of Matri Kala Mandir



was celebrated on April 15, 16, and 17, 2016. An exhibition of paintings by the students was inaugurated by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani in the afternoon.

At 5 pm the cultural program started with invocation – O *Jagjanani* O *Kalyani* – for the Mother’s Presence by Smt. Preamsheela, followed



by Odissi dance ‘*Matri Vandana*’, *Raagini Bhimpalasi* on violin, *jhap taal* on *Tabla*, *Raag Durga* by vocal students. The concluding item was

a Kathak dance performed by 5-16 year olds with much enthusiasm. Noted critic Smt. Manjari Sinha, the chief guest, was highly appreciative of the high quality performance of all items and commented favorably on the day’s events.

The program of 16th April began with invocation by Km. Linthoy singing in her melodious voice, ‘*De ma nij charanon ka pyar*’. This day’s items ranged



from vocal singing of *Raag Khamaaj* in *Teen-taal* by 6-9 year olds, ragas on Hawaiian Guitar & Sitar; and singing of Carnatic devotional songs.

Seventeenth April’s *bhajan* of invocation was ‘*Jai Sri Aravindah Jyoti Kalevara*’, vocalized by Srila Basu and Minauti Pradhan. Cultural program started with



kheyal in *madhya* & *tarana* in *Raag Bihag* by senior MKM students, followed by flute recital in *Raag*





Des and a Kathak dance item, and ended with a song ‘*jeevan hai paya jis liye hum karke woh dikhalayenge*’ vowing to follow the guidance of the Guru. Ms. Manjusri Chatterjee, famous exponent and guru of Kathak dance, was the chief guest for the occasion. She felicitated the teachers on the notable performance of their students and spoke to the audience about Indian culture especially in context of music and dance.

At the end, Km. Karunamayee, director MKM, briefly spoke about the Ashram and thanked the audience for their presence and support.

INTEGRAL YOGA ORIENTATION : Forty one individuals took part in the popular *Orientation to Integral Yoga* course held on April 16-17, 2016. The program consisted of 3 practical sessions of yogasanas and pranayamas conducted by Shri Debi Prasad; talks on yoga, the spiritual worldview, the purpose of life, and stress management by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani; and a musical session by Ms. Preamsheela. A few representative comments from the participants illustrate the nature of true utility of the program: “felt joy beyond words”, “an amazing experience”, “cleared so many doubts”, “an insightful orientation”, “a very calm and balanced approach”, “just what I was looking for”, and “so much to learn, reflect on, and take home”.

SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF M.I.S. : To commemorate the 60th anniversary of The Mother’s International School (MIS) on 23rd April, 2016, a cultural program was organized by ‘Mother’s Blossoms’, its alumni association. The program started by Tara didi releasing the much-awaited book on the memorable journey of MIS through the past 60 years entitled, *The Mothers International School, a Pictorial History*. It was compiled by Ms. Neena Sethi, an alumna and former teacher of MIS. The book release was followed by recitations, dances and musical performances by the alumni members. At the end, the Principal, Smt. Sanghamitra Ghosh gave the vote of thanks to ‘Mother’s Blossoms’ in presence of Smt. Indu Bala Pillai, honorary Director of the School, and a large audience comprising of teachers, students, alumni members, guests, and Ashram residents.



EYE CAMP BENEFITS GIRL AFFLICTED BY RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA : Besides the usual positive feedback from participants such as “I enjoyed the camp very much and

felt it benefited me a lot; however, the real test is sustaining the benefits by practicing daily.” (K.M., F 76), one particular improvement was especially noteworthy in the Integral Eye Exercise Camp conducted from April 23 to 28, 2016. Although this program is designed specifically to address possible improvement of focusing (refractive) errors, in the past it has benefited many people with severe dry eyes problems and cataract also.

“Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) refers to a group of diseases which cause a slow but progressive vision loss. In each of them there is a gradual loss of the light-sensitive retinal cells called rods and cones... Most forms of RP are inherited or genetic... Currently, very few treatments exist for persons with RP. Occasionally, the degeneration can be slowed to preserve vision for a longer time.” [University of Michigan Kellog Eye Center, USA].

It was therefore very heartening to encounter significant improvement in one young girl, who suffers from RP, in this camp. In her mother’s words, “This is one of the best eye exercise camps on alternative therapy. My daughter (A.M. aged 15) has Retinitis Pigmentosa and we are amazed to see the relief she is getting... [She] was diagnosed with RP in 2003. She has RP by birth. Doctors at Mumbai advised her to have Vitamin A daily. In 2014, she was advised to take Valparin-300 containing Sodium Valproate and Valproic acid for six months. When she enrolled for integral eye exercise camp at Aurobindo Ashram- New Delhi, she was able to read first 3 lines of ophthalmic chart [Snellen Test Card] at a distance of 6 feet initially. By 5th day, she showed remarkable improvement and from 5th day onward she is able to see read whole chart [7 rows] from distance of 10 feet. We are continuing with the exercise shown to us in the camp and we are very positive for the improvement in the vision of A.M.” (K.S.M., from written comments and by email text)

DARSHAN DAY 24 APRIL : The day commemorating the final arrival of the Mother in Pondicherry on 24 April 1920, started with an invocation of the divine Presence in the Meditation Hall. In the forenoon, a special musical offering by Karuna Didi was followed by a discourse based on

the Mother’s essay *To the Women of Japan* (from her collection, *Words of Long Ago*) by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani. In the evening following

the traditional march past and kindling of the Lamps of Aspiration around Sri Aurobindo’s Shrine, Tara Didi read out the Mother’s prayer dated 26 May

1914 which includes this sublime aspiration:



“O sweet Master, O supreme Giver of illumination and purity, grant that all substance and every activity may be no more anything other than a constant manifestation of Thy divine Love and Thy sovereign Serenity...”



Thereafter, Sri Shivaprasada Rao made an offering of classical music in *Raaga Kedar*. At the end of the eventful day, *Prasad* and a book titled *First Darshan of Divine Mother* were distributed to all attendees.

AYURVEDA CAMP : A short Ayurveda camp on *panchakarma* was conducted under the auspices of The Mother’s Integral Health Centre in the Ashram on April 25, 2016. In the morning, *Dhanwantari pooja* was done in the *Panchkarma* room by offering of flowers and chanting the Lord



Dhanwatari Vandana. This was followed by *havan* (sacrificial offering) with recitation of Maha Mritunjaya mantra and slokas from the Bhagvad Gita. A talk on “Role of *Panchkarma* in Wellness” explained the benefits of *panchakarma* in regeneration, rejuvenation, delay in onset of ageing, cleansing of body channels and boosting of the immune system. It is also used as part of treatment regimen for many diseases. *Shirodhara* procedure is excellent for insomnia, stress management, nervous system disorders, hair fall & much more. Oiling procedures like

skandh basti is excellent for frozen shoulder & *kati basti* for backaches, sciatica. Myths prevailing in society regarding *panchkarma* were also discussed. *Panchkarma* department of Ayurveda at The Mother’s Integral Health Center is open from Monday to Saturday from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm.

TALK ON SRI AUROBINDO’S EARLY LIFE : Dr. Ananda Reddy, founder of Sri Aurobindo Centre for Advanced Research (SACAR), Puducherry, spoke in the Ashram on 4 May 2016. The main theme of his talk was the letter written by Sri Aurobindo to his wife Smt. Mrinalini Devi in 1905 in which he elaborates on his ‘three madnesses’:

“The first one is this. I firmly believe that the accomplishments, genius, higher education and learning and wealth that God has given me are His. I have a right to spend for my own purposes only what is needed for the maintenance of the family and is otherwise absolutely essential. The rest must be returned to God.

My second madness.. is this: by whatever means I must have the direct vision of God.

My third madness is that while others look upon their country as an inert

piece of matter—a few meadows and fields, forests and hills and rivers—I look upon Her as the Mother. What would a son do if a demon sat on his mother’s breast and started sucking her blood? Would he quietly sit down to his dinner, amuse himself with his wife and children, or would he rush out to deliver his mother?”

It was the third ‘madness’ that made him participate in politics, first covertly and later openly, Dr. Reddy said. But the second ‘madness’ had already turned him towards yoga which subsequently became his sole aim in life.

In conclusion, Dr. Reddy advised the audience to approach the Divine for all their problems, for there are no missed calls to God – all sincere calls to the Divine are always answered, he said.

BHAJAN SANDHYA : In the *bhajan sandhya* session on May 7, Smt. Jalaja Shankar, a music teacher at Matri Kala Mandir offered an evening of devotional songs in the Meditation Hall. The soulful items of Carnatic music-*keertan* were chosen from the works of Shri Thyagaraja, one of the trio of great *vaggeyakara* (poet, musician & composer) whose *Pancharatna Keertan* are very famous and popular. She was accompanied by Shri Shankar Raman on *mridangam* and Smt. Uma on violin.

This month’s Ayurveda Camp was conducted on 14th & 15th of May 2016 at The Mother’s Integral Health Centre of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch. Theme of the camp was *Enjoy Holistic Health by following*

AYSOL- Ayurvedic & Yogic Style of Living.

Ayurveda lays concurrent stress upon physical, mental, social & spiritual well being which altogether are

termed wellness or Holistic Health. What a person needs to do in daily life to accomplish this objective

was clearly brought out in the camp. Activities included *prabhatpheri* (*walk & chant*), interactive sessions on secrets of health according to Ayurveda, a *Yogasana* session, traditional Indian games, *Havan* with chanting of *Mahamrityunjaya Mantra* and Gita slokas. Resource person for this camp was Dr Surinder Katoch, an Ayurveda Physician & Yoga Expert, who was ably assisted by healthcare trainees of The Mother’s Integral Health Centre.



Note: Pictures can be viewed up to 200% size for finer detail

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

CHAPTER XXX

THE PRINCIPLE OF FREE CONFEDERATION

The issues of the original Russian idea of a confederation of free self-determining nationalities were greatly complicated by the transitory phenomenon of a revolution which has sought, like the French Revolution before it, to transform immediately and without easy intermediate stages the whole basis not only of government, but of society, and has, moreover, been carried out under pressure of a disastrous war. This double situation led inevitably to an unexampled anarchy and, incidentally, to the forceful domination of an extreme party which represented the ideas of the Revolution in their most uncompromising and violent form. The Bolshevik despotism corresponds in this respect to the Jacobin despotism of the French Reign of Terror. The latter lasted long enough to secure its work, which was to effect violently and irrevocably the transition from the post-feudal system of society to the first middle-class basis of democratic development. The Labourite despotism in Russia, the rule of the Soviets, fixing its hold and lasting long enough, could effect the transition of society to a second and more advanced basis of the same or even to a still farther development. But we are concerned only with the effect on the ideal of free nationality. On this point all Russia except the small reactionary party was from the first agreed; but the resort to the principle of government by force brought in a contradictory element which endangered its sound effectuation even in Russia itself and therefore weakened the force which it might have had in the immediate future of the world-development.¹ For it stands on a moral principle which belongs to the future, while government of other nations by force belongs to the past and present and is radically inconsistent with the founding of the new world-arrangement on the basis of free choice and free status. It must therefore be considered in itself apart from any application now received, which must necessarily be curbed and imperfect.

The political arrangement of the world hitherto has rested on an almost entirely physical and vital, that is to say, a geographical, commercial, political and military basis. Both the nation idea and the State idea have been built and have worked on this foundation. The first unity aimed at has been a geographical, commercial, political and military union, and in establishing this unity the earlier vital principle of race on which the clan and tribe were founded, has been everywhere overridden. It is true that nationhood still finds itself largely on the idea of race, but this is in the nature of a fiction. It covers the historical fact of a fusion of many races and attributes a natural motive to a historical and geographical association. Nationhood finds itself partly on this association, partly on others which accentuate it, common interests, community of language, community of culture, and all these in unison have evolved a psychological idea, a psychological unity, which finds expression in the idea of nationalism. But the nation idea and the State idea do not everywhere coincide, and in most cases the former has been overridden by the latter and always on the same physical and vital grounds—grounds of geographical, economic, political and military necessity or convenience. In the conflict between the two, force, as in all vital and physical struggle, must always

¹ The component States of Sovietic Russia are allowed a certain cultural, linguistic and other autonomy, but the rest is illusory as they are in fact governed by the force of a highly centralised autocracy in Moscow.

be the final arbiter. But the new principle proposed,² that of the right of every natural grouping which feels its own separateness to choose its own status and partnerships, makes a clean sweep of these vital and physical grounds and substitutes a purely psychological principle of free-will and free choice as against the claims of political and economic necessity. Or rather the vital and physical grounds of grouping are only to be held valid when they receive this psychological sanction and are to found themselves upon it.

How the two rival principles work out, can be seen by the example of Russia itself which is now prominently before our eyes. Russia has never been a nation-State in the pure sense of the word, like France, Spain, Italy, Great Britain or modern Germany; it has been a congeries of nations, Great Russia, Ruthenian Ukraine, White Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Siberia, all Slavic with a dash of Tartar and German blood, Courland which is mostly Slav but partly German, Finland which has no community of any kind with the rest of Russia, and latterly the Asiatic nations of Turkistan, all bound together by one bond only, the rule of the Tsar. The only psychological justification of such a union was the future possibility of fusion into a single nation with the Russian language as its instrument of culture, thought and government, and it was this which the old Russian regime had in view. The only way to bring this about was by governmental force, the way that had been long attempted by England in Ireland and was attempted by Germany in German Poland and Lorraine. The Austrian method of federation employed with Hungary as a second partner or of a pressure tempered by leniency, by concessions and by measures of administrative half-autonomy, might have been tried, but their success in Austria has been small. Federation has not as yet proved a successful principle except between States and nations or subnations already disposed to unite by ties of common culture, a common past or an already developed or developing sense of common nationhood; such conditions existed in the American States and in Germany and they exist in China and in India, but they have not existed in Austria or Russia. Or, if things and ideas had been ripe, instead of this attempt, there might have been an endeavour to found a free union of nations with the Tsar as the symbol of a supra-national idea and bond of unity; but for this the movement of the world was not yet ready. Against an obstinate psychological resistance the vital and physical motive of union could only resort to force, military, administrative and political, which has succeeded often enough in the past. In Russia, it was probably on the way to a slow success as far as the Slavic portions of the Empire were concerned; in Finland, perhaps also in Poland, it would probably have failed much more irretrievably than the long reign of force failed in Ireland, partly because even a Russian or a German autocracy cannot apply perfectly and simply the large, thoroughgoing and utterly brutal and predatory methods of a Cromwell or Elizabeth,³ partly because the resisting psychological factor of nationalism had become too self-conscious and capable of an organised passive resistance or at least a passive force of survival.

But if the psychological justification was deficient or only in process of creation, the vital and physical case for a strictly united Russia, not excluding Fin-

² This principle was recognised in theory by the Allies under the name of self-determination but, needless to say, it has been disregarded as soon as the cry had served its turn.

³ This could no longer be said after the revival of mediaeval barbaric cruelty in Nazi Germany, one of the most striking recent developments of "modern" humanity. But this may be regarded perhaps as a temporary backsliding, though it sheds lurid lights on the still existing darker possibilities of human nature.

land, was overwhelming. The work of the Peters and Catherines was founded on a strong political, military and economic necessity. From the political and military point of view, all these Slavic nations had everything to lose by disunion, because, disunited, they were each exposed and they exposed each other to the oppressive contact of any powerful neighbour, Sweden, Turkey, Poland, while Poland was a hostile and powerful State, or Germany and Austria. The union of the Ukraine Cossacks with Russia was indeed brought about by mutual agreement as a measure of defence against Poland. Poland itself, once weakened, stood a better chance by being united with Russia than by standing helpless and alone between three large and powerful neighbours, and her total inclusion would certainly have been a better solution for her than the fatal partition between these three hungry Powers. On the other hand, by union a State was created, so geographically compact, yet so large in bulk, numerous in population, well-defended by natural conditions and rich in potential resources that, if it had been properly organised, it could not only have stood secure in itself, but dominated half Asia, as it already does, and half Europe, as it was once, even without proper organisation and development, almost on the way to do, when it interfered as armed arbiter, here deliverer, there champion of oppression in Austro-Hungary and in the Balkans. Even the assimilation of Finland was justified from this point of view; for a free Finland would have left Russia geographically and economically incomplete and beset and limited in her narrow Baltic outlet, while a Finland dominated by a strong Sweden or a powerful Germany would have been a standing military menace to the Russian capital and the Russian empire. The inclusion of Finland, on the contrary, made Russia secure, at ease and powerful at this vital point. Nor, might it be argued, did Finland herself really lose, since, independent, she would be too small and weak to maintain herself against neighbouring imperial aggressiveness and must rely on the support of Russia. All these advantages have been destroyed, temporarily at least, by the centrifugal forces let loose by the Revolution and its principle of the free choice of nationalities.

It is evident that these arguments, founded as they are on vital and physical necessity and regardless of moral and psychological justification, might be carried very far. They would not only justify Austria's now past domination of Trieste and her Slavic territories, as they justified England's conquest and holding of Ireland against the continued resistance of the Irish people, but also, extended a little farther, Germany's scheme of Pan-Germanism and even her larger ideas of absorption and expansion. It could be extended to validate all that imperial expansion of the European nations which has now no moral justification and could only have been justified morally in the future by the creation of supra-national psychological unities; for the vital and physical grounds always exist. Even the moral, at least the psychological and cultural justification of a unified Russian culture and life in process of creation, could be extended, and the European claim to spread and universalise European civilisation by annexation and governmental force presents on its larger scale a certain moral analogy. This, too, extended, might justify the pre-war German ideal of a sort of unification of the world under the aegis of German power and German culture. But, however liable to abuse by extension, vital necessity must be allowed a word in a world still dominated fundamentally by the law of force, however mitigated in its application, and by vital and physical necessity, so far at least as concerns natural geographical unities like Russia, the

United Kingdom,⁴ even Austria within its natural frontiers.⁵

The Russian principle belongs, in fact, to a possible future in which moral and psychological principles will have a real chance to dominate and vital and physical necessities will have to suit themselves to them, instead of, as now, the other way round; it belongs to an arrangement of things that would be the exact reverse of the present international system. As things are at present, it has to struggle against difficulties which may well be insuperable. The Russians were much ridiculed and more vilified for their offer of a democratic peace founded on the free choice of nations to autocratic and militarist Germany bent on expansion like other empires by dishonest diplomacy and by the sword. From the point of view of practical statesmanship the ridicule was justified; for the offer ignored facts and forces and founded itself on the power of the naked and unarmed idea. The Russians, thoroughgoing idealists, acted, in fact, in the same spirit as did once the French in the first fervour of their revolutionary enthusiasm; they offered their new principle of liberty and democratic peace to the world,—not, at first, to Germany alone,—in the hope that its moral beauty and truth and inspiration would compel acceptance, not by the Governments but by the peoples who would force the hands of their governments or overturn them if they opposed. Like the French revolutionists, they found that ours is still a world in which ideals can only be imposed if they have a preponderating vital and physical force in their hands or at their backs. The French Jacobins with their ideal of unitarian nationalism were able to concentrate their energies and make their principle triumph for a time by force of arms against a hostile world. The Russian idealists found in their attempt to effectuate their principle that the principle itself was a source of weakness; they found themselves helpless against the hardheaded German cynicism, not because they were disorganised,—for revolutionary France was also disorganised and overcame the difficulty,—but because the dissolution of the old Russian fabric to which they had consented deprived them of the means of united and organised action. Nevertheless, their principle was a more advanced, because a moral principle, than the aggressive nationalism which was all the international result of the French Revolution; it has a greater meaning for the future.

For it belongs to a future of free world-union in which precisely this principle of free self-determination must be either the preliminary movement or the main final result, to an arrangement of things in which the world will have done with war and force as the ultimate basis of national and international relations and be ready to adopt free agreement as a substitute. If the idea could work itself out, even if only within the bounds of Russia,⁶ and arrive at some principle of common action, even at the cost of that aggressive force which national centralisation can alone give, it would mean a new moral power in the world. It would certainly not be accepted elsewhere, except in case of unexpected revolutions, without enormous reserves and qualifications; but it would be there working as a power to make the world ready for itself and, when it is ready, would play a large determining part in the final arrangement of human unity. But even if it fails entirely in its present push for realisation, it will still have its part to play in a better prepared future.

— *Sri Aurobindo*

⁴ Now we must say Great Britain and Ireland, for the United Kingdom exists no longer.

⁵ Note from this point of view the disastrous economic results of the breaking up of the Austrian empire in the small nations that have arisen in its place.

⁶ The idea was sincere at the time, but it has lost its significance because of the principle of revolutionary force on which Sovietism still rests.

All now seems Nature's massed machinery;
 An endless servitude to material rule
 And long determination's rigid chain,
 Her firm and changeless habits aping Law,
 Her empire of unconscious deft device
 Annul the claim of man's free human will.
 He too is a machine amid machines;
 A piston brain pumps out the shapes of thought,
 A beating heart cuts out emotion's modes;
 An insentient energy fabricates a soul.
 Or the figure of the world reveals the signs
 Of a tied Chance repeating her old steps
 In circles around Matter's binding-posts.
 A random series of inept events
 To which reason lends illusive sense, is here,
 Or the empiric Life's instinctive search,
 Or a vast ignorant mind's colossal work.
 But wisdom comes, and vision grows within:
 Then Nature's instrument crowns himself her king;
 He feels his witnessing self and conscious power;
 His soul steps back and sees the Light supreme.
 A Godhead stands behind the brute machine...
 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.

– From *Savitri* by Sri Aurobindo

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